

GUIDELINES FOR THE ISSUE OF GMDSS CERTIFICATE OF EQUIVALENT COMPETENCY WITH ENDORSEMENT AND CERTIFICATE ENDORSEMENT REVALIDATION

1. Introduction

- 1.1 These guidelines are issued pursuant to Section 6(D)(1) of the Telecommunications Ordinance (Cap. 106). In accordance with Regulations I/2, I/10 and I/11 of the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (STCW), 1978, as amended and Hong Kong legislation, a seafarer manning a radio station on a Hong Kong registered ship has to hold either an appropriate Hong Kong issued GMDSS Radio Certificate or a GMDSS Certificate of Equivalent Competency (CoEC) with endorsement in conformity with the requirements of the STCW Convention currently in force.

2. Recognition of Foreign issued STCW GMDSS Radio Certificates

- 2.1 A seafarer holding a recognised STCW GMDSS radio certificates issued by a foreign administration can apply to the Office of the Communications Authority (OFCA) for a CoEC with endorsement. Alternatively, if he is also holding a recognised STCW Certificate of Competency as Deck Officer or Marine Engineer Officer, he may apply to the Marine Department for a Licence as Deck Officer or Marine Engineer Officer with GMDSS radio operator endorsement. For details, applicants may refer to the “Guidelines for the Issue of Hong Kong Licences to holders of non-Hong Kong Certificates under the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers, 1978, as Amended” available in the Marine Department’s website at <http://www.mardep.gov.hk>.

Issue of Full Term Certificate of Equivalent Competency with Endorsement

- 2.2 Holders of STCW GMDSS Radio Certificates issued by the following Administrations are eligible for the issue of full term CoECs with endorsements valid for a period of 5 years or up to the expiry date of the recognised certificates, whichever is shorter.

Australia	Liberia
Bangladesh	Lithuania
Belgium	Malaysia
Bulgaria	Marshall Islands
Canada	Montenegro
China, People's Republic of	Myanmar
Croatia	Netherlands
Cyprus	New Zealand
Czech Republic	Norway
Denmark	Pakistan
Dominica	Panama
Egypt	Papua New Guinea
Estonia	Philippines

Ethiopia	Poland
Fiji	Portugal
Finland	Romania
France	Russia
Georgia	Serbia
Germany	Singapore
Ghana	Slovenia
Greece	South Africa
Iceland	Spain
India	Sri Lanka
Indonesia	Sweden
Iran	Thailand
Ireland	Turkiye
Jamaica	Ukraine
Korea, Republic of	United Kingdom
Latvia	Vietnam

Issue of Short Term Certificate of Equivalent Competency with Endorsement

- 2.3 Holders of STCW GMDSS radio certificates issued by the following Administrations are eligible for the issue of short term CoECs with endorsements valid for a period of 12 months or up to the expiry date of the recognised certificates, whichever is shorter.

Argentina	Brazil
Malta	Solomon Islands

Revalidation of Short Term Certificate of Equivalent Competency with Endorsement

- 2.4 Subject to the validity of the STCW GMDSS radio certificate, holders of short term CoECs can apply for revalidation of their CoECs with endorsements for a period of 12 months or up to the expiry date of the recognised certificates, whichever is shorter if they can produce satisfactory proof of their continuous employment on a Hong Kong registered ship.
- 2.5 Upon a decision for full recognition of those STCW GMDSS radio certificates issued by the Administrations listed in paragraph 2.3 above, the issue of short term CoECs based on such certificates will be discontinued and full term CoECs with endorsements will be issued instead. Holders of these short term CoECs can then apply to renew their CoECs with full term CoECs with endorsements.
- 2.6 The Administrations listed in paragraphs 2.2 and 2.3 above will be updated from time to time. Applicants may refer to the “Recognition of Certificates of Competency issued under STCW” in the Marine Department’s website at <http://www.mardep.gov.hk> or make an enquiry to the OFCA for most updated information.

3. Procedures for Application for the issue of CoEC with Endorsement or Certificate Endorsement Revalidation

3.1 Applicants should complete the application form (can be downloaded from <http://www.ofca.gov.hk>), sign the Declaration of Secrecy in the Operation of Radiocommunications Apparatus (Declaration of Secrecy) (can be downloaded from <http://www.ofca.gov.hk>), and submit them in person to the address shown in the application form together with the originals and photocopies of the following supporting documents.

- (a) Passport or personal identification document(s);
- (b) seaman's discharge book, seaman's service record book or seafarer's employment registration book (see Note below);
- (c) recognised foreign STCW GMDSS radio operator's certificate and endorsement;
- (d) evidence of having received approved basic training or instruction in the ancillary requirements of the STCW Code Section A-VI/1-1 to A-VI/1-4 (basic training certificates issued under the provisions of the STCW Convention or a valid Certificate of Competency or licence as Deck Officer or Marine Engineer Officer issued by the Hong Kong administration can be accepted as evidence of having received such training or instruction);
- (e) current CoEC with endorsement (applicable to endorsement revalidation only); and
- (f) medical fitness certificate.

(Note: For application for certificate endorsement revalidation, the applicant should have aggregated approved seagoing service for a period of at least one year in total during the preceding five years; or three months in total during the preceding six months immediately prior to revalidating.)

3.2 The completed application form could also be submitted by any of the methods as stated in the application form. However, the signed Declaration of Secrecy and photocopies of all the supporting documents, which have been certified true by one of the following parties, should be submitted to the OFCA by post.

- (a) The master of the ship on which the applicant is serving or is going to serve (not applicable to the applicant who is the master of the ship);
- (b) the owners/managers of the ship on which the applicant is serving (or is going to serve);
- (c) notary public; or
- (d) the issuing authority of the original document.

4. Fee

4.1 The issue fees are listed as follows:

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| (a) Certificate of Equivalent Competency for: | |
| First-Class Radio Electronic Certificate | HK\$780 |
| Second-Class Radio Electronic Certificate | HK\$780 |
| General Operator's Certificate | HK\$410 |
| Restricted Operator's Certificate | HK\$410 |
| (b) Endorsement of certificate | HK\$160 |
| (c) Endorsement Revalidation | HK\$160 |

- 4.2 The required fees can be paid by any of the methods specified in the application form.

5. Rejection of application

- 5.1 The Communications Authority reserves the right to reject any applications if it is not entirely satisfied that the applicant has met the criteria for application.

6. OFCA's performance pledge and applicant's suggestion

- 6.1 OFCA will issue the CoEC with endorsement according to the performance pledge as specified in the OFCA's website at <http://www.ofca.gov.hk> after receiving an application. (i.e. completed application form together with certified true copies of all relevant documents and appropriate fees).
- 6.2 Suggestions for improvement or complaints relating to the issuing of CoEC and endorsement revalidation should be made to:

Controller Telecom (Support Services)
Office of the Communications Authority
29/F., Wu Chung House
213, Queen's Road East
Wan Chai
Hong Kong

Tel : +852 2961 6606
Fax : +852 3155 0914
E-mail : maritime@ofca.gov.hk

7. Enquiries

- 7.1 Enquiries relating to CoEC and endorsement revalidation applications should be made to:

Support Services Sub-section
Office of the Communications Authority
29/F, Wu Chung House
213, Queen's Road East
Wan Chai
Hong Kong

Tel : +852 2961 6608
Fax : +852 3155 0914
E-mail : maritime@ofca.gov.hk

- 7.2 Enquiries relating to application for Licence as Deck or Marine Engineer Officer with GMDSS radio operator endorsement should be made to the Marine Department (website: <http://www.mardep.gov.hk>).