

GUIDANCE NOTE No: 54/2000

REVISION No: 2

Eyesight Tests for Deck Certificates of Competency

Schedule One of Sections 2 and 3 of the Uniform Shipping Laws (USL) Code specifies the standard of eyesight tests required for the issue of all grades of deck Certificates of Competency.

Failure to reach the required standards in the eyesight test *may* exclude a person from being issued with a deck Certificate of Competency.

Where an applicant fails only the colour vision (24 Plate Ishihara) test as a prerequisite for the issue of a Certificate of Competency as Coxswain or Certificate of Competency as Master Class 5/Skipper Grade 3 only, he/she *may* be issued with a Certificate of Competency restricted to daylight operations only.

All applicants for the issue of deck Certificates of Competency are therefore strongly urged to undertake the required eyesight test before undertaking any further commitments or attending any relevant courses.

Eyesight tests are conducted by Optometrists or Doctors. Eyesight test forms are available from the Marine Safety Branch. The completed form must be returned to the Marine Safety Branch.

1. Applicants must pass an eyesight test prior to the issue of a Certificate of Competency and Temporary Permit to Serve.
2. For Temporary Permit holders of inland waters and sheltered waters (pearling vessels only), eyesight tests are valid for 5 years. For all other Temporary Permits and Certificates of Competency they are valid for 2 years only.
3. Depending on the results of an eyesight test, Certificates of Competency/Temporary Permits may be endorsed as follows:
 - (A) Glasses/contact lenses used to pass both the letter (distance) and N5 (reading) tests:-
'Corrective aids to vision for distance and near vision deficiencies must be worn when performing watch keeping duties';
 - (B) Glasses/contact lenses used to pass the letter (distance) test:-
'Corrective aids to vision for distance vision deficiencies must be worn when performing watch keeping duties';

- (C) Glasses/contact lenses used to pass the N5 (reading) test:-
'Corrective aids to vision for near vision deficiencies must be worn when performing watch keeping duties';
- (D) Glasses/contact lenses used to pass the letter (distance) test after failure to meet required standard without aids to vision: ie; (6/30 or better in each eye), in addition to (B) above, the certificate will be endorsed:
'Two (2) pairs of aids to vision to be carried on board at all times'.

Note: Applicants with one eye or poor vision in one eye are required to undertake a practical assessment of their ability to keep a navigation watch. A practical assessment form can be obtained from the Marine Safety Branch.

Any inquiries relating to eyesight tests should be directed to the Senior Nautical Adviser, telephone (08) 8924 7100.

Signed by: Principal Marine Surveyor
Date Issued: 25 May 2006

For further information contact Marine Safety Branch:

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