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## New Procedures at the RECs “Ready for Evaluation”

As you know, the Mariner Licensing and Documentation program is facing tough challenges. Mariners are complaining about lengthy delays in receiving their credentials, about poor customer service, and about inconsistencies regarding policy. One of the main reasons mariners are experiencing delays is the fact that the RECs and the NMC spend a large amount of time obtaining information missing from the mariner's credential application submission.

Centralization brings huge opportunities to set a new focus, set new goals to improve service to the merchant mariners – our customers – and to improve the processes used to produce merchant mariner credentials. We must take advantage of these opportunities to reduce application processing time and improve customer service.

### New Procedure

To help reduce the percentage of incomplete applications from entering the evaluation stage of our process, the NMC is implementing a new procedure that shall be used at all RECs in the future. For now, the new procedure is only being used by RECs forwarding application packages to NMC and is described below.

- **At the Regional Exam Center**

Since the RECs represent the “face” of the Coast Guard to the mariner, it is essential that they help the mariner complete the application to ensure it is “ready to be evaluated” before forwarding the application to NMC for evaluation. The REC’s basic processing steps are:

- (1) Take application package from mariner.
- (2) Review application package to determine if it is “ready to be evaluated”. The RECs will use the “Mariner File Organization and Mariner Application Submittal Checklist” MLD-FM-NMC1-01. The checklist also provides important reminders regarding database entries and file mailing procedures.
- (3) If the application is determined to be “ready for evaluation”, the RECs will send it to the NMC with the completed checklist attached. If it is not ready to be evaluated, the REC will provide the mariner with a receipt letter detailing a list of items missing and hold the application package until the mariner provides the missing material.

- **At the National Maritime Center.**

The NMC’s processing steps are:

- (1) Receive the application package from REC.
- (2) Verify that the application package is “ready for evaluation” using MLD-FM-NMC1-01.
- (3) If critical pieces of the application package are missing, (i.e. evaluation can not begin without them) contact the REC and hold the application until the REC provides the missing material from the mariner. If the application is “ready to evaluate”, begin processing immediately.

## **The Goal – Reduce Processing Time**

The overall goal is to reduce credential processing time by ensuring that only files that are “ready to be evaluated” are sent to NMC. As the NMC begins to receive "ready for evaluation" applications from the RECs, the inventory of active applications will be reduced because we won't be spending time waiting for missing information. This will result in faster processing of credentials.

## **For Additional Information**

If you have specific questions regarding this new procedure, please contact your local REC or LCDR Mike Washburn at (304) 724-9546 or CDR Craig Swirbliss at (304) 724-9560 in the NMC's Operations and Oversight Division.

Best Regards,

David C. Stalfort  
Captain, U. S. Coast Guard  
Commanding Officer  
National Maritime Center