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**Republic of the Philippines**  
**Professional Regulation Commission**  
**Manila**

**MEMORANDUM CIRCULAR NO. 13- 08**  
**January 3, 2013**

**TO : MARINE DECK OFFICERS, MARINE ENGINEER OFFICERS  
AND ALL CONCERNED**

**SUBJECT : GUIDELINES IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE QUALITY  
STANDARDS SYSTEM**

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**I. AUTHORITY**

Section 28, Article VI of Republic Act No. 8544, otherwise known as the "PHILIPPINE MERCHANT MARINE OFFICERS ACT OF 1998", as implemented by Section 45, Article X, Resolution Nos. 55-A and 48-A, series of 2012, of the Boards of Marine Deck and Marine Engineer Officers (Boards), respectively.

**II. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this guidelines is to comply with the Quality Standards System (QSS) pursuant to Regulation I/8 of the 1978 STCW Convention, as amended, and Section A-I/8 of the STCW Code.

**III. OBJECTIVE**

1. To establish systems and procedures to ensure that the assessment, certification, endorsement and revalidation of certificates conform to the requirement of the revised STCW Convention;
2. To ensure that activities on assessment, certification, endorsement and revalidation of certificates are continuously monitored in accordance with defined objectives, including the qualification and experience of Board Members/Assessors;
3. To ensure that an independent evaluation is undertaken in accordance with Section A-I/8 of the STCW Code by qualified persons who are not themselves involved in the activities concerned; and
4. To ensure that the Report of independent evaluation is communicated to the IMO Secretary-General in accordance with Regulation I/8 of the STCW Convention, as amended.

#### IV. COVERAGE

The Quality Standards System shall cover the activities carried out by the Boards and the Commission in the implementation of the 1978 STCW Convention, as amended, as follows:

1. Certification system including issuance, endorsement and revalidation of certificates
  - Master and Chief Mates
  - Officer-In-Charge of a Navigational Watch
  - Chief Engineer and Second Engineer Officer
  - Officer-In-Charge of an Engineering Watch
2. Assessment including qualification of Board member/Assessors.
  - Bachelor of Science in Marine Transportation (BSMT)
  - Bachelor of Science in Marine Engineering (BSMarE)

#### V. KEY ELEMENTS

1. Policies, Aims and Objectives – an expressed policy regarding quality and the means this policy is implemented. It shall include a commitment by the Boards and the Commission to achieve stated aims and objectives and to the consequent recognition by the relevant accrediting or quality standards authority.
2. Management and Control Functions – are those which ensure that the managerial and operational activities are working as planned in order to achieve the Boards and the Commission's aims and objectives.
3. Self-Evaluation/Internal Quality Audit - monitoring the extent to which the institution is achieving the objectives of the programs it delivers, and is effectively maintaining the quality control procedures which it employs; and
4. Independent Evaluation – an arrangement made for periodic external evaluations required under paragraph 2, Regulation I/8 of the revised STCW Convention.

#### VI. DOCUMENTATION

1. The Boards and the Commission document its procedures as a means of controlling key operations that deals on assessment,



certification, endorsement and revalidation of certificates. It is the means of providing a clear and consistent understanding of how critical activities are performed.

2. Documentation shall comprise the structural overview of how the Boards and the Commission deal with its particular responsibility. Relevant national and international instruments shall be considered when establishing the necessary documentary structure.
3. Level 1 document of the QSS- the Quality Policy Manual shall contain the following:
  - The policies, aims and objectives
  - The organizational structure involved in the QSS
  - The major responsibilities for the levels of management
  - List of processes and procedures
  - A list of national laws, regulations and requirements that give the STCW Convention its legal standing within the organization
4. Level 2 document of the QSS- The Quality Procedures Manual shall contain the details of the work flows relevant to the activities of the Boards and the Commission pertaining to the QSS.

Examples:

- Issue and Endorsement of Certificates under Chapters II and III
  - Issue of Certificates under Chapters V and VI
  - Revalidation of Certificates
  - Certification of Marine Deck and Engineer Officers at the operational and management level
5. Level 3 document of the QSS- the Quality Forms and Documents Manual. The documents shall include forms, documents, reports, detailed work instructions and references of Level 1 and 2, as may be appropriate.

**VII. DEFINITION OF TERMS.** - Unless otherwise provided, the following shall mean:

1. COMMISSION – the Professional Regulation Commission (PRC) created under Republic Act No. 8981, otherwise known as the “PRC Modernization Act of 2000”.
2. BOARD- the Professional Regulatory Board of Marine Deck Officers or Marine Engineer Officers.

3. STCW CONVENTION – the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers, 1978 (STCW), as amended.
4. STCW CODE – the Seafarer's Training, Certification and Watchkeeping (STCW) Code as adopted by the 1995 Conference Resolution 2.
5. QUALITY STANDARDS SYSTEM – refers to a system that is able to manage and control all necessary activities and information through a set of documented procedures. It consists of an organizational structure, responsibilities, quality policy manual and procedures, quality records, processes and resources needed to implement quality management to meet the quality objectives.
6. POLICY STATEMENT – is the formal statement expressed by the top management of the Commission as to its aims, objectives and commitment in setting up guidelines for action to be taken by its personnel to reach its quality objectives toward satisfying national and international regulatory requirements.
7. DOCUMENT – a paper or any form of software that provides policy, guidance, or information for the establishment of facts, evidence or proof.
8. RECORD – is any written facts obtained from an observation or an event. In quality assurance, a record is normally a chart, a form, or a document which furnishes objective evidence of activities performed or results achieved.
9. PROCEDURE – the detailed work flows for each of the appropriate elements of the Quality Standards System.
10. SELF-EVALUATION – a self-check performed by the management of the Commission, through the Quality Assurance Representative, to evaluate its performance at the various levels and meeting its objective in complying with the requirements and standards of the 1978 STCW Convention, as amended.
11. INTERNAL QUALITY AUDIT – an audit conducted by the Maritime Industry Authority (MARINA) from the pool of auditors from the different government agencies performing maritime related functions and activities, except the agency being audited, who shall be responsible for evaluating as to whether or not the QSS is being implemented and to make any recommendation for improvement.
12. INDEPENDENT EVALUATION – is an external audit conducted by persons who do not belong to the government agencies performing maritime related functions and activities on the quality standards system of the Administration and examining the system that



controls the activities on the training and education of seafarers, certification, revalidation and endorsement of certificates, in compliance with paragraph 2, regulation 1/8 of the 1978 STCW Convention, as amended, and section A-1/8 of the STCW Code.

13. **NON-CONFORMITY** – an observed situation where objective evidence indicate the non-fulfillment of a specified requirement or standard.
14. **CORRECTIVE ACTION** – a remedy taken to eliminate the cause of an existing non-conformity, defect or other undesirable situation.
15. **PREVENTIVE ACTION** – an activity being done in order to avoid recurrence of an existing non-conformity, defect or other undesirable situation.
16. **DECK OFFICER** – a duly registered and licensed Master Mariner, Chief Mate, Officer-in-Charge of a Navigational Watch, Major Patron and Minor Patron.
17. **ENGINEER OFFICER**- a duly registered and licensed Chief Engineer Officer, Second Engineer Officer and Officer-in-Charge of an Engineering Watch in a manned engine-room or designated duty engineer in a periodically unmanned engine-room.
18. **MANAGEMENT LEVEL** – the level of responsibility associated with serving as Master or Chief Mate/Chief Engineer Officer or Second Engineer Officer on board a seagoing ship and ensuring that all functions within the designated area of responsibility are properly performed.
19. **OPERATIONAL LEVEL** - the level of responsibility associated with serving as officer-in-charge of a navigational or engineering watch, and maintaining direct control over the performance of all functions within the designated area of responsibility in accordance with proper procedures and under the direction and supervision of a marine deck/engineer officer serving in management level for that area of responsibility.
20. **CERTIFICATE OF REGISTRATION** - a document issued to a marine deck/engineer officer after passing the required licensure examination and upon compliance with all the requirements prescribed by the Board and the Commission.
21. **CERTIFICATE OF COMPETENCY** - a Certificate issued and endorsed for deck officers/engineer officers, officers and GMDSS radio operators in accordance with the provisions of chapters II, III, IV or VII of the annex to the STCW Convention and entitling the lawful holder thereof to serve in the capacity and perform the functions involved at the level of responsibility specified therein.

22. ENDORSEMENT CERTIFICATE – a document issued by the Commission attesting the issue of a Certificate of Competency to a marine deck/engineer officer or the recognition of a Certificate issued by other flag states in compliance with the standards of the STCW Convention.
23. STCW CERTIFICATE - a Certificate issued in accordance with all applicable requirements of the STCW Convention and Code.
24. LICENSURE EXAMINATION FOR MARINE DECK/ENGINEER OFFICERS- the licensure examination given by the Board which is composed of the theoretical phase and the practical assessment phase.
25. ADMINISTRATION – the Government of the Party in whose flag the ship is entitled to fly.
26. REGULATIONS - Regulations contained in the Annex to the STCW Convention, as amended.

## VIII. POLICY

To ensure the integrity and credibility of the Marine Deck and Engineer officers' licensure examinations, with the objective that only competent and qualified marine officers who are physically and morally fit shall be duly licensure and certificated.

## IX. PROCEDURES

The detailed procedures and workflows for each of the appropriate elements of the QSS are contained in the Quality Procedures Manual.

The Quality Standards System procedures shall contain but shall not limited to the following :

- Objective
- Scope
- Responsibilities
- Procedure/Work flow/Flow chart
- Reference/Documents/Records

### Section 1. Self-Evaluation

1. The self-evaluation provides a reference base for the conduct of the Internal Quality Audit and the subsequent independent evaluation.



2. Self-evaluation is aimed to monitor how the organization is performing and ensuring that the various levels of management are achieving their objectives.
3. Self-evaluation shall be carried out by personnel who are familiar with the activities being evaluated and have an understanding of audit techniques but not involved in the activities concerned.
4. Elements to consider in self-evaluation:
  - Measurable objectives
  - procedures to be followed
  - records to be kept
  - staff training
  - quality control
  - management review
  - corrective and preventive actions
  - opportunities for improvement
5. Checklist. A checklist should be employed to focus attention on the critical stages of the organizational structure, procedures and processes.
6. Self-evaluation Report. At the end of the self-evaluation, a report should be prepared for the purpose of:
  - analyzing and commenting candidly on the effectiveness of the systems and procedures in use
  - discussing the results with staff responsible for the area evaluated
  - making proposals to remedy any perceived weaknesses
  - identifying any follow-up action required to revise procedures as necessary.
7. Follow up Action. The key issues to be identified in the reporting and follow-up of the findings are:
  - areas where the documented procedures and processes are working effectively.
  - evidence of non-compliance and deficiencies and possible reasons for this
  - effective corrective action together with completion date and monitoring arrangement.
  - implementation and effectiveness of corrective actions suggested in previous evaluation.
8. Self-evaluation shall be conducted at least once a year.

## **Section 2. Internal Quality Audit (IQA)**

The IQA is the second level of audit conducted by the MARINA through the pool of auditors from the different government agencies performing maritime related functions and activities, except the agency being audited, which shall be viewed as the independent evaluation of the Philippines' National Quality Standards System. They shall be guided by some elements in the Self-Evaluation.

## **Section 3. Independent Evaluation**

The independent evaluation is, in effect, an external review by experts selected according to the nature of operation. Auditors should have extensive knowledge of quality audit practices in maritime administration and be aware of the strength and weaknesses which maybe encountered within the system.

- The independent evaluation shall examine the system that controls the activities of the Administration on the education and training, assessment, issuance, endorsement and revalidation of certificates.
- Notwithstanding the provisions of paragraph 3 of Section A-I/8 of the STCW Code, an independent evaluation of the knowledge, understanding, skills and competence acquisition and assessment activities in the certification system shall be conducted at intervals of four (4) years in order to verify that:
  1. All internal arrangement control and monitoring measures and follow-up actions comply with planned arrangements and documented procedures and are effective in ensuring achievement of the defined objectives;
  2. The results of each independent evaluation are documented and brought to the attention of those responsible for the area evaluated; and
  3. Timely action is taken to correct deficiencies.
  4. The Evaluation Report. After carrying out the independent evaluation, the evaluation team shall conduct a post evaluation conference with the management of each of the agency being evaluated, and thereafter shall submit the final report to the Administration, which should:
    1. include brief background information about the institution and its program;



2. be full, fair and accurate;
3. highlight the strengths and weaknesses in implementing the National Quality Standards System;
4. describe the evaluation procedure followed;
5. cover the key elements specified in section 5.
6. indicate the extent of compliance or non-compliance with the requirements of the Convention and the effectiveness of the quality standards in ensuring achievement of defined aims and objectives; and
7. spell out clearly the areas found deficient, offer suggestions for improvement and provide any other comments the evaluators consider relevant.

#### TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR INDEPENDENT EVALUATOR/S

When conducting an independent evaluation, pursuant to Regulations I/7 and I/8 of the Convention and sections A-I/7 and A-I/8, and the guidance provided in sections B-I/7 and B-I/8 of the Code, as amended, the following shall be taken into account:

1. Quality assurance and audit functions of: the administration of training, assessment of competence, certification including issue of certificates of competency, medical certificates, endorsements and revalidation of certificates;
2. Administrative responsibilities for arrangements for internal audits and management reviews;
3. The level of knowledge, understanding and skills appropriate to examinations and assessments required for each certificate are identified;
4. Education and training objectives and related standards of competence are clearly defined;
5. Procedures followed to authorize, accredit or approve training courses, medical fitness, and competency assessment pursuant to the provisions prescribed in the Convention and Code, as amended; and
6. Implementation of mandatory amendments to the Convention and Code which entered into force after the previous independent evaluation.

Standards, specification and legislation relevant to the above activities:

1. International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (STCW) 1978, as amended;
2. Seafarers' Training, Certification and Watchkeeping Code, as amended;

3. National laws, regulations and administrative guidance related to the implementation of the Convention; and
4. Quality Standards System of the country, as appropriate.

#### **X. REPEALING CLAUSE**

Any issuance, or parts thereof, which are inconsistent with any of the provision of this memorandum circular is hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

#### **XI. SEPARABILITY CLAUSE**

If any provision of this memorandum circular is declared invalid or unconstitutional, the other provisions not affected thereby shall remain valid and subsisting.

#### **XII. EFFECTIVITY**

This Memorandum Circular shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its complete publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of nationwide circulation, whichever is earlier.

Let a copy of this Memorandum Circular be furnished the U.P. Law Center.

#### **BOARD FOR MARINE DECK OFFICERS**

  
**CAPT. JAIME D. AQUINO**  
Chairman

#### **BOARD FOR MARINE ENGINEER OFFICERS**

  
**CHIEF ENGINEER MIGUEL O. MARASIGAN**  
Vice-Chairman  
Officer-in-Charge

**APPROVED:**

#### **PROFESSIONAL REGULATION COMMISSION**

  
**TERESITA R. MANZALA**  
Chairperson