

GUIDELINES ON APPLICATION FOR MARITIME RADIO (LOCAL VESSEL) LICENCE

Introduction

The following guidelines are issued pursuant to Section 6(D)(2)(a) of the Telecommunications Ordinance (Cap. 106) (the Ordinance).

2. Under the Ordinance, a licence is required for possession, establishment, maintenance or use of any apparatus for radiocommunications. Accordingly, a Maritime Radio (Local Vessel) Licence should first be obtained from the Communications Authority (CA) before a person possesses or uses maritime radiocommunications station on board a local vessel (e.g. barge, tug, pilot boat, ferry, oil carrier, pleasure vessel, fishing vessel, etc.) or at a shore station established for radiocommunicatons with pleasure vessels.

Licensing Criteria

3. The station may be installed on a vessel which is licensed as a local vessel under the Shipping and Port Control Ordinance or Merchant Shipping (Local Vessels) Ordinance, or established as a shore station at yacht club, marina, etc. for radiocommunications with pleasure vessels. Subject to justifiable reasons, the CA may also consider applications from an individual who does not own a local vessel but is in need of using a portable station¹ on board different vessels to meet operational needs and/or as an aid to personal safety at sea. For licensing a portable station, the applicant's justifications for establishing a portable station will be verified and the applicant shall be in possession of a valid certificate of competency appropriate for the operation of the apparatus comprised in the portable station.

4. Apparatus comprised in the station shall be operated only by persons possessing a valid and appropriate certificate of competency, but this requirement does not apply to apparatus which operate solely on frequencies above 30 MHz other than frequencies assigned for international use.

5. Apparatus comprised in the station shall comply with the appropriate performance specifications, if any, issued by the CA.

¹ A portable station may consist of one piece of handheld portable maritime radio, one piece of Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon, one piece of Personal Locator Beacon and/or one piece of aeronautical search and rescue equipment.

6. The operating frequency or frequencies must be one or those assigned by the CA. In this regard, frequency allocations follow the Hong Kong Table of Frequency Allocations published and updated by the Office of the Communications Authority (OFCA) from time to time.

7. If the station is intended to be used for public correspondence, the owner of the vessel is required to make a contract with an Accounting Authority² recognised by OFCA for settling all communication charges due on radio and/or satellite messages sent by the station.

8. Reference should be made to the conditions of the Maritime Radio (Local Vessel) Licence for other licensing criteria. The sample licence may be viewed and downloaded from the CA's website at <http://www.coms-auth.hk>.

Procedures for Application

9. Applications should be submitted to OFCA by any of the methods as stated in the application form, together with a duly completed application form and photocopies of supporting documents as mentioned below. The application form is available at <http://www.coms-auth.hk>.

a. For station installed on local vessels -

(i) Hong Kong Marine Department issued (a) Certificate of Ownership and Operating Licence (or Permission for a Laid-up Vessel if the vessel has not yet obtained the Operating Licence), or (b) Approval-in-Principle Letter for Licensing of a Local Vessel (if the vessel has not yet obtained the Certificate of Ownership and Operating Licence). For (b), upon receiving the Maritime Radio (Local Vessel) Licence, the licensee is required to replenish photocopies of the thereafter obtained Certificate of Ownership and Operating Licence to the Authority. If the licensee fails to observe or comply with this requirement, the Authority may take action including not to renew the licence;

(ii) the Hong Kong identity card(s) or passport(s) of the vessel owner(s);

(iii) the Business Registration Certificate and Certificate of

² Accounting Authority may be an administration, a recognised operating agency or any other entities designated by OFCA to act as telecommunications billing intermediary between the maritime mobile station and service providers.

- Incorporation (if applicable) if the vessel is owned by a company;
- (iv) the document confirming that a contract has been made with an Accounting Authority recognised by OFCA for settling all communication charges if the station is intended to be used for public correspondence; and
 - (v) the radio operator certificate of the person(s) responsible for operating the radio equipment comprised in the station, if applicable.
- b. For station established as a shore station –
- (i) the Business Registration Certificate and Certificate of the Incorporation(if applicable) of the yacht club, marinas, etc. at which the station is established; and
 - (ii) the radio operator certificate of the person(s) responsible for operating the radio equipment comprised in the station, if applicable.
- c. For station established as a portable station –
- (i) the Hong Kong identity card or passport of the applicant; and
 - (ii) the radio operator certificate of the applicant.

Enquiries

10. Any person who has enquiries relating to licensing matters may -
- a. call us on 2961 6282;
 - b. fax to 3155 0986;
 - c. mail to the Licensing Office, OFCA, 26/F., Wu Chung House, 213 Queen's Road East, Wan Chai, Hong Kong; or
 - d. e-mail to license.mob@ofca.gov.hk