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Coast Guard Begins Audits of Approved Courses

In February 2009, the National Maritime Center (NMC) officially began its Course Oversight and Auditing Program (COAP) focusing on U.S. Coast Guard approved merchant mariner training courses throughout the continental United States, Alaska, Hawaii and Guam. There are over 2,200 Coast Guard approved training courses offered at some 286 locations nationwide and several distance learning courses online. Our COAP teams have already audited several Merchant Mariner Schools with great success, so you may visited soon.

The goal of the COAP is to ensure persons and agencies offering U.S. Coast Guard approved training are performing their duties in a manner that meets all applicable regulatory and policy standards.

COAP operations are conducted through announced or un-announced visits and audits by NMC and the 17 Regional Examination Centers (REC). Every approved Merchant Mariner School can expect an announced administrative visit at least once per year and an announced audit every five years. We will also be conducting unannounced audits. Some schools, depending on the number of courses offered, will be visited more frequently. Before an announced visit or audit, each Merchant Mariner School will receive a Pre-Audit Notification Letter. The preferred method of delivery for the letter will be electronically via e-mail. Included in the letter will be a Pre-Audit Checklist to assist the schools and the COAP teams in preparing for the audit.

The Pre-Audit Checklist can be viewed by clicking on the following URL: http://www.uscg.mil/nmc/training/announcements/pre_audit_checklist.pdf. Voluntary submittal of the checklist to the NMC COAP or REC COAP within 5 days prior to the commencement of the audit will significantly reduce the audit or visit time.

For additional information, please contact the Course Oversight Branch at NMCCOAP@USCG.MIL, or 1-888-IASKNMC.

Sincerely,

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