

than February 28, 2003. If you would like a copy of your material distributed to each member of the committee or working groups in advance of a meeting, please submit 17 copies to the Assistant Executive Director no later than February 28, 2003. You may also submit this material electronically to the e-mail address in **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**, no later than February 28, 2003.

Information on Services for Individuals With Disabilities

For information on facilities or services for individuals with disabilities or to request special assistance at the meetings, contact the Assistant Executive Director as soon as possible.

Dated: February 12, 2003.

Howard L. Hime,

Acting Director of Standards, Marine Safety, Security & Environmental Protection.

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Coast Guard

[USCG-2003-14500]

Merchant Mariners' Documents: Forms and Procedures for Renewals and Issuances

AGENCY: Coast Guard, DOT.

ACTION: Notice of policy.

SUMMARY: The Coast Guard suspended renewing and issuing Merchant Mariners' Documents (MMDs) using the previously issued form and has begun renewing and reissuing MMDs using a new form. The new MMD form is more tamper-resistant and facilitates verification of an MMD holder's identity, citizenship, and qualifications to work aboard U.S.-flagged vessels. MMDs in the new form will enhance maritime security.

DATES: The Coast Guard began renewing MMDs using the new form on February 3, 2003.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: If you have questions on this notice, call Mr. Donald J. Kerlin, Deputy Director, Coast Guard National Maritime Center (NMC), (202) 493-1006.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

MMDs both serve as identity cards for merchant mariners and provide information about the mariners' professional qualifications. MMDs, in the previously issued form (CG-2838 [Rev. 7-94]), serve the second of these

purposes well enough; however, they no longer serve the first with sufficient confidence. The Coast Guard is replacing them using a new form (CG-2838 [Rev 09/02]) that will be issued through a more secure process. The Coast Guard will make every effort to effect a smooth and easy transition from the previously issued form to the new form. The Coast Guard will begin issuing MMDs in the new form to new applicants as soon as possible.

The Coast Guard also is considering whether to allow mariners to replace their previously issued MMDs with new MMDs on an accelerated basis, *i.e.*, at an earlier date than current expiration date. To ensure that only eligible mariners receive MMDs, the Coast Guard will conduct a criminal-record review of mariners seeking renewal or re-issuance of a previously issued MMD, or issuance of an original MMD. The review may include verification of identities; criminal histories; and sobriety (as gauged from, among other sources, the National Drivers' Register). This review will be consistent with applicable law and Coast Guard regulations set forth in Title 46, Code of Federal Regulations (46 CFR 12.02-4). Because of the importance of establishing positive proof of identity to facilitate the background investigation, it will be necessary for holders of, and applicants for, an MMD to be present at a Regional Examination Center (REC) to be fingerprinted.

Mariners may encounter delays incident to the new processes' going into practice and the delays may persist for some weeks. Holders and new applicants seeking re-issuance, renewal, and original issuance of their MMDs should inquire at their nearest REC, a list of which appears at 46 CFR 12.01-7, or contact Mr. Donald Kerlin at the National Maritime Center, 4200 Wilson Boulevard, Suite 630, Arlington, VA 22203-1804, (202) 493-1006.

Authority

46 U.S.C. 7301, 7302, 7303, 7304, 7305, 7503, 7505, and 49 CFR 1.46.

Dated: February 13, 2003.

Kevin J. Eldridge,

Rear Admiral, Coast Guard, Assistant Commandant for Governmental and Public Affairs.

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

Harmonization Initiatives

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration, DOT.

ACTION: Notice of public meeting.

SUMMARY: The Federal Aviation Administration and the Joint Aviation Authorities will convene meetings to accept input from the public on the Harmonization Work Program. The Federal Aviation Administration and the Joint Aviation Authorities use the Harmonization Work Program to carry out a commitment to harmonize, to the maximum extent possible, various rules. These rules include the operation and maintenance of civil aircraft, and the standards, practices, and procedures governing the design materials, workmanship, and construction of civil aircraft, aircraft engines, and other components. The purpose of this meeting is to give the public an opportunity to provide input to the Harmonization Work Program. This notice announces the date, time, location, and procedures for the public meeting.

DATES: The public meeting will be held on March 4, 2003, starting at 10:30 a.m. Written comments are invited and must be received by February 24, 2003.

ADDRESSES: The public meeting will be held at Central Joint Aviation Authorities, 8-10 Staturnusstraat, Hoofddorp, The Netherlands. Persons unable to attend the meeting may mail their comments in triplicate to: Florence Hamn, Federal Aviation Administration, Office of Rulemaking, ARM-200, 800 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20591.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Requests to attend and present a statement at the meeting or questions about the logistics of the meeting should be directed to Florence Hamn, Office of Rulemaking, 800 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20591; telephone (202) 267-3625, telefax (202) 267-5075.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Federal Aviation Administration and the Joint Aviation Authorities will convene meetings to accept input from the public on the Harmonization Work Program. On March 3, there will be an authorities only meeting that addresses various certification, operations, maintenance, and harmonization issues. The March 4 public meeting will begin at 10:30 a.m. and the agenda will include: