



# South African Maritime Safety Authority

Ref: SM6/5/2/1

Date: 10 December 2014

## Marine Notice No. 34 of 2014

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### Recognition of Existing Seafarers for Electro – Technical Officers (ETO) Certificate of Competency (CoC)

TO SAMSA EXAMINERS, PRINCIPAL OFFICERS, MARITIME EDUCATION & TRAINING PROVIDERS,  
SHIP OWNERS & OPERATORS AND SEAFARERS

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#### *Summary*

The Merchant Shipping (Safe Manning, Training and Certification) Regulations, 2013 (the Regulations) provides for the issuing of a Certificate of Competency for ETO's. The Regulations covers those candidates who start their training or sea service on or after the promulgation of the Regulations. Those candidates serving in similar positions are not recognised in the regulations and as such, are left to follow the same route as those starting. This Marine Notice addresses the recognition of those seafarers with relevant service prior promulgation of the Regulations.

#### **Introduction**

- (1) The position of the electricians or electronics officer was not a legal (as per minimum safe manning) requirement and thus no international certification was issued to them. Some of them were employed because they had degrees, diplomas, and trade certificates in electronics, electrical engineering or just experience.
- (2) With electrics and electronics continuing to be part of the ships equipment and affecting safety sensitive operations of the ship such as navigation and propulsion, it has become more and more important to have a formal qualification recognised internationally.
- (3) In 2010, at the conference in Manila, the IMO resolved to introduce international requirements for persons working onboard ships dealing with electronics. This resolution introduced two certificates with special attention to electronics, vis;
  - (a) Electro-technical officers (ETO); and
  - (b) Electro-technical ratings (ETR).
- (4) The resolution covered the requirements for those who wish to qualify as ETO or ETR as well as recognising that there are those who are serving onboard ships in relevant positions. When the Regulation were drafted, there was an omission to recognise those already serving in relevant positions. This Marine Notice seeks to address this omission and chart a way forward for the seafarers who have served in relevant positions.

#### **Application**

- (5) The provisions of this Marine Notice is applicable to South African seafarers with relevant qualifications and supporting information having been attained from a South African training institution. Ancillary courses must be obtained from a training institution accredited by SAMSA.

- (6) Foreign seafarers who have permanent residency (prior 01 January 2012) in South Africa may apply as per item 5 above. Their applications need to be supported by documentation from the Department of Home Affairs and their qualifications adopted by the South African Qualifications Authority.
- (7) This Marine Notice applies to persons who have served in the following capacities onboard a ship;
  - (a) Electronics officers; and
  - (b) Electricians.

### **Recognition of Existing Seafarers**

- (8) The International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping (STCW) for Seafarers (the Convention) allows the administration to recognise existing seafarers. In *Chapter III – Engine Department, Regulation III/6<sup>1</sup>* of the Convention, it states;

#### Quote

3. *Every party shall compare the standard of competence which it required of the electro-technical officers for certificates issued before 1 January 2012 with those for the certificate in section A-III/6 of the STCW Code, and shall determine the need for requiring those personnel to update their qualifications.*
4. *Seafarers may be considered by the party to have met the requirements of this regulation if they have served in a relevant capacity on board a ship for a period of not less than 12 months within the last 60 months preceding the entry into force of this regulation for that party and meet the standard of competence specified in section A-III/6 of the STCW Code*

#### Unquote

### **Application of the Recognition Provisions**

- (9) Paragraph 3 as quoted above is not applicable to the South African seafarers as no certificate of competency was available prior the introduction of the Regulations.
- (10) Paragraph 4 of the Convention is thus interpreted for the South African case as follows;  
*“...if they have served in a relevant capacity on board a ship for a period of not less than 12 months within the last 60 months preceding the entry into force...”*  
South Africa, citing the above part of the Convention, thus recognises that seafarers who have served as ETO's, electricians or in a 'relevant capacity' on board ships of 750kW propulsion power prior 01 January 2012 to meet this requirement. Seafarers applying for this will need to produce 12 months sea service on vessels such vessels with a detailed testimonials as to their responsibilities during that time. The testimonial shall specify the type of electronics generally applicable to their duties, e.g. GMDSS Maintenance, Cargo Systems, Electrical Wiring, etc.  
*“...meet the standard of competence specified in section A-III/6 of the STCW Code...”*
- (11) For a candidate who is attempting to qualify for the CoC as ETO/ETR, the following methods of assessment are adopted for their recognition
  - (a) Candidates with qualifications in electrical engineering from a South African University, University of Technology (Technikon), or in a form of a trade certificate are recognised as having met all the assessment requirements. Candidates are required to produce a transcript of their results having achieved a pass and a copy of their final Certificate, Degree or Diploma. The candidate will then be assessed at level 3. If this candidate is found Not Yet Competent in the examinations, the examiner will require that the candidate undergoes one of the following;
    - i. A minimum of three months sea service where a training record book is to be completed by onboard management; and
    - ii. Training on the relevant parts where the candidate was found to be weak.

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<sup>1</sup> Applicable to Regulation III/7 for ratings. Exact wording applies in the case of ratings and the interpretation is common.

- (b) Candidates for the certificate who qualify under paragraph (7) above but do not have evidence as per sub-paragraph (a) are required to provide the following;
  - i. A Training Record Book completed onboard by the Management level Engineers over a period of at least 3 month sea service in addition to that service in (7) above.
  - ii. An endorsement from the employer attesting to the abilities of the candidate to carry out functions outlined for the ETO.
  - iii. Undergoes level 3 assessment by SAMSA examiners in accordance with the SAMSA Code.
- (c) A candidate who has been found not yet competent in 3 attempts will be required to comply with the provisions of Regulations 52 or 65. The examiner will transmit, to the senior and chief examiner, the results of such attempt as quickly as possible.

(12) SAMSA will soon be publishing the guidelines for the oral examinations for the ETO.

#### **Application and Administration Process**

- (13) Candidate seeking Certificates as ETO/ETR should apply at any SAMSA office, such applications should be forwarded to the nearest office with a senior/lead examiner Engine. The same form as used for other CoC or CoP should be used. The following fees should be applicable
  - (a) ETO – Charge 38(1)(a), i.e. R 1895 – 00
  - (b) ETR – Charge 42(1), i.e. R 370 – 00
- (14) Upon assessment of application and the candidate being found to meet all the requirements for the relevant Certificate, an interim certificate may be issued in line with Regulation 10(3) of the Regulations.
- (15) SAMSA will commence accepting applications from candidates under this policy from 19 January 2015. The level 3 assessment will be incorporated into the engineering examination as from March 2016
- (16) No applications under this Marine Notice will be accepted after 31 December 2016.

**10 December 2014**

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