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From: Commanding Officer, U. S. Coast Guard National Maritime Center
To: Distribution

Subj: LICENSES AND CERTIFICATIONS ISSUED UNDER THE INTERNATIONAL
CONVENTION ON STANDARDS OF TRAINING, CERTIFICATION AND
WATCHKEEPING FOR SEAFARERS, 1978, AS AMENDED (STCW) FOR SERVICE
ON OFFSHORE SUPPLY VESSELS (OSV)

Ref: (a) Title 46, Code of Federal Regulations (46 CFR), Sections 10.493 through 10.497
(b) NMC Policy Letter 8-98 *Acceptance of Current Licenses for Service on Offshore
Supply Vessels (OSV) Admeasured in Accordance With the International Tonnage
Convention*

1. Reference (a) authorizes the issuance of licenses limited to service on OSVs; however, it provides no specific information about the requirements to qualify for such licenses. The U. S. Coast Guard intends to develop guidance for Officers in Charge, Marine Inspection concerning STCW requirements that may be inappropriate or unnecessary for service on OSVs. Until such guidance is promulgated, an application for an OSV-limited credential, except able seaman-special (OSV), should not be processed unless the applicant has completed an approved or accepted training program that leads to the credential.
2. We encourage training organizations, vessel operating companies, labor organizations, and others to develop training courses, programs, and assessments of professional skills either for U. S. Coast Guard approval or acceptance by a U. S. Coast Guard accepted quality standards system. Completion would lead to the issuance of the credentials for which they are approved. To date, the U. S. Coast Guard has approved several courses and assessment programs developed by the Offshore Marine Services Association (OMSA) that lead to qualification for service on OSVs. These are discussed in enclosure (1). As other courses, programs, and/or assessments are approved, guidance about their scope and application will be forwarded.
3. A mariner may be employed on board an OSV provided the size of the vessel and its route are within the scope of the endorsements on a mariner's license, a special OSV endorsement is not required. For a mariner to obtain a license based on service or training that began prior to 1 August 1998, the provisions of reference (b) apply until 1 February 2002. For a mariner who qualifies for one of the licenses and comparable STCW-95 certificates listed below based on training or service that began after 31 July 1998 and for all mariners after 31 January 2002, the license and certificate should be endorsed as follows:

a. Master and mate licenses

(1) A mariner licensed as master or mate 1,600 GRT on ocean or near coastal routes may have the license endorsed as valid for service on vessels of not more than 3,000 GT. This endorsement is not limited to service on OSVs. It is included here as a convenient reference about endorsements that will allow such mariners to serve on OSVs measuring between 1,600 and 3,000 gross tons.

(2) A mariner licensed as master 500 GRT on ocean or near coastal routes may have the license endorsed as valid for service on OSVs of not more than 3,000 GT on near coastal, domestic voyages.

(3) A mariner licensed as mate 500 GRT on ocean or near coastal routes may have the license endorsed as valid for service on OSVs of not more than 3,000 GT on near coastal, domestic voyages.

b. Engineer licenses

(1) A mariner licensed as designated duty engineer (DDE) may have the license endorsed for service as the chief engineer on OSVs of not more than 3,000 GT on near coastal, domestic routes within the horsepower limitations of the license and the route limitations set forth in 46 CFR 10.501. No additional endorsement is required.

(2) A mariner licensed as chief engineer (limited) may serve as the chief engineer of an OSV of not more than 3,000 GT within the horsepower and route limitations of the license without further endorsement. The license must be endorsed to authorize service on vessels of 3,000 GT.

(3) A mariner licensed as chief engineer (OSV) of less than 4,000 HP may have the license endorsed for service as engineer (OSV) unlimited HP on domestic, near coastal voyages only.

c. Unlicensed ratings

(1) Many OSVs have a required deck crew comprised of two mariners: one able seaman (OSV) and one ordinary seaman. Because the ordinary seaman may be required to stand navigational watches, both mariners must be qualified under the STCW as a rating forming part of a navigational watch (RFPNW). Full qualification as an RFPNW is a pre-requisite for a mariner to qualify as an able seaman-special (OSV).

(2) Any unlicensed engineer assigned to watchstanding duties must be certified as a rating forming part of an engineering watch. Full qualification in accordance with STCW regulation III/4 is required.

4. This policy letter is available on the World Wide Web at <http://www.uscg.mi/hq/g-m/marpers/pag/policy.htm>.

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Encl: (1) Information about the OMSA programs leading to OSV qualifications

Dist: Commandant (G-MSO)
All District Commanders (m)
All COs MSOs
All Activity Commanders
All RECs

INFORMATION ABOUT THE OMSA PROGRAMS LEADING TO OSV QUALIFICATIONS

1. This enclosure provides information about the OMSA programs that lead to either a license, or MMD, and an STCW certificate authorizing service on an OSV on near coastal, domestic voyages only. It is organized into six sections.

SECTION I. GENERAL

SECTION II. INFORMATION ABOUT QUALIFYING AS MASTER (OSV)

SECTION III. INFORMATION ABOUT QUALIFYING AS MATE (OSV)

SECTION IV. INFORMATION ABOUT QUALIFYING AS CHIEF ENGINEER (OSV)

SECTION V. INFORMATION ABOUT QUALIFYING AS RATING FORMING PART OF
A NAVIGATIONAL WATCH (RFPNW[OSV])

SECTION VI. INFORMATION ABOUT QUALIFYING AS ASSESSOR (OSV)

SECTION I. GENERAL

1. OMSA developed several rating-specific, training and/or assessment programs that have been approved by the U. S. Coast Guard. Completion qualifies a mariner for the pertinent license or other credential and STCW certification limited to service on OSVs. To date, training courses with related assessments or an assessment program only (as indicated in the following descriptions) have been approved for the following:

- a. License as master (OSV) of vessels of not more than 3,000 gross tons (GT) (tonnage measured under the International Tonnage Convention or 500 gross register tons (GRT) (domestic tonnage measurement) on near coastal, domestic voyages (assessment program);
- b. License as mate (OSV) of vessels of not more than 3,000 GT or 500 GRT on near coastal, domestic voyages (course and assessments);
- c. License as chief engineer (OSV) motor of not more than 3,000 GT or 500 GRT propelled by main engines of 4,000 or more horsepower (HP) on near coastal, domestic voyages (assessment program);
- d. License as chief engineer (OSV) motor of not more than 3,000 GT or 500 GRT propelled by main engines of less than 4,000 HP on near coastal, domestic voyages (assessment program);
- e. Provisional and final certification as a rating forming part of a navigational watch (OSV) (RFPNW-OSV) (course and assessments); and
- f. Assessor limited to on-board assessments of skills as part of OMSA's approved training courses (course and assessments).

Specific information relating to each of these programs is included in separate sections later in this enclosure.

2. These courses and/or assessments are approved for use by any company that is a member of OMSA, and a training organization or other entity specially authorized by OMSA. However, any company, organization, or entity that wishes to use these approved courses must complete

the following process before they are presented or used. The presenter/user must submit a letter to the NMC that includes the following:

- a. Name of the sponsoring company and affiliation with OMSA. Provide a copy of OMSA's authorization to use the course if not an OMSA member;
- b. Name(s) of the course(s) that will be taught and the location(s) where they will be presented or the names of the assessment programs that will be used;
- c. Name(s) and qualifications of a course's instructor(s) and assessors at each location or the names of the assessors participating in an assessment program;
- d. The names and tonnages of the vessels upon which the assessments will occur if the course offerer is not a vessel operator; and
- e. The methodology by which a mariner will obtain sea service and the system for verification of the sea service.

The OMSA program must be presented or used exactly as outlined in the approval. Any modification of an approved OMSA program requires that the presenter obtain approval from the National Maritime Center.

3. Except for the assessor course, these approvals apply to participants who started their service or training after 31 July 1998 that leads to the OSV license or qualification. Graduation from the appropriate course if a course is required, completion of any other required training such as basic safety training, and completion of the required assessments are pre-requisites for issuance of the requested license or certification. In addition, a mariner must meet all other requirements of 46 CFR Part 10 that apply, i.e., recency of service, drug screening, physical condition, character, length and nature of sea service, and a review of the National Driver Register. Applicants must also pass a U. S. Coast Guard examination
4. Each qualification except assessor is limited to service on OSVs of not more than 3,000 GT or 500 GRT. In addition, the master, mate, and chief engineer licenses as well as the provisional certification as RFPNW - OSV are limited to service on OSVs on near coastal, domestic voyages only. Service on an OSV may be creditable for increasing the scope of a mariner's OSV credential by removal of the OSV limitation. To remove the limitation, a mariner must, in addition to acquiring any necessary sea service, complete any training and assessments of skills that were not completed when qualifying for the OSV license. If the OSV limitation is removed, the mariner may also qualify for an increase in the scope of the route or vessel tonnage.
5. The performance standards and required assessments will be forwarded separately to each REC. OMSA has requested that their courses and assessment programs be treated as proprietary material.

SECTION II. INFORMATION ABOUT QUALIFYING AS MASTER (OSV)

1. An applicant for a master (OSV) license who completes the OMSA developed assessment program presented by an approved course provider must hold a license at least equal to mate (OSV) as a prerequisite. A license as mate 500 GRT on near coastal or ocean waters, master 200 GRT on ocean or near coastal waters, or operator of uninspected towing vessels on ocean or near coastal waters is an acceptable equivalent to mate (OSV). If the applicant does not hold a license equivalent to mate (OSV) but is otherwise qualified in accordance with 46 CFR Part 10.418, the applicant will be required to first complete all the assessments and training required for mate (OSV).
2. Completion of the required training and assessments must be documented on the record of training approved for use with the training program.
3. An applicant must meet the sea service requirements of 46 CFR 10.418 to qualify for this license.
4. Completion of the OMSA program does not exempt the applicant from the U. S. Coast Guard examination. An examination for OSV master has been developed as shown in the following table. It will be included in the Deck Guide at the next revision.

TITLE	MODULE NUMBER	NO. OF QUESTIONS	PASSING SCORE
Rules of the Road	05XXX	50	90%
Navigation problems	181XX	20	90%
Nav General	182XX	60	70%
General	183XX	60	70%

SECTION III. INFORMATION ABOUT QUALIFYING AS MATE (OSV)

1. A mariner may qualify for a license as mate (OSV) valid for service on near coastal, domestic voyages by completing this training program; meeting all qualification requirements in 46 CFR 10.205; acquiring the sea service required by 46 CFR 10.421; and passing the U. S. Coast Guard examination.
2. An applicant who applies for a mate (OSV) license under this program must present to the REC the following:
 - a. Course completion certificate that attests to successful completion of the U. S. Coast Guard approved, OMSA developed, mate (OSV) course presented by an approved course provider;
 - b. Training record book with each assessment signed by a qualified assessor. The OMSA developed training record book **must** be used to document completion of the training and assessments;

c. Proofs of completion of approved training courses in the following: radar observer; the four elements of basic safety training with continuing competence; and basic and advanced firefighting. Training is also required in ARPA and GMDSS, or in their absence, the STCW form will be annotated to prevent service on vessels equipped with those installations; and

3. Completion of the training course does not exempt the applicant from the U. S. Coast Guard examination. An examination for OSV mate has been developed as shown in the following table. It will be included in the Deck Guide at the next revision.

TITLE	MODULE NUMBER	NO. OF QUESTIONS	PASSING SCORE
Rules of the Road	05XXX	50	90%
Navigation problems	191XX	20	90%
Nav General	192XX	60	70%
General	193XX	50	70%

SECTION IV. INFORMATION ABOUT QUALIFYING AS CHIEF ENGINEER (OSV)

1. An applicant for a license as chief engineer (OSV) limited to motor vessels on near coastal domestic voyages may qualify for this license as follows:

a. Chief engineer (OSV) of less than 4,000 HP and less than 3,000 gross tons on domestic, near coastal voyages. The mariner must complete the U. S. Coast Guard approved, OMSA-developed, skill assessment program; meet the applicable regulatory requirements of 46 CFR part 10; meet the sea service requirements applicable to a DDE of not more than 4,000 HP [(10.524(b)(2)]; and pass the required examination; or

b. Chief engineer (OSV) unlimited HP and less than 3,000 gross tons on domestic, near coastal voyages. The mariner must complete the U. S. Coast Guard approved, OMSA-developed skill assessment program; meet the applicable regulatory requirements of 46 CFR part 10; meet the sea service requirements applicable to a DDE of any HP [(10.524(b)(1)]; and pass the required examination.

2. Completion of the required assessments must be documented in the record of training approved for use with the OMSA-developed, training program.

3. Examinations for these licenses are being developed. The following table sets forth the scope and content of the examination.

TITLE	MODULE NUMBER	NO. OF QUESTIONS	PASSING SCORE
General subjects	701XX	70	70
Motor plants	702XX	70	70
Engineering safety	703XX	70	70
Electricity	705XX	70	70
Survival Craft	706XX	50	70

4. A mariner holding a DDE license of more than 1,000 HP that was issued based on service beginning after 31 July 1998 and who applies for an increase in scope to a license valid for service on OSVs must complete the OMSA-developed, training program; acquire any required, additional sea service; and pass the required examination

5. A mariner holding a license as chief engineer (OSV) of less than 4,000 HP on domestic, near coastal voyages that was acquired as set forth in paragraph 1.a may be issued an increase in scope to an unlimited HP license upon completion of the additional sea service. No further testing, training, or assessments are required.

SECTION V. INFORMATION ABOUT QUALIFYING AS RATING FORMING PART OF A NAVIGATIONAL WATCH (RFPNW [OSV])

1. The OMSA training program for RFPNW (OSV) is a multi-step program. A mariner initially qualifies to stand look-out watches based on training and assessment of the competencies in Part I of the OMSA developed competency tables; no sea-going experience is required. An applicant must also present evidence of completion of basic safety training and the other pre-requisites for issuance of a merchant mariner document (MMD) required by 46 CFR 12.02. At this point, the mariner may be issued:

a. an MMD endorsed as ordinary seaman; and

b. a provisional STCW-95 form valid for four months from the date of issue and endorsed for service as a rating forming part of a navigational watch (lookout) valid for service on OSVs on near coastal, domestic voyages only.

2. Once qualified as a look-out, the mariner may progress to full qualification as an RFPNW (OSV) which requires:

a. participation in a formal, on-board, training program;

b. acquiring 60-days sea service performing duties associated with navigational watchkeeping functions; and

c. successfully completing all required assessments of Part II of the OMSA developed competency tables.

3. An alternative to paragraph two consists of a mariner providing evidence of six-months sea service performing duties associated with navigational watchkeeping functions and assessments in the competencies in Parts I and II of the OMSA developed competency tables.

4. A mariner who presents evidence of meeting the requirements of either paragraph two or three may be issued an STCW form endorsed as a rating forming part of a navigational watch limited to service on OSVs without any geographical restriction. This qualification will not be endorsed on an MMD.

SECTION VI. INFORMATION ABOUT QUALIFYING AS ASSESSOR (OSV)

1. To qualify as an assessor (OSV), a mariner must complete a one-day, U. S. Coast Guard approved, training course. Successful completion of the course authorizes the mariner to conduct in-service assessments of student-mariners' skills when the assessments fall within the assessor's area of expertise and when the student mariner is participating in any of the training courses or programs listed below. A pre-requisite for qualification as an assessor is that the mariner must hold the appropriate license and have obtained experience at or above the level of the student he or she will assessing. Each of the licensing courses or programs leads to a license or certification limited to service on OSVs of not more than 3,000 GT or 500 GRT on domestic, near coastal voyages. Similar restrictions are not imposed on the RFPNW qualification.

- a. Master (OSV);
- b. Officer in charge of a navigational watch (OSV);
- c. Chief engineer (OSV); and
- d. Rating forming part of a navigational watch.

2. When a prospective candidate has completed training and qualified as an assessor, the organization that conducted the training will provide the student with a course completion certificate. The same organization will also advise the NMC of all students who have qualified as an in-service assessor. This information will be available to RECs when evaluating training record books or other records of training to determine that the assessments were actually conducted by a qualified assessor.

3. Qualification as an on-board assessor remains valid as long as the mariner continues to be employed by the company which sponsored or conducted the training of the assessor and the assessor serves in a seagoing position aboard an OSV. An on-board assessor who changes employment to another company must qualify as an assessor on the vessels operated by his or her new employer.