

USCG NATIONAL MARITIME CENTER MARINER CREDENTIALING PROGRAM FACT SHEET FOR COAST GUARD SECTORS

June 2010

ABOUT US

The National Maritime Center (NMC) is the mariner credentialing authority for the United States Coast Guard. Our mission is to issue credentials to fully-qualified mariners in the most effective and efficient manner possible in order to assure a safe, secure, economically efficient and environmentally sound Marine Transportation System.

The NMC Headquarters is located in Martinsburg, West Virginia, and is supported by 17 Regional Examination Centers (RECs) and 3 Monitoring Units located within the continental U.S. as well as Alaska, Hawaii, Guam and Puerto Rico. A complete list can be found at www.uscg.mil/nmc.

CUSTOMERS

Who are the customers of the Mariner Credentialing Program (MCP)?

- Over 216,000 U.S. Mariners
- Over 260 Training Organizations
- 7 Maritime Academies
- Marine Industry Trade Associations (AWO, PVA, OMSA, etc.)
- Maritime Unions
- Licensing Consultants / Brokers
- Flag State / Port State Control Inspectors

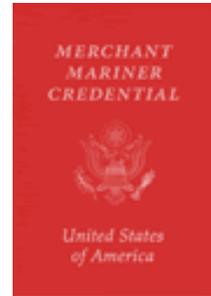
CREDENTIALS

What type of credentials are issued to mariners?

Historically, the Coast Guard issued separate credentials, including:

- License (Officers)
- Merchant Mariner Document (Crew)
- Certificate of Registry (Staff Officers)
- STCW Certificate (International)

Beginning April 2009, the Coast Guard began issuing consolidated passport-style Merchant Mariner Credentials (MMC), shown to the right. In 2014, all legacy credentials, listed above, will be invalid and all mariners will have the MMC.



How many credentials are produced annually?

- Approximately 72,000 credentials

How do I know if a U.S. Merchant Mariner Credential is valid?

- Examine the credential for expiration dates
- Valid for 5 years from the date of issuance
- Endorsements for routes
- Check Merchant Mariner Credential Verification on Homeport - <http://homeport.uscg.mil/mmcv>
- Send email to NMC call center at iasknmc@uscg.mil
- Call the NMC call center – 1-888-IASKNMC (1-888-427-5662)

How can a mariner check the status of their credential application?

- Check Merchant Mariner Credential Verification on Homeport - <http://homeport.uscg.mil/mmcv>
- Send email to NMC call center at iasknmc@uscg.mil
- Call the NMC call center – 1-888-IASKNMC (1-888-427-5662)

Will mariners be able to submit credential applications on line?

- Yes, the Coast Guard is developing an electronic application system called Merchant Mariner Security Electronic Application System (MM-SEAS).
- MM-SEAS will be the “turbo-tax” for mariners. Read the article on the future of the Mariner Credentialing Program on our website at http://www.uscg.mil/nmc/Whats_new_to_NMC/MMC_Program_Future_State_Story.pdf
- NMC is planning to have this capability in place by 2012.

TRAINING ORGANIZATIONS AND MARITIME ACADEMIES

What are the types of courses approved by the Coast Guard?

- To meet a regulatory requirement
- As a substitute for a USCG license exam
- As a substitute for a portion of the sea services required for a credential

Are these courses audited?

- Yes, audits are conducted by the NMC-23 Course Oversight Branch. Administrative visits are conducted by local REC personnel on an annual basis.

What do I do if I receive a complaint about a Coast Guard approved training course?

- Contact the NMC call center at 1-888-IASKNMC (1-888-427-5662)
- Send email to NMC-23 Course Oversight Branch, NMCCOAP@uscg.mil
- Call the NMC-23 Course Oversight Branch (NMC-23) at 1-304-433-3705

CENTRALIZATION OF THE MARINER CREDENTIALING PROGRAM

What is now centralized at the National Maritime Center?

- The *evaluation of mariner credential applications* is now conducted at the NMC rather than at the 17 Regional Exam Centers.
- All *mariner credentials are being printed and issued* from the NMC rather than from the 17 Regional Exam Centers.

What is the role of the Regional Exam Centers?

The Regional Exam Centers perform three primary functions:

- *Assist mariners* with submitting credential applications
- *Proctor exams* for mariners
- *Audit courses* for approved training

What is the role of the Sector Commander / OCMI under centralization?

The Sector Commanders are still responsible for determining requirements for certain credential endorsements, including:

- First Class Pilotage
 - Description of Pilotage route
 - Local knowledge exam
 - Route familiarization requirements
- Limited / Restricted Credentials for Operator of Uninspected Passenger Vessel
 - Description of limited route / operation
 - Local knowledge requirements

What are the benefits of centralization?

The primary goals of centralization are:

- *Decreased* Processing Time
- *Improved* Consistency of Service
- *Improved* Customer Service

[Monthly performance reports](#) are available on NMC's website.

How do mariners apply for a credential?

- 1) Visit the NMC website at www.uscg.mil/nmc to gather information on submission requirements.
- 2) Obtain a Transportation Worker Identification Credential (TWIC). To enroll, mariners can visit www.tsa.gov/twic. Mariners now have their identity verified and their fingerprints taken at a TWIC Enrollment Center.
- 3) Mariner submits a complete application to the nearest REC.
- 4) REC will check to ensure application is “ready for evaluation” and forward it to the NMC.
- 5) NMC will conduct a three-part evaluation: safety/suitability, medical and professional qualifications.
- 6) If qualified, NMC will notify the mariner and REC that they are “approved to test” (if needed). If not qualified, the mariner will be notified by the NMC denying their application.
- 7) Mariner will take any necessary tests at the REC.
- 8) Once mariner passes tests (if needed), NMC will print and issue the credential(s) directly to the mariner.

Centralization is working

- Credential processing time has been dramatically reduced.
- Mariners now have access to real time information about the status of their application through automated application status emails, through the NMC’s Customer Service Center, and through “[Merchant Mariner Application Status](#)” tracking on Homeport.
- Customer feedback indicates almost 90% of mariners are satisfied with the service they are receiving under centralized operations.

How you can help us

When speaking with trade groups or other MCP customer groups use the opportunity to stress any / all of the following

- Encourage mariners to visit the NMC’s website for information on application requirements. Provide mariners with a copy of the “[Ready for Evaluation](#)” [checklist](#).
- Stress the importance of submitting a complete application to avoid processing delays.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Visit NMC’s website

For additional information, visit the NMC’s website at www.uscg.mil/nmc.