

# MARINE SAFETY MANUAL

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# MARINE SAFETY MANUAL

## CHAPTER 15: DOCUMENTING U.S. MERCHANT MARINERS

### A. General Provisions.

#### 1. Authority.

A merchant mariner's document (MMD) issued by an Officer in Charge, Marine Inspection (OCMI) in accordance with 46 U.S.C. 7302 is required aboard those U.S. merchant vessels specified in 46 U.S.C. 8701. These vessels include those at anchor, docked, and loading or unloading passengers or cargo, but not those laid up, dismantled, or out of commission.

#### 2. Seamen's Records.

Records of merchant mariners and vessels have been maintained by the Commandant since 1937. Only those records reflecting activities within the five preceding years are kept at Headquarters; all others are stored at the Federal Records Center in Suitland, MD. Records of merchant mariners who became inactive prior to 1937 are available from the, Judicial, Fiscal and Social Branch, National Archives, Washington, D.C. 20408.

#### 3. Merchant Mariner's Documents (MMDs).

MMD Form CG-2838 replaces previously-issued Certificates of Identification, Certificates of Service, and Certificates of Efficiency. These certificates, no longer acceptable for employment, may be exchanged for current MMDs bearing corresponding endorsements. [NOTE: Holders of able seaman and lifeboatman certificates issued prior to 25 June 1936 must now be treated as original applicants.] An MMD is subject to suspension and revocation (S&R) under 46 U.S.C. 7701 on the same grounds and in the same manner as licenses of officers and Certificates of Registry. An MMD issued to a licensed officer is a certificate of service authorizing the officer to serve in unlicensed capacities, in the department in which licensed (see 46 CFR 12.02-11(c)).

#### 4. Appeals.

Any applicant adversely affected by a decision of or action by the OCMI shall be advised of the appeal procedures contained in 46 CFR 12.02-25.

### B. Types Of Transactions.

#### 1. Original Applications.

The new application form shall be used by all applicants for an original MMD.

#### 2. Supplemental Applications.

The new application form shall be used:

- a. When applications are made for qualified ratings requiring evidence of experience or training (see Section 15.E.1 below);
- b. When the seaman's name has been changed (see section 15.F);
- c. When correcting the date and/or place of birth, or describing the evidence establishing citizenship subsequent to issuance of the original document; or

d. When application is made to remove a previously imposed vessel restriction. The applicant's service record, evidence of birth or citizenship, and identification of the surrendered document should be noted on this application. However, such applications should be coordinated with the OCMI responsible for placing the original restriction to determine all fulfilling requirements. Applicants shall be required to document all required service.

3. Additional Endorsements, Exchange, And Replacement Of Documents.

The new application form shall be used by applicants for exchanging and replacing documents, and requesting certain additional endorsements, as follows:

- a. For additional endorsements not requiring proof of sea service or training (see section E of this chapter);
- b. To report the exchange of Continuous Discharge Books (CDBs) for MMDs or vice versa (see section L of this chapter);
- c. For the exchange of MMDs bearing "Z" or "Bk" numbers; and
- d. To report the replacement of mutilated documents (see section 15.K.2).

4. Duplicate Documents.

The new application form shall be used to apply for duplicate MMDs, Continuous Discharge Books (CDBs), and Certificates of Discharge (record of service), (see section 15.K.1), and to request a continuation of a CDB (see section 15.L.3).

5. Renewal Of Documents.

- a. The renewed MMD will be issued for a period of five years from the date of the original application. Mariners who hold a license and an MMD should be encouraged to renew the MMD at the time of license renewal to allow for concurrent renewal dates.
- b. Original and supplemental, MMDs will be issued for a period of five years.
- c. On the application, the word renewal should be shown in the type of transaction section. The expiration date shall be noted in section VIII.

C. Application For An Original MMD.

1. Required Documentation.

No evidence of service is required to obtain entry ratings. The applicant must present proof of a drug test, a social security card, and proof of legal entry into the United States. Evidence of service must be presented to establish an individual's qualifications for qualified ratings. Service on U.S. flag merchant vessels will be documented by certificates of discharge or letters from the employer. Evidence of service aboard foreign merchant marine and military vessels is also acceptable, however, local evaluations shall be made to determine the equivalency of such service to that obtained aboard U.S. merchant vessels. For military service, documentation shall be a Transcript of Sea Service from the U.S. Navy, Coast Guard, or Army Transportation Corps, or equivalent documentation providing vessel information, capacity served, and dates aboard each vessel.

Applicants who have been disenrolled from a federal, state, or Great Lakes maritime

academy or another Coast Guard approved maritime training center who present evidence of sea service during their training may receive up to six months' credit towards a qualified rating in the department in which the service was obtained. They must present a transcript from the school verifying completion of at least one semester and the amount of sea service obtained.

When the OCMI has issued an MMD to a cadet prior to completion of the lifeboatman requirements, a letter of qualification as lifeboatman may be issued in lieu of an endorsement to the MMD. This letter shall state that the cadet is a qualified lifeboatman and may fill the lifeboatman billets required aboard on the school ship by the COI. If a cadet is disenrolled from the school prior to graduation, but has qualified as a lifeboatman, an MMD for entry ratings may be issued with the lifeboatman endorsement; a letter of commitment from an employer is not required.

2. Required Information.

a. Name.

The applicant's name, as shown on a birth, baptismal, or naturalization certificate, must appear in full. It is common practice for a child to be known by a nickname or derivative of the legal name; as adults, these names tend to stick and few individuals seek court orders to adopt such names. When the name by which the applicant is known is different from that appearing on the documentation of citizenship, certified copies of a court order or other official document such as a marriage license, effecting a change of name must be presented and submitted to the National Maritime Center (NMC-4A) with the new application form. Without a court order, the name on the documentation of citizenship must be used.

b. Address.

A permanent address should be listed rather than a temporary local address. If the applicant's permanent address is outside the U.S., the applicant should furnish the name and address of a U.S. facility, such as an embassy. Such information should be entered in the space entitled "Record of Qualifying Service."

c. Minimum Age Requirements.

No MMD shall be issued to an applicant under 16 years of age. An applicant between 16 and 18 who presents a notarized statement of parental or guardian's consent may be issued an MMD, unless the applicant is disqualified by a reason other than age. When applicable, a statement that such consent has been presented shall be made in the space entitled "Service Record." The notarized statement may be attached with the application.

d. Complexion.

An entry shall be made that best describes the hue or general color of the applicant's skin, e.g., fair, olive, ruddy, red, yellow, black, or brown. In the last two examples an adjective more closely describing tint may be prefixed: light, medium, or dark. In these instances abbreviations may be used, e.g., LT brown. A common misconception is the complexion description of a light skinned person of color; if applicable in such instances, "fair" may be used to describe complexion.

e. Digital Data Card System.

The "Digital Data Card System" (DDCS) has replaced the need for photographs. Photographs are taken at the REC by the DDCS camera that reproduces the image digitally for placement on the MMD. Photographs are stored in the DDCS system memory and may be reproduced at a later date if/when necessary. Photographs are now needed only when an applicant desires to apply for or renew an MMD by mail. In such cases, submitted photographs are "photographed" and digitally reproduced by and stored in the DDCS. If the applicant is applying by mail, he shall provide two (three, if the REC wants a picture in file) unmounted photos, 2 X 1.5 inches in size, taken within one year of the application. They must show the full face, at least one inch in height, measured from bottom of chin to normal hairline, with head uncovered. Color photographs are acceptable. Polaroid or other "instant" type photographs may be accepted if:

- (1) All photographs submitted do not contain any obvious differences;
- (2) The quality of the photograph is such that the image will remain identifiable for the life of the document; and
- (3) The background to the image on the photograph is plain, flat, and clearly defines the intended image.

f. Citizenship.

Applicants who claim to be citizens of the United States must present acceptable evidence of citizenship (see 46 CFR 12.02-13) at the time of filing the original application. Acceptable evidence of citizenship is listed in 46 CFR 10.205(c), in the order of desirability. [NOTE: 46 CFR 10.205(c), with the exception of paragraphs (c)(1)(ii) and (c)(1)(viii), applies to persons who are native-born; paragraphs (c)(1)(ii) and (c)(1)(viii) apply to naturalized persons.] As birth records have been maintained throughout the U.S. since 1919, affidavits of citizenship shall not be accepted unless an applicant presents evidence of an unsuccessful attempt to obtain a birth certificate. [NOTE: In such cases, affidavits shall be returned to applicants after notation on the application form that they were submitted and copies have been made.] Information in the citizenship section of the application must be (a) USA; (b) another country (specific country) and a resident alien; (c) another country (specific country) and a nonresident alien.

g. Drug Convictions.

If an applicant indicates drug use or conviction, other criminal convictions, or National Driver Register motor vehicle convictions, refer to Chapter 3 of this volume.

- h. License Or Certificate Record.  
Particular attention should be given to statements pertaining to the applicant's license or certificate record. Evasive statements on the application, such as "Never previously issued seamen's documents from this office," SHALL NOT be accepted. All previous MMD/license histories shall be listed. All actions under 46 U.S.C. 7701, including voluntary surrenders, shall be indicated. If the application contains a "Yes" answer regarding suspension, revocation, or voluntary surrender of a previously issued MMD, Commandant (G-MOA-2) shall be requested to provide detailed information in the matter.
- i. Record Of Qualifying Service.  
When a company letter is presented indicating qualifying service, the source, date, type, and amount of service should be entered in the space "Record of Qualifying Service" on the new application form. When the qualifying service is from Certificates of Discharge, indicate "Certificates of Discharge (or computer printout) indicating \_\_\_\_\_ days of service." There is no need to list each vessel and dates of service. When a Transcript of Sea Service is accepted, the respective spaces shall show branch of service, the names of the vessels, the ratings in which the applicant served, and the complete dates of such service or a certified copy of the Transcript of Sea Service shall be attached to the application form. An additional sheet shall be attached to the application when the information exceeds the allotted space on the form.
- j. Section V - Certification And Oath.  
This section shall be signed and dated by the applicant. The oath must be administered by authorized Coast Guard personnel. However, when completing a transaction by mail, the oath must be administered and verified by a certified notary public and signed by the applicant. RECs shall ensure that the oath is signed and properly witnessed.
- k. Preparation Of Fingerprint Records.  
To comply with FBI policy and procedures governing criminal history evaluations, the National Maritime Center (NMC-4A), requires that two classifiable Form FD-258 fingerprint cards be submitted for an original license and certificate of registry and with each application for an original Merchant Mariner's Document. The REC shall submit one card for an original license or certificate of registry and one card attached with one staple in the upper left corner with an application form for a MMD. The second card shall remain at the REC for use if the first card is unclassifiable. Only the two fingerprint cards need to be submitted when the applicant applies for a license and a Merchant Mariner's Document at the same time or within 6 months of a previous application. Particular attention must be given to obtaining legible prints. The majority of rejections are due to one or more fingers not being rolled fully, the charts being smeared as the finger is being removed from the chart, or use of too much or too little ink. Any fingerprint that is smudged or otherwise illegible will be rejected. In addition, the FBI's system will reject any card containing any discrepancy which may include a blank entry or even a middle initial inserted in the place of a full middle name. The Form FD-258 must have the proper ORI code number DCCG 00000, US COAST GUARD, WASH DC. A supply of

Form FD-258 with the proper code may be obtained by calling the National Maritime Center (NMC-4A).

(1) Applicant Fingerprint Form, FD-258.

To obtain the needed information for a criminal record check, compliance with the instructions on the back of Form FD-258 is essential. Personnel must ensure that the following information is provided.

- (a) Applicant's Name. (First, Middle, Last, Suffix)
- (b) Social Security Number.
- (c) Date of Birth.
- (d) Place of Birth.
- (e) REC Location. The space entitled "Employer and Address" should contain the name and address of the Regional Examination Center where the application is submitted.
- (f) Reason For Fingerprinting. The reason for fingerprinting (original license, license as radio officer, certificate of registry as staff officer or MMD) must be typed or legibly printed in the space designated "Reason Fingerprinted."
- (g) Race. The space for "Race" will be completed with one of the following abbreviations only:

American Indian (AI);	Alaskan Native (AN);
Asian (A);	Pacific Islander (PI);
Black (B);	Hispanic (H); or,
White (W).	

(2) Authenticity Of Information.

If for any reason you doubt the information provided by the applicant, the case shall be referred to the National Maritime Center (NMC-4A) for decision, with a letter stating the basis for doubt (including all pertinent details and justification).

(3) Radio Officers.

When an applicant has been approved for a license as radio officer and subsequently, within the five year renewal period, applies for an original MMD endorsed "See License as Radio Officer", a second set of fingerprints need not be obtained or submitted to the Commandant.

l. Caution Against Fraudulent Applications.

An application not completed truthfully should be considered fraudulent, and any license or MMD initially issued under such an application should be voided ab initio (as if never issued; see Commandant Decision on Appeal 2025). All applicants shall be advised of the penalties for making false statements on an application form (see 18 U.S.C. 1001). Failure of the applicant to answer questions on the application may cause considerable delay in processing and issuing the document, and the applicant shall be so informed. Items not applicable should be noted by "N/A" or "None," as appropriate. When a fraudulent application is discovered the applicant shall be notified that any initial document thereby issued is "null and void" and be directed to immediately return it to the OCMI. A document that has been re-issued based on a fraudulent application cannot be declared "null and void." In these cases the documented person must be charged and taken to a hearing. These cases shall be reported to the Senior Investigating Officer (SIO). See chapter 3 of this manual.

(1) Fraudulent MMD Returned.

If the MMD is returned it shall be canceled.

(2) Fraudulent MMD Not Returned.

If the applicant refuses to return the MMD after receiving notification, the applicant's file should be forwarded to the unit's SIO for further action. An investigating officer will then determine if the case warrants filing charges against the individual with the U.S. Attorney. The OCMI should develop a working relationship with the U.S. Attorney to determine what cases should be criminally pursued and what type of documentation should be submitted. The investigating officer should make every effort to recover the certificate regardless of whether criminal charges are pursued.

m. Drug Tests.

When drug tests are required at the time of the application, the applicant shall provide proof of a test within the previous six months or of being subject to a random drug testing program for at least 60 days within the previous 185 days. Tests must be conducted by laboratories certified by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMSA, HHS), an agency of the Department of Health and Human Services. See section 1.G.5. of this volume for more information on drug tests.

n. National Driver's Register (NDR) Authorization Forms.

46 U.S.C. 7505, requires all applicants for merchant mariner credentials to sign a consent form giving the Coast Guard the authority to obtain a check on the mariner from the National Driver Register (NDR). This form has been incorporated into the application (CG-719B) and RECs shall ensure section 9 is filled out on the application.

3. Additional Requirements For Aliens Seeking Original MMDs.

a. General Requirements.

In addition to meeting all other requirements for original MMD applications, each alien must furnish the information listed in the following paragraphs. Applications from aliens may be accepted and processed at the REC, and original documents issued, without prior Headquarters approval. An alien is a non-U.S. citizen by birth.

b. Evidence Of Legal Entry/SSN.

Alien applicants for original MMDs are required to present evidence of lawful admission to the United States for permanent residence or for employment. This evidence may be an alien registration card issued by the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) or a passport entry visa or notation. The evidence should be carefully examined and, when questionable, authenticity verified with INS authorities. As with all applicants, each alien must present a social security card. This requirement is to assign a seaman identification number and establish a computerized mariner's record. In instances where social security cards are stamped "Employment Not Authorized," as in the case of certain nonresident aliens, a document may still be issued. Possession of a merchant mariner's document is not an implied right to employment. Responsibility for employing nonresident aliens, as with other document holders, lies with the employer. Illegal employment is monitored by the Social Security Administration and the Immigration and Naturalization Service.

c. Special Entries On Application Forms.

The evidence of lawful admission to the United States shall be cited on the application in the citizenship section. When the applicant is being processed for permanent residency, an entry to this effect, with the appropriate registration number or passport citation, shall be made on the application.

d. Questionnaire for National Security Positions SF-86 (formally, Coast Guard Intelligence Agency Check Request, Form CG-2765).

Form SF-86, Questionnaire for National Security Positions, replaces the previous form CG-2765. The form SF-86 must be executed for all non-U.S. citizens born outside the U.S., attached to the application and fingerprint forms, and forwarded to Commanding Officer, National Maritime Center. The NMC will forward the completed SF-86 to Immigration and Naturalization Service for processing and verification of an alien's legal entry into the U.S. Form SF-86 is available on Form Filler. Paper copies may be ordered from regular supply sources.

The applicant must complete Parts 1-14 (page #s 1-5), and sign the bottom of page 9. In addition, page 10 (Authorization For Release Of Information), must also be completed and signed.

D. Temporary Certificate Of Identification, Form CG-2838(T).

Effective 15 November 1992, the Temporary Certificate of Identification, Form CG-2838(T) (TMMD), will not be issued for entry ratings. Applicants for an original MMD, shall be issued Form CG-2838 if they meet all the requirements, e.g., proof of service when needed, social security card, proof of citizenship or legal entry, drug tests, physicals and examinations where required.

1. When To Issue.

The Temporary Certificate of Identification, Form CG-2838(T), may be issued in the following situations:

- a. When a mariner has lost the U.S. Merchant Mariner's Document, needs to report for work within 48 hours, and the National Maritime Center (NMC-4A) cannot verify the ratings and duplicate number.
  - (1) The mariner must appear at the REC and complete the application, for a duplicate document and pay the appropriate fee for duplicate MMD.
  - (2) The REC shall call the National Maritime Center (NMC-4A) for verification. If NMC-4A can not verify the ratings and duplicate number, the applicant may be issued a Temporary Certificate of Identification with entry ratings. For a rating other than entry ratings, the applicant must provide proof of the rating held. The proof should be in the form of certificates of discharge or an equally valid form of documentation which satisfies the local OCMI.
- b. In special cases the OCMI may determine that a Temporary Certificate of Identification (TMMD) is needed. Commandant (NMC-4A) shall be notified of the circumstances and duration of the Temporary Certificate of Identification. If the determination is for a specific group, the National Maritime Center (NMC-4A) shall be consulted prior to issuing the temporary certificate.

2. Prefix "T".

The prefix "T" precedes the applicant's social security number (SSN) in the block for "MMD No.";

3. Temporary Certificate Of Identification.

The Temporary Certificate of Identification shall be valid for the term of the voyage or six months from issue date, whichever is longer. In special cases, the period of validity shall be established by the OCMI and the National Maritime Center (NMC-4A) advised of the term.

4. Impression Seal.

An impression seal shall be used to emboss parts of the mariner's signature and photograph.

5. Instructions For Filling Out Form CG-2838(T).

In cases where Temporary Certificate of Identification, Form CG-2838(T) are issued, the following instructions should be used:

- a. The applicant shall execute an Application for Original, Supplemental, or Duplicate Merchant Mariner's Document, ensuring that all sections of the application are completed.

- b. The applicant should ensure that the application indicates that a Temporary Certificate of Identification (TMMD) was issued, the reason for the TMMD, and the expiration date is shown in block #46.
- c. A photograph shall be attached to the TMMD and to the application form. Extra photographs shall be returned to the mariner for later use.
- d. The original application with the photograph shall be forwarded to the National Maritime Center (NMC-4A), and a copy shall be maintained at the REC.

E. Application For Additional Endorsements.

1. Endorsements For Higher Ratings.

The new application form shall be filed when an applicant is applying for an unlicensed rating higher than the presently held rating and the higher rating requires presentation of evidence of qualifying service. All additional qualifying service shall be specified on the form. These transactions normally require a physical, drug test, and professional examinations. Reports of Physical Examination shall be forwarded with this form.

2. Additional Qualified Member Of The Engineering Department (QMED) Or Unqualified Ratings.

Additional endorsements of MMDs for ratings not requiring qualifying experience, or for additional QMED ratings, shall be reported in Section VIII of the new application form, which is forwarded to the National Maritime Center (NMC-4A).

3. Additional Endorsements Not Requiring Professional Examinations.

Documents with entry ratings which are surrendered for additional unqualified ratings not requiring professional examination shall be reissued and endorsed with the additional ratings upon filing of the application form.

4. Affirmation Of Narcotics Involvement.

If the applicant affirms any narcotics convictions, other criminal or NDR convictions, a local evaluation of the applicant's eligibility shall be made to determine whether action under 46 U.S.C. 7704 is warranted. REC personnel should check the Coast Guard Wanted/Locator list to determine if the applicant appears on the list. If the applicant's name appears on the list, the local Investigating Officer should be contacted. An MMD shall not be issued until the applicant has provided satisfactory evidence that he or she is no longer involved with narcotics or any criminal activity. If a conviction has occurred since the document was issued, the evaluation shall follow the guidelines set forth for an original document, see section 3.A.

F. Change Of Name.

If a mariner requests a new MMD due to a legal change of name, the mariner shall be required to submit a supplemental application, with a certified copy of the evidence of the new legal name, e.g., court order, certificate of marriage. The application should show the new name followed by the previous name in parentheses. The mariner shall then be issued an MMD showing the new legal name. If a "Z" or "Bk" number appears on the old document it shall be replaced with the applicant's SSN at that time. The application shall be forwarded to the National Maritime Center (NMC-4A); the old document shall be destroyed at the REC.

G. "Z" And "Book" Numbers.

"Z" and "Book" numbers were control numbers issued by Commandant (G-MVP-1) from 1937 until 1978. They required an authorization from G-MVP-1 for each MMD/CDB issued. In 1978, the Coast Guard began using the mariner's social security number as their identification. The mariner's social security number must appear on the MMD. No other identifying numbers such as "Z" or "Book" number shall appear on the MMD.

H. Requests For MMDs From Other Agencies.

To maintain necessary central records and administrative control, RECs receiving requests for issuance of MMDs for special official purposes shall refer them to the National Maritime Center (NMC-4A). Requesting agencies shall be advised to route such requests directly to the National Maritime Center (NMC-4A), stating the reason(s) for such requests. In cases where time concerns are pressing, telephone requests may be approved by the National Maritime Center (NMC-4A), with follow-up letters to be forwarded.

I. Issuance Of MMDs To Employees Of The National Oceanic And Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).

1. General.

Applications for MMDs endorsed in entry or qualified ratings may be accepted from NOAA employees. If the applicant is in all respects qualified for the endorsement requested, the approved document shall not be limited to NOAA vessels. However, if the applicant fails to meet the general requirements for the endorsement, service and examination requirements may be tailored to service aboard NOAA vessels. In such cases, the MMD issued shall be endorsed "Valid for use aboard NOAA vessels only." Except as modified by this subpart, all usual procedures shall be followed in issuing MMDs so restricted.

2. Evidence Of Service.

A letter from a NOAA vessel's commanding officer or a NOAA district officer shall be accepted as documentation of service. If the qualifying service for a QMED endorsement has been obtained aboard vessels of more than 100 gross tons (GT), and at least 75 percent of that time has been obtained aboard vessels in underway operations, the MMD should not be limited to NOAA vessels, if the applicant is qualified for an unrestricted document in all other respects.

J. Permanent MMD, Form CG-2838.

All applicants may be issued a permanent MMD at the time of application without prior Headquarters approval. Applicants shall execute the application form generated by the Merchant Mariner Licensing and Documentation (MMLD) system. The issuing officer shall determine whether this application will suffice for permanent record purposes. The evidence of sea service presented shall be noted on the application and returned to the applicant. Upon issuance of the MMD, the applicant's complete record (along with the Form FD-258, and Form CG-2765 if the applicant is an alien) shall be forwarded to the National Maritime Center (NMC-4A). A copy of the application shall be retained by the issuing REC.

K. Duplicate, Mutilated, And Replacement Documents.

1. Duplicate Merchant Mariner's Documents.

a. Duplicate Document For Entry Rating.

If a merchant mariner's document (MMD) is lost and the mariner needs it for immediate employment and the National Maritime Center (NMC-4A) cannot verify by phone, a duplicate MMD may be issued on Form CG-2838(T), provided that an application form has been filed. A check should be made of the "Seamen Wanted" List and the local investigation department's wanted list.

b. Duplicate Document For Qualified Ratings.

Unless there is an immediate need for the MMD, the application shall be forwarded to the National Maritime Center (NMC-4A) for approval. If a mariner needs a duplicate MMD for immediate employment, REC personnel shall contact the National Maritime Center (NMC-4A) by phone for verification of ratings and duplicate number. Phone verifications shall be requested only if the need is important enough for the mariner to be in the office at the time of the request or to have made an appointment to appear within 24 hours of the request. The mariner should also be prepared to show an immediate need for the duplicate MMD. In cases of immediate need, if the National Maritime Center (NMC-4A) cannot verify the rating the same day of the request, shipping articles, payroll slips, or similar records indicating the ratings that the mariner worked may be used to verify the rating for the MMD. If satisfactory evidence cannot be obtained, the document must not be issued. Before issuing a duplicate MMD, the following actions shall be taken:

- (1) Check the Seaman's Locator/Wanted list.
- (2) Contact Commandant (G-MOA-2) for any pertinent information concerning affirmed suspensions, revocations, or voluntary surrender of an MMD before issuing the duplicate MMD.
- (3) Obtain satisfactory evidence of no further involvement with narcotics if use or addiction of narcotics is affirmed.
- (4) Issue MMD but initiate an investigation to determine if action under 46 U.S.C. 7704 is warranted when a narcotics conviction is affirmed.

c. Application For Duplicate Documents.

(1) Use Of Application Form.

All applications for duplicates of MMDs, Continuous Discharge Books (CDBs), and certificates of discharge (records of service) shall be made in duplicate using an application form. The application shall be forwarded to the National Maritime Center (NMC-4A), which will provide the required information and return the application to the Regional Examination Center (REC) to issue the document.

(2) Preparation Of The Form.

All applicable items on the form shall be filled in before the form is accepted. The port (REC) shall be entered in block 1. The applicant's name must appear in full and the applicant's Social Security number (SSN), and the "Z" or "Bk" number, shall be included to aid identification. No application shall be accepted without a United States SSN. The name must be exactly the same as that under which the applicant was previously documented. [NOTE: Particular care should be taken that Hispanic applicants do not transpose their middle and last names.] The applicant's permanent address should be listed, rather than a temporary local one. Present or Previous MMD/License History shall include all MMD or license transactions, including a temporary MMD, which the mariner has had during his/her career as a merchant mariner. Section V, Request for Duplicate License, MMD, or CD, Block 37-39 shall have the license serial/MMD number, date of issue, and port (REC) of issue of the lost document. The time, manner and place of loss, and a summary of recovery efforts shall be shown in section V, block 42. The applicant must sign and date the application.

(3) Yes And No Questions.

All "yes" and "no" questions in section II, block 24 and section VI, must be answered and initialed by the mariner. The mariner shall be advised, either in written or verbal form, of the possible consequences of a false answer. When the document is issued section VI shall be completed indicating the expiration date, ratings issued, date and signature of the issuing official and port (REC) where issued.

(4) Photographs.

All applicants for duplicate MMDs or CDBs may apply in person at the REC or, if applying by mail, send in two photos of the type previously described. Photographs are then digitally reproduced and stored in the DDCCS memory. The application is then forwarded to the National Maritime Center (NMC-4A) for approval. If the application is for a CDB or the applicant has requested that the duplicate MMD be issued at another REC, both photos shall be forwarded to the National Maritime Center (NMC-4A).

(5) Collection Of Fees.

In case of the loss of an MMD or CDB by shipwreck or other marine casualty, the seaman shall be supplied a duplicate without cost as specified in 46 U.S.C. 7501(a). All discharge data available from Coast Guard records will be entered into the CDB. In all other instances of loss, the Coast Guard, under 46 U.S.C. 7501(b) and 10311(d)(2), may issue duplicate merchant mariner's documents, Certificates of Discharge and CDBs upon payment to the government of service charges for processing them. The fee currently prescribed for issuance of duplicate merchant mariner's documents and Certificates of Discharge, Form CG-718A, and CDBs by 46 CFR 12.02-18 shall be collected at the time of application.

d. Preparation Of Duplicate Documents.

(1) Identification Number.

All duplicate MMDs shall contain the applicant's SSN in lieu of any "Z" or "Bk" number previously assigned. No prefix should be attached to this number. Duplicates shall be given a suffix ("D1," "D2," etc.) after the SSN only in the space designated "Z or Bk Number."

(2) Questions Of Birth Or Citizenship.

Duplicate MMDs shall NOT be issued with question marks entered in the spaces for place of birth and citizenship. In cases of doubt, applicants must present the necessary evidence of citizenship to be issued a duplicate document. If an applicant presents evidence of an unsuccessful attempt to obtain a birth certificate, and cannot present evidence of citizenship in any of the forms prescribed in 46 CFR 10.02-5(c), the document shall indicate the place of birth and citizenship claimed by the applicant. If the date of birth cannot be proven, the REC shall issue the MMD with dashes inserted in that space; the applicant's claim shall not be accepted.

(3) Endorsements On Duplicate MMDs.

The endorsement on a duplicate MMD shall reflect current terminology. All superfluous ratings shall be eliminated unless the applicant requests otherwise (this request may be made orally).

e. Issuance Of Duplicate Merchant Mariner's Documents.

(1) By Mail.

Duplicate MMDs may be mailed to applicants at their request. Duplicate Certificates of discharge may be mailed via regular mail if no additional fee is to be collected.

(2) By Another REC.

When a duplicate MMD is requested to be issued at an REC other than the one at which the application was made, both copies of the application form shall be forwarded to the National Maritime Center (NMC-4A), with the required photograph(s). A notation shall be made on the application that the applicant desires the document be issued at a REC other than where the application is initiated. The NMC will return the application containing the information necessary for preparing the MMD to the REC requested to issue the document.

(3) Reporting Requirements.

The original application for all duplicate MMDs and Certificates of Seamen's Service issued shall be returned to the National Maritime Center (NMC-4A) after entering the issuing information required in Section VI. If duplicate documents are mailed, the issue date shall be the date of mailing. The original application should not be sent to the National Maritime Center (NMC-4A) until the document is mailed or delivered to the applicant. The ratings, date of issue and signature of the issuing official shall be shown.

(4) Warnings Regarding Loss Of Documents.

When duplicate MMDs are issued, the holder shall be warned of the gravity of losing the original. The holder should also be informed that the lost document is no longer valid and should be returned to the Coast Guard if subsequently recovered.

(5) Recovery Of Lost Documents.

Documents that have been lost and subsequently turned in to the Coast Guard shall be held for 30 days. If not claimed in that time, they shall be destroyed and the National Maritime Center (NMC-4A) so advised by rapidraft or E-mail.

(6) Disposition Of Un-issued Duplicate Documents.

When duplicate MMDs, CDBs, and Certificates of Discharge are not issued within six months of preparation, attach the un-issued document to the original application and return them to the National Maritime Center (NMC-4A) with a notation that they were retained for six months at the REC and include the dates of attempts to contact the applicant to arrange for issuing documents.

2. Mutilated Documents.

a. Replacement By The OCMI.

If a mutilated MMD identifies the holder, all data is distinguishable and shows no evidence of alteration, a new MMD shall be prepared and delivered without charge (the replacement shall update all incorrect information). A record of this exchange shall be forwarded to the National Maritime Center (NMC-4A) on an application form. Sections I, II, VI, and VII shall be completed insuring ratings, date of issue and signature of the issuing official are included.

b. Data Unidentifiable Or Altered.

If the data on a mutilated MMD cannot be distinguished or the holder cannot be identified, the transaction shall be treated as a lost document, and the original shall be destroyed locally. If data on an MMD shows evidence of alteration, the investigations office should be contacted and appropriate actions taken.

3. Replacements For Other Transactions.

When a mutilated MMD is surrendered for an additional endorsement, change of name, etc., the transaction should be completed as appropriate and the surrendered document destroyed locally. A notation shall be made on the application that the old document has been locally destroyed.

L. Continuous Discharge Books (CDBs).

1. Issuance Of CDBs.

With certain exceptions, all merchant mariners sailing on vessels of over 100 gross tons for foreign voyages and 75 gross tons for coastwise voyages must be issued a Merchant Mariner's Document. If an applicant insists on receiving an original CDB, an application shall be completed with the appropriate box checked. The REC will prepare and issue the CDB in the same manner as a MMD.

2. Exchange Of CDBs For MMDs.

An applicant seeking to exchange a CDB for an MMD (Form CG-2838) may do so at any time. All MMDs shall bear the applicant's SSN, instead of any "Z" or "Bk" number previously held. A report of such an exchange shall be made to the National Maritime Center (NMC-4A) on an application form; a notation will be made on the application that the applicant held a prior document bearing a "Z" or "Book" number. The CDB shall be returned to the mariner as a record of service.

3. Continuation Of CDB.

A mariner possessing a CDB in which all but three or fewer spaces are used may submit the new application form for a continuation book. The appropriate portions of this form will be executed and the original forwarded to the National Maritime Center (NMC-4A). A continuation of the CDB, showing the mariner's SSN, will be issued by the REC without charge.

M. Merchant Mariner's Document (MMD) Forms.

1. Preparation Of Documents.

MMDs are now prepared with the computerized DDCS system using form CG-2838. If an item called for on the MMD form is not applicable, N/A, or NONE should be entered in the space.

a. Name.

The MMD shall be issued according to the name shown on the application which must be the legal name shown on a birth certificate, court order, or marriage license.

b. Social Security Number (SSN).

The applicant's SSN shall appear in the space for "SSN" on the front of the MMD. All original, supplemental, renewal, and duplicate documents shall bear the SSN. An MMD shall not be issued until a Social Security card, receipt of Social Security card, or a signed document from Social Security Administration showing application for duplicate Social Security number has been shown to the REC personnel.

c. Place Of Birth.

If native-born, enter the state in which the applicant was born. If not native born, enter country of birth.

- d. Citizenship.  
Enter the name of the country of which the applicant is a citizen. Acceptable evidence of citizenship must be shown before the document is issued. For nonresident aliens, the notation "NRA" must be placed immediately following this notation. If a determination of citizenship cannot be made, contact the local Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) for assistance. If INS is unable to make a determination, the citizenship block should read "NON-US" or "NON-US-NRA" (NRA = Non Resident Alien).
- e. Address.  
The permanent address shown on the application shall be used.
- f. Signature.  
Applicants shall sign their full first name, middle initial, and last name, and any suffix such as Jr., III, in ink.
- g. Complexion.  
The applicant's complexion shall be stated as recorded on the application (see section C.2.d of this chapter).
- h. Issued By.  
Enter the REC issuing the document.
- i. Location Of Expiration Date.  
The expiration date shall be placed on the face of the MMD, beneath the mariner's picture and on the back of the MMD beneath the thumb print.
- j. Signature Of Issuing Official.  
The issuing official shall sign directly above the line labeled "Examiner" being careful not to obscure the endorsements. "By direction of OCMI" appears beneath the name of the "Examiner".
- k. Endorsements.  
The rating endorsement(s) for which the applicant is qualified shall appear on the reverse of the permanent document beneath the physical description data line. Endorsements must clearly state the qualifications of the holder.
  - (1) Entry Ratings.  
All MMDs issued for entry ratings shall be endorsed for Ordinary Seaman, Wiper, and Steward's Department (FH). No other entry rating endorsement shall be issued, except as provided in section 15.M.1.k.(4)(a) and (b) below. All entry ratings shall be endorsed on an MMD except when a higher rating for a department is warranted by service and testing. A physical is no longer required for food handlers.

(2) Ratings In Several Departments.

If an MMD applicant is qualified to serve in more than one department, the ratings for which the applicant is qualified in each department will be endorsed separately. For example, a fireman/watertender who is also qualified as a lifeboatman and in the Steward's Department (FH) will have the MMD endorsed, "Fireman/Watertender, Lifeboatman, Ordinary Seaman, Steward's Department (FH)." QMED will be used only when the applicant is qualified for all QMED ratings.

(3) Endorsements For Licensed Or Staff Officers.

An MMD issued to a licensed officer or staff officer shall be endorsed with entry ratings and in accordance with 46 CFR 12.02-11.

(4) Marine Training Program Endorsements.

Special endorsements shall be issued to students engaged in training programs that include an institution-sponsored sea period. Students at institutions that do not provide a sponsored sea period, and where the students must seek employment on their own, entry-level endorsements shall be issued. Should doubt arise as to a specific endorsement, the approval letter for the particular institution should be consulted. Cadet (Deck) or Cadet (Engine) endorsement(s) shall be issued, in accordance with 46 CFR 12.25-25, to cadets enrolled at the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy; those cadets involved in the Dual Licensing Program shall receive both endorsements. Cadets at state academies generally do not require MMDs, as their sea training is normally conducted on state operated training ships. Should issuance of MMDs to such cadets become desirable or necessary, the foregoing endorsements (as appropriate) shall be used.

(a) "Student Observer-Any Department" endorsements shall be issued, in accordance with 46 CFR 12.25-30, to students enrolled in programs dealing with marine management, operations, naval architecture, oceanography, and similar subjects.

(b) Apprentice mate or engineer endorsements shall be issued, in accordance with 46 CFR 12.25-35 and -40, to students enrolled in approved training programs, other than at federal or state academies, that lead to issuance of deck or engineer licenses.

N. Surrender Of Merchant Mariner's Documents By Retiring Merchant Mariners.

Several maritime labor organizations require pension applicants to surrender their merchant mariner's document as a condition for receiving benefits. This practice is precluded by 46 U.S.C. 7303 which requires each document be retained by the mariner to whom it is issued. However, in an effort to assist mariners in obtaining their entitlements while preventing any violation of law, the REC should accept the document for deposit. A receipt on letterhead, or a locally approved form, should be given to the mariner. The mariner should be advised that upon request the document will be returned only to the mariner with or without receipt. The document may be held locally or sent to the National Maritime Center (NMC-4A) with a copy of the receipt to be filed in the mariner's official record.