

# MERCHANT NAVY CERTIFICATES

## THE MERCHANT SHIPPING (CERTIFICATION OF ENGINEER OFFICER) REGULATIONS 1977

### IMPLICATIONS FOR NAVAL ENGINEERING PERSONNEL

BY

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#### Introduction

Ever since the passing of the Merchant Shipping Act of 1894, various forms of service in the Royal Navy have been recognized as giving exemption from some of the examinations and other requirements needed for service in the Merchant Navy. This recognition has taken the form of:

- (a) *Certificates of Competency*: normally obtained as a result of written and oral examinations conducted by the Board of Trade. (These are the famous and much respected 'Board of Trade Certificates').
- (b) *Certificates of Service*: granted by the Board of Trade in recognition of training and service experience. These allow the holders to practice at an appropriate level in the Merchant Navy without holding a Certificate of Competency.

Although the Board of Trade adopted a fairly liberal attitude towards the issue of these certificates to naval personnel in the days when the machinery and construction of warships and merchant ships were similar, the divergence of practices between the two Services since the war was highlighted in evidence to the Pearson Court of Inquiry which was set up to look into the Shipping Industry in the 1960s. The Pearson recommendations were published in 1967 and subsequently incorporated into the Merchant Shipping Act of 1970.

One of the recommendations of the Pearson C. of I. was that the issue of certificates of service to Royal Naval personnel should be abolished, on the grounds that differences in equipment and operating methods and procedures between the two navies would tend to increase.

Although naval personnel continue to seek employment in the merchant navies at the end of their naval service, the numbers are far less than at the turn of the century when it was common practice. This article is intended to describe the current situation as it affects naval engineering personnel and updates that given in the Appendix to the Navy List which will be amended in due course.

#### Present Situation

Thus the Department of Trade decided that when it overhauled the regulations for Merchant Navy Engineer Officers it would do away with Certificates of Service for the Royal Navy. Its legal instrument for achieving this is the Merchant Shipping (Certification of Marine Engineer Officers) Regulations 1977 which received Parliamentary approval on 16 December 1977. These new regulations have a four-year introductory period at the end of which (1 September 1981) no more Certificates of Service will be issued. This does not mean that Certificates of Service already issued cannot be used after that date, but they will require to be accompanied by a Certificate of Validation. This also applies to Certificates of Competency issued before 1 September 1981. At present no procedure exists for revalidation, but the Department of Trade hope

to achieve further legislation before the 1 September 1981 to render individual revalidation unnecessary. Holders of these certificates may apply to the Superintendent of any Merchant Marine Office for information on the situation. If you wish to obtain and think you are eligible for a Certificate of Service, you must apply by the closing date on a Form EXN18 obtainable from the Registrar General of Shipping and Seamen, Llantrisant Road Llandaff, Cardiff CF5 2YS. The Certificate of Service will cost £25.

These new regulations increase the numbers of endorsements to Certificates of Competency and would have to be studied carefully to determine the numbers and classes of officers which are required to be borne and the appropriate endorsements for the varying sizes of ship employed in the different trading areas.

The equivalence of a validated Certificate of Service or Certificate of Competency with the new Certificates of Competency is given in TABLE I. Employment outside these areas will involve examination to acquire the appropriate Service Endorsement.

TABLE I

<i>Class of 1894 Certificate</i>	<i>Equivalent Class of Certificate of Competency issued under 1977 Regulations</i>
First Class Engineer	Marine Engineer Officer Class I
Second Class Engineer	Marine Engineer Officer Class 2 with a service endorsement enabling the holder to be carried as Chief Engineer Officer in any ship with a registered power of less than 3000 Kilowatts operating to, from or between any places, or in any ship with registered power of less than 6000 Kilowatts operating within the Near Continental trading area

### The Future

What remains for Royal Navy personnel who wish eventually to serve in the Merchant Navy? After 1 September 1981, all of us without certificates must sit our examinations for the new Certificates of Competency. However, there is still considerable recognition given for our training and employment in the form of the exemptions that the Department of Trade will grant.

A Certificate of Competency is made up of four distinct areas:

- (a) An initial training requirement which covers the craft training requirement and is the same irrespective of the class of certificate.
- (b) A qualifying sea service requirement, this varies with the class of certificate.
- (c) An approved 4-day fire-fighting course.
- (d) A pass in the examination for the class of certificate which is both written and oral. The examination is in two parts:

Part A—this comprises papers on subjects such as Mathematics, Mechanics, Heat Engines, Drawing.

Part B—this is in two sections:

Section I—Electrotechnology and Naval Architecture.

Section II—Engineering Knowledge and an oral examination.

The Department of Trade will:

- (a) recognize all General List marine engineer officers qualifying prior to September 1965 and artificer/mechanician craft training given in the Royal Navy as being adequate to satisfy the requirements of craft skill for all Certificates of Competency. Marine Engineer Officers qualifying after September 1965 will be required to have completed a further 9 months

seatime in the marine engineering department in addition to that required in paragraph (b) below. The only exceptions are the University Cadet and Direct Graduate Entry Officers who will have to submit details of the craft training they have received;

- (b) assess sea service performed by Royal Navy marine engineering personnel in warships as if it had been articulated sea service in ships of the Merchant Navy. This service must be concerned with the propulsion plant; time spent as a flight-deck engineer will not count. The minimum sea service requirements are usually satisfied by not less than 21 months' service in the marine Engineering department of which at least 9 months should have been spent on main machinery watchkeeping after having completed training for the Unit Watchkeeping Certificate. This 9 months 'core time' must be spent in either a steam-driven ship or a diesel-driven ship. Gas turbine and nuclear-powered ships at present do not count for 'core time', but may count for the extra sea service required;
- (c) *not* waive any requirement to attend their fire-fighting courses on the strength of Royal Navy training, there being significant differences between what is taught in the two navies;
- (d) allow the following exemptions for training:

*Exemptions from Part A of the Examinations*

Candidates who have passed the terminal examination of courses specified in this paragraph to the standard required by the Department may be granted exemptions from Part A of the examinations on a subject for subject basis, the subjects being those stipulated on the terminal certificate of the course:

- (i) Candidates who have completed courses in the United Kingdom leading to the Higher National Diploma or the Higher National Certificate in Engineering may be granted exemptions from the Class 1, Class 2 and Class 3 examinations. (\*)
- (ii) Candidates who have been awarded Engineering Degrees by a University in the United Kingdom may be granted exemptions from Class 1, Class 2 and Class 3 examinations. Candidates who have obtained similar qualifications at a University or place of Higher Education within the Commonwealth may be allowed the same exemptions provided they can satisfy the Department of the suitability of the courses taken. (†)
- (iii) Candidates who have completed the Engineer Cadet Training Scheme leading to the Ordinary National Diploma in Engineering and Supplementary Certificate may be granted exemptions from Class 1, Class 2 and Class 3 examinations.
- (iv) Candidates who have completed the Engineer Cadet Training Scheme leading to the City and Guilds of London Institute Marine Engineering Technicians (Course 291) and Advanced Technicians' Certificate may be granted exemptions from the Class 2 and Class 3 examinations.
- (v) Candidates who have attended courses in the United Kingdom leading to the Ordinary National Diploma or to the Ordinary National Certificate in Engineering may be granted exemptions from the Class 2 and Class 3 certificates. (‡)

*Exemptions from Part B of the Examinations*

Candidates who have passed the terminal examinations of courses specified in this paragraph to the standards required by the Department may be granted exemptions from Section I of the Part B examination

on a subject for subject basis, the subjects being those stipulated on the terminal certificate of the course. No exemption is granted from Section II of the Part B examination:

- (i) Candidates who have completed the Engineer Cadet Training Scheme leading to the Ordinary National Diploma in Engineering and Supplementary Certificate may be granted exemption from the Class 1 and Class 2 examinations. The exemptions from the subject Electrotechnology is conditional upon this subject having been passed in both the Diploma and Supplementary examinations.
- (ii) Candidates who have completed the Engineering Cadet Training Scheme leading to the City and Guilds of London Institute Advanced Technician Certificate may be granted exemption from the Class 2 examination.
- (iii) Candidates who have obtained an Engineering Degree, Higher National Diploma or Higher National Certificate may be granted exemptions from the Class 1 and Class 2 examinations. (†)(\*)

Thus, General List Engineer Officers, including those who have taken the full 3-year Naval Engineering Degree course at the Royal Naval Engineering College, Manadon, Plymouth may seek exemptions under the clauses marked (†).

Special Duties List Engineer Officers holding Higher National Certificates or Diplomas in Engineering may seek exemptions under the clauses marked (\*).

Marine Engineering Artificers who hold Ordinary National Certificates or Diplomas may seek exemptions under the clause marked (‡).

The Department of Trade will usually recognize Certificates issued by the Technician Education Council on a subject for subject basis.

The full details of the requirements for the new style Certificates are contained in the Department of Trade publication *Certificates of Competency in the Merchant Navy, Marine Engineer Officer Requirements*. Another useful publication is *Certificates of Competency in the Merchant Navy, Marine Engineer Officer Examinations, Syllabuses and Specimen Papers*. Both are obtainable from Her Majesty's Stationery Office.

Application for the examination for a Certificate of Competency is made on Form EXN3 obtainable from the Registrar General of Shipping and Seamen, Llantrisant Road, Llandaff, Cardiff CF5 2YS, or any Mercantile Marine Office (or through your naval Administrative Authority if abroad) and forwarded as directed on the form. Applications should be supported:

- (a) in the case of officers, by a statement of service (Form DGDA 902) which may be obtained on request from the Ministry of Defence (Naval Secretary). Forms S450 ('Flimsies') in respect of all seagoing appointments and of last appointment whether seagoing or not should also be produced by the officer concerned. (It should be noted that duplicates of Form S450 are no longer held by the Ministry of Defence). Candidates should also provide watchkeeping certificates;
- (b) in the case of ratings, by copies of Service Certificates and History Sheets. Candidates should also provide watchkeeping certificates.

The application must also be accompanied by the examination fee, details of which are given in the Department of Trade publication *Fees for Marine Surveys and Other Marine Services* obtainable from H.M. Stationery Office.

You should bear in mind that you do not have to take every subject at one sitting. The oral examination that forms one subject in Part B section II of the examination is compulsory; it is based on Merchant Navy practice and candidates will find it far easier to pass if they have served for a short period on board a merchant ship, albeit in a lesser post to that which they aspire.