

Merchant Mariner Credential Processing Delays Update

The National Maritime Center (NMC) continues to experience a greater-than-average volume of applications for Merchant Mariner Credentials (MMC). This bulletin outlines actions to be taken for U.S. mariners holding national and STCW endorsements.

National Endorsements: The United States Coast Guard (USCG) is exercising its authority under Title 46, United States Code, Section 7507, and is granting an extension of national endorsements for any mariner whose MMC expires on or after December 1, 2016. This extension is effective immediately and will be valid until September 30, 2017. Mariners, employers, and owner/operators are encouraged to print a copy of the [letter explaining the extension](#). All mariners sailing exclusively under the authority of their national endorsement on inland or coastwise voyages are advised to carry a copy of this letter with their expired credentials and produce it upon the request of USCG personnel or other officials. Expiration dates of new MMCs will be 5 years from the date of expiration of the previous MMC, in accordance with current policy. The extension of validity of expired credentials provides the opportunity for a mariner to work under the authority of that credential during this period, so there is no loss of MMC validity associated with this decision.

STCW Endorsements: The NMC is focusing on evaluating applications with International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification, and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (STCW) endorsements. In accordance with Regulation I/2 of STCW, we are unable to extend the validity of these endorsements. As a result, applications containing MMCs with STCW endorsements will be processed as quickly as possible. This includes credential applications with an endorsement currently has a limitation of “Not valid after Dec 31, 2016” associated with it.

Mariner Medical Certificates: Mariners must continue to maintain a valid mariner medical certificate.

Nothing stated in this bulletin is intended to relieve mariners from their responsibility to submit timely applications. Mariners should continue to submit their renewal requests in time to receive a new MMC prior to the expiration date of their credentials. Mariners who have already submitted renewal applications do not need to resubmit their requests for renewal.

For additional information, please visit the [NMC website](#), call 1-888-IASKNMC (427-5662), or e-mail IASKNMC@uscg.mil.

Sincerely,

//K. R. Martin//

Kirsten R. Martin
Captain, U.S. Coast Guard
Commanding Officer