



NIGERIAN MARITIME ADMINISTRATION AND SAFETY AGENCY (NIMASA)

(Established under the Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency Act, 2007)

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MN 8/26/SN01

MARINE NOTICE

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MERCHANT SHIPPING (STANDARDS OF TRAINING, CERTIFICATION, AND WATCHKEEPING FOR SEAFARERS) REGULATIONS, 2025 - GUIDANCE ON MARITIME EDUCATION, TRAINING, ASSESSMENT AND EXAMINATION, CERTIFICATION, REVALIDATION, ENDORSEMENT AND MEDICAL FITNESS CERTIFICATION OF SEAFARERS IN NIGERIA

1. OBJECTIVE

The objective of this Circular is to provide guidance on the revised requirements relating to Seafarer's Education, Training, Assessment and Examination, Certification, Revalidation, Endorsement, and Medical Fitness certification of seafarers, in accordance with the Merchant Shipping (Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers) Regulations, 2025 and the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers, 1978, as amended.

2. APPLICATION

This Circular is addressed to:

1. All candidates undergoing maritime education and training in Nigeria towards the issuance of Certificates of Competency and Certificates of Proficiency (CoC and CoP).
2. All Maritime Education and Training Institutions (METIs) and Maritime Training Institutions (MTIs) delivering maritime programmes in line with the STCW Convention, 1978, as amended.
3. All Instructors, Examiners and Assessors of Competence and Officers responsible for issuing Notices of Eligibility, and assessment and verification and endorsement of Seafarers Certificates of Competency and Certificates of Proficiency
4. Ship Owners, Ship Operators, Shipping Companies, Manning Agents and other employers of seafarers
5. Parties to STCW Convention, 1978, as amended, and concerned Maritime Administrations.
6. Seafarers, including Masters, Officers and Ratings, as well as Seafarers' Unions, Associations and other relevant bodies
7. Recognized Medical Practitioners
8. Other concerned maritime stakeholders

3. BACKGROUND

Pursuant to section 22 of the Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency Act, 2007, the Merchant Shipping (Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers) Regulations, 2025, and Nigeria's obligations under the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers, 1978, as amended, the Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency ("the Agency") hereby issues this Circular.

Further to the publication of Marine Notice No. MN 7/26/SN03 on the implementation of the Merchant Shipping (STCW) Regulations, 2025, this circular is hereby issued as guidance to address changes to the standards for maritime education, training, assessment and examination, certification including medical fitness certification of seafarers, revalidation, endorsement and the mandatory use of onboard Training Record Books in Nigeria.

4. REVISED CURRICULUM FOR MARITIME EDUCATION AND TRAINING COURSES

- 4.1 In order for Nigeria to comply fully with the provisions of the STCW Convention, 1978, as amended, the Agency in conjunction with the National Board for Technical Education (NBTE) has taken bold steps to review and update the Nigerian Maritime Education (Academic) Training curriculum to fully align with provisions of the STCW Convention, 1978, as amended, and the Merchant Shipping (STCW) Regulations, 2025.
- 4.2 In line with the new standards, effective from 27 October 2025,-
 - a. all Seafarers Intending to apply for the Nigerian Officer of the Watch Unlimited (OOW) Certificate of competency in accordance with Regulations II/1 and III/1 of the STCW Convention, 1978, as amended, and Regulations 15 and 20 of the Merchant Shipping (STCW) Regulations, 2025, are required to complete the revised National Diploma (ND) Programmes in Nautical Science and Marine Engineering Technology in line with the NIMASA-NBTE Curriculum at an approved Maritime Education and Training Institution (METI) in Nigeria (**The list of approved Maritime Education and Training Institutions can be sighted on the Agency's Website**); and

- b. all Seafarers intending to apply for management level Certificate of Competency (Unlimited) in accordance with Regulations II/2 and III/2 of the STCW Convention, 1978, as amended, and Regulations 16 and 21 of the Merchant Shipping (STCW) Regulations, 2025, shall complete the revised Higher National Diploma (HND) Programmes in Nautical Science and Marine Engineering Technology in line with the NIMASA-NBTE Curriculum at an approved Maritime Education and Training Institution (METI) in Nigeria.

5. BRIDGING COURSES FOR EFFECTIVE TRANSITION AND REVALIDATION OF EXISTING CERTIFICATES OF COMPETENCY

- 5.1 In line with the new developments in **Paragraph 4** above, there is need to effectively bridge the gap between the old and new curriculum. Consequently, the Agency hereby introduces **Bridging Courses** to close the gap and fully align the competency requirements of certificates of competency issued on or before 3rd of July 2026, with the education and training standards of the revised curricula. Seafarers in this category are required to enrol and complete a **Bridging Course** at an approved Maritime Education and Training Institution as part of the **process of revalidation** of all existing Certificates of Competency.
- 5.2 Accordingly, all Seafarers holding certificates of competency issued on or before 3rd of July 2026, are required to revalidate their certificates of competency with effect from 3rd July 2026, until 31st December 2028 by completing the approved bridging course(s) as applicable to their level of certification.
- 5.3 Pursuant to **Paragraph 5.2** above, all previously issued certificates of competency shall cease to be valid on 31st December 2028.
- 5.4 Effective from 1st January 2029, all seafarers shall be required to undertake either the National Diploma (ND) or Higher National Diploma (HND) Programmes in Nautical Science and Marine Engineering Technology at a NIMASA-approved METI, in addition to possessing the approved sea-service on a seagoing ship, as a prerequisite to sit for the Operational Level (OOW Unlimited) and Management Level (Class 2/1) Unlimited Certificates of Competency Examinations (Navigation/Engineering).

6. RATINGS EDUCATION AND TRAINING PROGRAMME

- 6.1 In accordance with the competency requirements for Ratings forming part of Navigational or Engineering Watch, and Able Seafarers Deck or Engine, under Regulations II/4, III/4, II/5 and III/5 of the STCW Convention, 1978, as amended, and Regulations 18, 23, 19 and 24 of the Merchant Shipping (STCW) Regulations, 2025, respectively, and the gaps identified in meeting the revised standards for Maritime Education and Training in Nigeria, the Agency has implemented a 15-Week Ratings Education and Training Programme, designed to impart candidates applying for the Certificate of Proficiency (CoP) Certification, with the Knowledge understanding and proficiency required of a seafarer to work effectively onboard ships at support level.
- 6.2 This training aligns with the competency requirements under Regulations 18, 19, 23 and 24 of the Merchant Shipping (STCW) Regulations, 2025 and Regulations II/4, II/5, III/4 and III/5 of the STCW Convention, 1978, as amended.
- 6.3 Effective from 3 July 2026, trainees shall be required to undertake the 15-Week Ratings Education and Training Programme at a NIMASA-approved METI, in addition to possessing the approved, documented sea-service on a seagoing ship, as a prerequisite to sit for the Ratings forming part of Navigational or Engineering Watch (Regulations II/4 or III/4) Certificate of Proficiency (CoP) Examinations.
- 6.4 Effective from 3 July 2026, all intending Ratings as Able Seafarer Deck or Engine shall be required to undertake the 15-Week (Advanced) Ratings Education and Training Programme at a NIMASA-approved METI, in addition to possessing the approved, documented sea-service, while qualified as a rating forming part of a watch, Navigation or Engineering, on a seagoing ship, as a prerequisite to sit for the Able Seafarers Deck or Engine (Regulations II/5 or III/5) Certificate of Proficiency (CoP) Examinations.



7. **RE-APPROVAL OF MARITIME EDUCATION AND TRAINING INSTITUTIONS (METIs) AND MARITIME TRAINING INSTITUTIONS (MTIs) PROGRAMMES AND COURSES**

- 7.1 In view of the enactment of the Merchant Shipping (STCW) Regulations, 2025, all approved Maritime Education and Training Institutions are required to resubmit their course portfolios consisting of course framework, lesson plans, detailed teaching syllabi, course delivery notes, training aids, equipment, facilities (workshops, laboratories, simulators, library, etc.) and list of instructors for the delivery of the education programmes in Nautical Science and Marine Engineering based on the new NIMASA-NBTE Curricula, to the Agency for review and approval on or before 31 August 2026.
- 7.2 Similarly, all approved Maritime Training Institutions (MTIs) are required to resubmit their course portfolios consisting of course framework, lesson plans, detailed teaching syllabi, delivery notes, training aids, equipment, facilities (workshops, laboratories, simulators, library, etc) and list of instructors for the delivery of the basic safety training, advanced safety training and/or ancillary courses in accordance with the provisions of the STCW Convention, 1978, as amended, and applicable competence tables of the STCW code, to the Agency for review and re-approval on or before 31 October 2026.

8. **ENDORSEMENT OF CERTIFICATES OF COMPETENCY AND PROFICIENCY**

- 8.1 Regulation I/2 of the STCW Convention, 1978, as amended, and Regulation 6 of the Merchant Shipping (STCW) Regulations, 2025, requires that endorsement of foreign certificates of competency and proficiency shall only be issued subject to verification that all the requirements of the STCW Convention have been complied with.
- 8.2 Pursuant to Paragraph 8.1 above, the Agency shall endorse only foreign certificates of competency issued by an STCW State Party with whom Nigeria has signed a valid Memorandum of Undertaking (MOU), in accordance with the provisions of Regulation I/10 of the STCW Convention, 1978, as amended and Regulation 10 of the Merchant Shipping (STCW) Regulations, 2025.
- 8.3 Effective from 27 October 2025, all Masters, Officers and Ratings engaged on or intending to work on Nigerian flagged ships with foreign Certificates of Competency and Proficiency must carry onboard a valid, original copy of a Certificate of Endorsement/Certificate of Recognition (CoE/CoR) issued by Nigeria in the same capacity as their CoC and/or CoP, issued by the respective Maritime Administration, in accordance with regulation I/2 of the STCW Convention, 1978, as amended, and Regulation 6 of the Merchant Shipping (STCW) Regulations, 2025.
- 8.4 Ship Owners, Ship Operators and Manning Agents are hereby mandated to ensure that all seafarers holding foreign Certificates of Competency and Certificates of Proficiency (CoC and CoP) issued under Regulations II, III, IV, V and VI of the STCW Convention, 1978, as amended, must have their certificates duly endorsed, prior to engagement onboard ship.
- 8.5 Effective from 27 October 2025 and in accordance with regulation I/2 endorsement of CoC shall only be issued to Masters and Officers holding valid and verifiable certificates from Administrations with which Nigeria has valid MOU for recognition of Certificates in line with regulation I/10 of the Convention.

9. **MANDATORY USE OF ONBOARD TRAINING RECORD BOOK (TRB)**

- 9.1 Every trainee (Cadets and Ratings) undergoing an approved training programme in accordance with Regulation II/1, III/1, II/4, II/5, III/4 and III/5 of the STCW Convention, 1978, as amended, shall have their onboard training documented in an approved Training Record Book (TRB).
- 9.2 Hence forth, seafarers training record book shall be issued only through NIMASA-approved Maritime Education and Training Institutions (METI).

All Seafarers, Maritime Education and Training Institutions, Maritime Training Institutions, Instructors, Assessors, Examiners, Shipowners, Ship Operators, Shipping Companies, Manning Agents, Seafarers' Bodies and Associations, and other relevant maritime stakeholders are required to take note of the provisions of this Circular and ensure compliance within the applicable timelines specified herein.

For questions and any other clarification(s) relating to this Circular, contact:

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