



April 7, 2009

Processing of Credential Application Submitted Prior to April 15, 2009

All merchant mariner credentials issued after April 15, 2009 will be printed in the new consolidated Merchant Mariner Credential (MMC) format, regardless of when the application was submitted. Over 25,000 credential applications have been submitted to the Coast Guard over the past few months and are currently being processed. Many of these applications will be completed prior to April 15, 2009 and will be issued in the format of a separate license, MMD, STCW Certificate or Certificate of Registry, as appropriate. Credentials issued on or after April 15, 2009 will be printed in the new MMC format. As mariners conduct credential transactions after April 15, 2009, credentials will be issued in the new MMC format.

The Coast Guard published a [final rule](#) on March 16, 2009 consolidating the credentials issued to merchant mariners into a single credential and reducing the burden on mariners by limiting the number of times they need to appear in person to provide fingerprints and proof of identity. The regulation consolidates the credentials issued to merchant mariners into a [single credential](#). The regulation also streamlines the application process for the MMC by [removing the requirement that all mariners appear](#) at one of 17 Regional Exam Centers, so long as they have already enrolled for a Transportation Worker Identification Credential (TWIC) at one of 149 TWIC Enrollment Centers.

Important information for the mariner:

- If you have not [applied for your TWIC](#), do so now. Regardless of whether your credential was issued before the April 15, 2009 deadline no Merchant Mariner Credential is valid after April 15, 2009 without a valid TWIC.
- After April 15, 2009, the Coast Guard will not accept MMC applications without proof of either having applied for or been approved for a TWIC. The Coast Guard will contact mariners if their TWIC status can not be verified electronically. Submit a copy of your TWIC card or receipt with your application even if you are applying before 15 April as it will save time in the verification, evaluation and issuance process.
- Regardless of the application date, after April 15, 2009 the NMC will not issue any credentials unless that mariner holds a valid TWIC, or has been approved for issuance of a TWIC, as verified by TSA.

Sincerely,

David C. Stalfort
Captain, U. S. Coast Guard