



South African Maritime Safety Authority

Ref. SM 6/5/2/1
SM 14/2/7/1
SM 9/2/2

Date: 16 September 2020

Marine Notice No. 46 of 2020

Conduct of Eyesight Tests during the COVID-19 Lockdown

TO ALL SEAFARERS, SAMSA EXAMINERS AND SHIP OPERATORS

Summary

To provide for the conduct of Seafarers' Eyesight Examinations to be conducted by Optometrists or Ophthalmologists registered with the Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA) and to provide for matters related thereto

Introduction

1. The Merchant Shipping (Eyesight and Medical Examinations) Regulations, 2004, as amended, requires that Eyesight Tests be conducted by an Eyesight Examiner designated by the South African Maritime Safety Authority (SAMSA), such persons must, "...in the Authority's opinion, is qualified."
2. Measures to combat the spread of COVID-19 requires that all persons observe Social Distancing at all times.
3. SAMSA, in its risk adjusted strategy for operations, resumes all operations at level 2 of lockdown, provided that it is safe to do so.
4. Seafarer applications for Revalidation/Issue of Certificates and Level 3 Assessments (Orals) requires that Seafarers hold a valid Colour Form and Vision Test Certificate, usually conducted at SAMSA offices by SAMSA officials.

Guidance

5. The following SAMSA Offices are able to conduct the Eyesight Test (this may be amended from time-to-time) during Level 2, or lower, of the Lockdown;
 - 5.1. Cape Town
 - 5.2. Port Elizabeth
 - 5.3. East London
 - 5.4. Port Nolloth
 - 5.5. Richards Bay

6. Candidates within the proximity of the offices listed above shall have their eyesight tests conducted at these offices. [See Marine Notice 41 of 2020 - SAMSA Services Available at National Risk Level 2]. Arrangements shall be made with the appropriate offices in accordance with the said Marine Notice.
7. To ensure continued provision of services to seafarers, particularly issuing, revalidation and assessments for certification, SAMSA has, under Section 4 of the Merchant Shipping Act, 1951, as amended, granted an exemption to all seafarers to hold a valid Colour Form and Vision Test Certificate issued by SAMSA under the following conditions:
 - 7.1. Prior approval is obtained from each Port Office listed in paragraph 5 above that an eyesight test may be conducted by a suitably qualified Optometrist or Ophthalmologists who is registered with the with the HPCSA, providing the reasons for such request to the Principal Officer;
 - 7.2. They hold an eyesight test Certificate issued by a Suitably Qualified Optometrist or Ophthalmologists who is Registered with the HPCSA;
 - 7.3. The Certificate shall be in the form attached to this Marine Notice. Where an alternative form is used, it shall contain all the information required contained in the attached form; and
 - 7.4. The Colour Form and Vision Test results shall be based on the standard set out in the Annex.

Procedure

8. The candidate (seafarer) shall print this Marine Notice and Annexures and provide it to the Optometrist or Ophthalmologist before being tested. All pages of the Annex form part of the certificate and the person conducting the assessment shall initial each page.
9. When arranging for the eyesight test, the seafarer must confirm that the Optometrist or Ophthalmologists will be able to conduct the colour blindness tests using the Ishihara Plates as a primary method.
10. All three pages of the certificate shall be submitted to SAMSA when lodging an application for certification.
11. A copy of this Marine Notice is available free of charge from SAMSA offices.

Conclusion

12. The withdrawal of this Marine Notice will constitute the cancellation of the Exemption granted herein.
13. Enquiries may be directed to the Office of the Chief Examiner via e-mail to exams@samsa.org.za

16 September 2020

SM 6/5/2/1
SM 14/2/7/1
SM 9/2/2

Issued by and obtainable from:
The South African Maritime Safety Authority
146 Lunnon Road
Hillcrest, Pretoria 0083

PO Box 13186
Hatfield 0028

Tel: +27 12 366 2600
Fax: +27 12 366 2601
E-mail: marinenotices@samsa.org.za
Web Site: www.samsa.org.za