



South African Maritime Safety Authority

Ref: SM6/5/2/1

Date: 21 September 2011

Marine Notice No. 21 of 2011

Alerting all SAMSA approved Medical Practitioners to pending changes to the Merchant Shipping (Eyesight and Medical Examination) Regulations, 2004.

TO SAMSA EXAMINERS, PRINCIPAL OFFICERS, SAMSA APPROVED MEDICAL PRACTITIONERS, SHIP OPERATORS AND OWNERS AND SEAFARERS

Summary

SAMSA hereby presents preliminary notice of amendments to the Merchant Shipping (Eyesight and Medical Examination) Regulations 2004, due to be amended in accordance with the provisions of the STCW Code. These provisions take effect from 1 January 2012 and are applicable to all Seafarers as set out in Article III and according to Regulation I/9 of the STCW Convention '78 as amended.

1. Application

In terms of Regulation I/9 of the STCW Convention 1978 as amended,

“Each Party shall establish standards of medical fitness for seafarers and procedures for the issue of a medical certificate in accordance with the provisions of this regulation and of Section A- I/9 of the STCW Code.”

Article III of the STCW Convention '78 as amended states:

The *Convention shall apply to seafarers* serving on board seagoing ships entitled to fly the flag of a Party except to those serving on board:

- a) Warships, naval auxiliaries or other ships owned or operated by a State and engaged only on governmental non-commercial service;
- b) fishing vessels;
- c) pleasure yachts not engaged in trade; or
- d) wooden ships of primitive build

2. Background to proposed changes

As a result of the Amendments to the STCW Convention and Code which enter into force on 1 January 2012, considerable changes to the Merchant Shipping (Eyesight and Medical Examination) Regulations 2004 have become necessary.

3. Proposed changes.

- a) There will be changes to the process followed in the appointment of Medical Practitioners
- b) There will be changes to the requirements to be met before an appointment as an approved Medical Practitioner is made, with particular emphasis on knowledge of the working environment of seafarers.
- c) There will be changes brought about to improve record keeping, both in terms of the clinical details of the medical examination and in terms of maintaining records of the results of the medical examination

- d) There will be changes to the standards to be met by seafarers before a declaration on their medical fitness can be made.
- e) There will be additional information made available via a Marine Notice, in the near future.

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