

Renewal of national certificates and endorsements

This guidance is for applicants renewing national certificates of competency and endorsements.

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Disclaimer

This guidance provides information and explanations about the requirements set out in the maritime rules, but are not a substitute for the rules themselves, which are the law. This guidance refers to provisions in Maritime Rules Part 32, Seafarer Certification. The Director of Maritime New Zealand will grant a certificate only when satisfied that all requirements have been met.

In this guidance, any references to 'we' or Maritime New Zealand relating to a decision about the issue or renewal of any seafarer certificate are references to the Director or a person acting under the Director's delegated authority.

maritimenz.govt.nz/rules

1. Overview

Renewal of national certificates of competency and endorsements

This guidance is for seafarers wanting to renew (revalidate) their national certificate of competency, proficiency or endorsement.

The information in this guidance applies to the following national certificates and endorsements:

Skippers and Masters

Skipper Restricted Limits (SRL)

Skipper Restricted Limits endorsed <24m (SRL <24m)

Skipper Restricted Limits endorsed <500GT (SRL <500GT)

Skipper Restricted Limits endorsed 500–3000GT (SRL 500–3000GT)

Skipper Coastal/Offshore (SCO)

Master Yacht <24m

Marine Engineers

Marine Engineer Class 6 (MEC 6)

Marine Engineer Class 5 (MEC 5)

Marine Engineer Class 5 Steam (MEC 5 Steam)

Marine Engineer Class 5 Motor and Steam (MEC 5 Motor and Steam)

Marine Engineer Class 4 (MEC 4)

Endorsements

Passenger endorsement

Cook Strait endorsement

High-speed ship endorsement

Square-rigged endorsement

Steam endorsement

Your certificate or endorsement can be renewed for up to five years.

This guidance covers training, sea service and other requirements for your renewal, how to apply and pay for your renewal, and where to find more information.

maritimenz.govt.nz/seafarers

2. Requirements

To renew your national certificate or endorsement, you need to prove that you meet all of the renewal requirements for the certificate or endorsement.

In summary, you need to:

- prove you meet the minimum renewal sea service requirements, or equivalent, for the certificate or endorsement
- have current certificates for the required ancillary proficiencies, where required.
- prove you are a fit and proper person
- be medically fit and meet eyesight requirements.

Each of these requirements and how to prove that you meet them is explained below.

2.1 Sea service

To renew a national certificate of competency or endorsement, you must demonstrate continued professional competency by providing evidence of your approved sea service, performing functions appropriate to the certificate or endorsement you hold.

Sea service requirements

Certificates of competency

Your sea service must have been served on a relevant vessel in a relevant capacity and include:

- at least six months' approved sea service within the previous five years
- or 45 days of approved sea service in the three months immediately before you apply to renew your certificate or endorsement.

Endorsements

The endorsements listed below have specific renewal requirements. You will need to show that you meet these requirements to renew the endorsement. The sea service you use may be part of the sea service you use to renew your Certificate of Competency.

You will be charged for both the renewal of the national certificate **and** the renewal of the endorsement.

Endorsement	Additional requirements
Passenger	At least six months on a passenger vessel in the previous five years, or 45 days in the three months preceding the date of application
Cook Strait	At least two Cook Strait crossings in the 12 months preceding the date of application
500–3000GT	At least six months on a ship of 500–3000GT operating in restricted limits in the previous five years, or 45 days in the three months preceding the date of application
Steam	At least six months on a steam ship in the previous five years, or 45 days in the three months preceding the date of application

Square-rigged sailing ship	At least six months on a square-rigged sailing ship in the previous five years, or 45 days in the three months preceding the date of application
High-speed	At least six months on a high-speed ship operating in restricted limits in the previous five years, or 45 days in the three months preceding the date of application

Renewal of MEC 4 or MEC 5 Certificates

MEC 4, MEC 5 and MEC 5 Motor and Steam certificates can be renewed by meeting the requirements for a national certificate, or the requirements for an STCW-F-aligned certificate. STCW-F-aligned certificates provide greater privileges, and also require more sea service for renewal.

Sea service requirements for renewal of STCW-F-aligned MEC 4, MEC 5 and MEC 5 Motor and Steam certificates are 12 months in the previous five years. This complies with the International Convention on the Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Fishing Vessel Personnel, 1995 (STCW-F).

MEC 4, MEC 5 and MEC 5 Motor and Steam certificate holders who do not meet the STCW-F requirement, but meet the sea service requirement for renewal of a national certificate (six months in the previous five years or 45 days in the three months before application), will still be able to renew their certificate. In this case, the certificate will be renewed with a condition that it cannot be used to exercise STCW-F-level privileges. These privileges apply to ships of 750kW or more propulsion power which are operating beyond the inshore fishing limit. Please take this into account when gaining your sea service.

Proving your sea service

You are responsible for making sure your sea service is documented and verified by your ship's master or company.

To support your sea service, you must provide at least one of the following documents for each vessel you have served on:

- *certificate of sea service* (available on Maritime NZ's website)
- completed seafarer record book
- discharge certificate or discharge book (ensuring that any section on watchkeeping is appropriately signed off).

The documents you provide must contain all of the following details for each vessel you have served on:

- your employer's name and contact details
- the name, tonnage and type of vessel (for example, cargo vessel, tanker, bulk carrier)
- the vessel length overall (for deck certificates)
- the type of cargo carried and area of operation
- the engine type and output power (for engineering certificates)
- the dates you were employed and the sea time completed between those dates
- your duties, including watchkeeping where relevant to your certificate.

Any statutory declarations you have made are generally *not* acceptable as proof of your sea service. However, the Director will consider these in exceptional circumstances.

Calculating sea service for voyages of 24 hours or more

Relevant qualifying sea service is expected to be on voyages of 24 hours or more, calculated as follows:

- from the sign-on date of starting work on the ship to the sign-off date of discharge (both dates are inclusive)
- by counting each whole calendar month during this period as one month
- for multiple voyages, by adding together extra days that do not fall within a calendar month, with each addition of 30 days to be calculated as one month.

Extended time in port is generally not counted as sea service, and nor is time on leave.

Note

Voyage means a voyage between a port or place of departure and a ship's final port or place of arrival. It includes any period of 24 hours (or more) where you are signed on or employed on the vessel and you remain on board.

For example: If your service record shows your sign-on date as 3 March and sign-off date as 14 April, your sea service would be calculated as one month (3 March to 2 April) and 12 days (from 3 to 14 April inclusive).

Calculating sea service for voyages of less than 24 hours

This sea service applies only to certificates where sea service in excess of 12 months may be on voyages of less than 24 hours, provided all of the conditions of sea service are met.

Sea service on voyages of less than 24 hours (for example, day work) is calculated by counting the number of months made up of days, as follows:

- counting each period of eight (or more) hours worked within each period of 24 hours as one day's service
- counting periods of more than eight hours at a rate of more than one day (may be expressed in decimal points), at the Director's discretion, if the Director is satisfied there are suitable policies and processes in place to manage fatigue
- counting each additional 20 days (or more) in a 30-day period as one month's sea service. (A month is calculated as 160 or more hours worked over 20 or more days in a 30-day period.)

Where insufficient hours are accrued in a period of 30 days, additional hours or days may be accrued as described above until 20 days have been reached. This can then be counted as one month's sea service.

You cannot claim for more days of sea service than you actually served. You also cannot claim for time spent on leave or extended periods in port.

For more information about calculating your sea service, refer to the Maritime NZ website.

maritimenz.govt.nz/seafarers

2.2 Alternatives to sea service

If you are unable to meet the sea service requirements outlined above, the following alternatives will be considered by the Director.

Equivalent renewal experience

The Director may renew a national certificate if the holder has completed at least 2.5 years of non-seagoing experience in the previous five years, in a position considered by the Director to be equivalent to seagoing service. These positions may include:

- harbourmasters
- marine college lecturers
- technical, engineering and marine superintendents or ship repair managers
- Maritime NZ maritime officers
- Maritime Operator Safety System (MOSS) surveyors.

Other roles can be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Documenting equivalent experience

To renew your certificate, you must provide evidence of recent sea service or equivalent experience. In most cases relevant sea service will be sufficient, but the Director may consider that other types of experience satisfy in full or part the requirements for relevant experience equivalent to sea service.

The following table sets out the types of experience that may be considered and the documents you would need to provide with your renewal application. Acceptable forms of assessment, examination or (refresher) training will be notified on Maritime NZ's website or by training providers as these are determined.

Type of experience	Document you must provide
Passing an examination	Examination results showing you have successfully passed an exam relevant to the certificate you are renewing.
Employment in a relevant shore-based role – 30 months in the 5 years immediately prior to the application	Letter from an employer stating the position, functions and duties, and the period of employment
Performing on-board functions appropriate to the certificate being renewed for at least three months immediately preceding the date of application: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> in a supernumerary capacity or in a lower officer rank than the certificate to be renewed is valid for. 	The proof of your sea service can be used as evidence for this. For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> certificate of sea service completed seafarer record book discharge certificate or discharge book.
Completing and passing relevant bridging, refresher or updating training acceptable to (as specified by) the Director [If available in NZ.]	Documentation from a training provider indicating the name of the person trained, the specific training standard provided, the date and a statement that the person successfully demonstrated competency at the required level
Passing an assessment of a type specified by the Director [If available in NZ.]	Documentation from an approved assessor indicating the name of the person examined, the specific nature of the assessment, the date and a statement that the person successfully demonstrated competency at the required level

2.3 First aid ancillary certificate

If you are renewing SRL, SCO, MY24 m or MEC 6 you will need to have a valid first aid certificate covering unit standards 6400, 6401 and 6402 when you renew your certificate.

2.4 Fit and proper person (for renewal of certificates only)

To renew a national certificate, we need to confirm that you are a fit and proper person. To help us do this, we need the following documents from you. This *does not apply* to renewal of endorsements.

Requirement	Document(s) you must provide
Be a fit and proper person	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A completed <i>fit and proper person form</i>, which must have been signed and dated no more than three months before we receive your application A police clearance report for any country or countries outside New Zealand that you have lived in for 12 months or longer in the past five years (covering the entire period you lived in that country or countries)

2.5 Medical examination and eyesight tests

You need to prove that your medical fitness and eyesight meet the required standard.

Requirement	Document(s) you must provide
Be medically fit and meet the eyesight requirements	<p>A certificate of medical fitness for seafarers that is valid at the time we renew your certificate or endorsement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• This is a special medical certificate, which you must get from a registered medical practitioner.• The certificate must be either Category A, A(T) or B.• You may use an existing medical certificate if it will be valid (usually less than two years old) when your certificate or endorsement is renewed.• Your doctor will test your eyesight as part of their medical examination.

For more information about the medical and eyesight requirements for your certificate or endorsement, refer to the guidelines on Maritime NZ's website.

maritimenz.govt.nz/seafarers

3. When and how to apply

If an application for renewal of a certificate or endorsement is made within six months of its expiry date, the certificate or endorsement will be renewed until the five-year anniversary of the expiry date.

Certificates received more than six months before their expiry date, or after the certificate has expired, will be renewed for five years from the date of issue.

Apply when you have completed all of the renewal requirements for your certificate or endorsement. Once we have received all of the information we need from you, it may take us up to 20 working days to process your application, so send it in well before your certificate or endorsement is due to expire.

Make sure you include all of the documents we have asked for. Refer to *3.4 Checklist* to make sure you have everything you need for your renewal application.

Note

If your application is incomplete, it will **not** be processed and we will return your application and other documents to you.

3.1 Copies of supporting documents

We only need copies of your supporting documents, not the original versions.

For the fit and proper person form (if applicable) you need to include sighted and signed copies of the ID documents specified.

3.2 Fees

There is a fee for your application. Refer to the Maritime NZ website for information about fees.

maritimenz.govt.nz/fees

You will be invoiced once we have formally received your application. A reference number and instructions explaining how to pay will be sent with the invoice.

You can pay:

- online using a credit card or debit card, *or*
- by internet banking or bank deposit.

Refer to the Maritime NZ website for more information about how to pay your fees:

maritimenz.govt.nz/howtopay

As well as the application fee, you will have other fees and expenses to pay. For example, you may need to pay for your eyesight tests, medical examination and any refresher training courses.

3.3 Application process

This is the application process for renewal of a national certificate of competency or endorsement. Complete each step before you move on to the next one.

1 Do you meet all the requirements?

You need to check that you meet all of the requirements for this certificate.

2 Do you have the documents we need?

You need to prove that you meet the requirements. Include all of the documents we have asked for with your application form. Use the checklist to help you (see 3.4. *Checklist*).

Remember we need copies, not the originals.

3 Send us your application by email or courier

There are two options for you to send your application:

1. Send your application by email (preferred), attaching the scanned documents.
The application form has information about the requirements for electronic copies.
2. Use a courier to send us your completed application forms and supporting documents.

The addresses are on the application form.

4 Confirmation and/or request sent

We will send you an email or letter to confirm that we have received your application and advise you of any documents we need from you before we can assess your application. We must receive your payment before we can finalise your application.

5 Assessment and payment of application fee

Once you have sent us all the documents we need, we will assess your application and make a decision. This will usually take 20 working days (about a month) from the time we let you know that we have received your application.

We will send you an invoice with your reference number and information on how to pay the application fee once we begin the assessment. Please note we cannot release your certificate unless payment has been received.

6 Issue certificate

We will send you:

- your certificate, if your application has been successful, or
- a letter or email explaining why your application was unsuccessful.

3.4 Checklist

Use this checklist to make sure that you have everything you need for your application.

Check that your documents are complete and have been signed, dated and sighted as required.

- Seafarer certificate application form*
 - Fit and proper person form* - including sighted and signed copies of the ID documents specified
 - Police clearance for other countries (if applicable)
 - Copy of certificate of medical fitness for seafarers
 - Evidence of sea service
 - Copies of up-to-date first aid certificate if applicable
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4. Contact us for help

If you need more information about the requirements for your renewal application, visit the Seafarer Certification section of our website.

maritimenz.govt.nz/seafarers

If you can't find the information you need, send us an email:

seafarers@maritimenz.govt.nz

Tell us what you need help with and remember to include your contact details (email address and phone numbers).

Alternatively, you can phone us toll free on 0508 SEACERT (0508 732 237).