

Unapproved Evening Courses at Mid-Atlantic Maritime Academy

An investigation by the Coast Guard has revealed that between January 2015 and December 2019, instruction hours designated for evening courses (courses scheduled to convene at or after 3PM) provided at Mid-Atlantic Maritime Academy in Virginia were cut by 50% or more. End-of-course exams issued for these courses may also have been compromised. The impacted courses did not meet the time requirements contained in the terms of their respective Coast Guard Approvals. As a result, these evening courses were not Coast Guard approved and certificates issued for these courses are invalid.

To avoid interruption of the Marine Transportation System, the National Maritime Center (NMC) will allow mariners to retain endorsements associated with these impacted courses by taking the following actions within six months of this bulletin or prior to any future application to the NMC, whichever is later:

Mariners with a valid MMC or valid endorsements related to the impacted courses:

1. Submit an affidavit to the NMC attesting to competence in the subjects covered by the impacted course(s) and attesting to integrity on the end of course exams for the impacted courses. A sample affidavit can be found at the following link: <https://dco.uscg.mil/Mid-Atlantic-Maritime-Academy-Course/>.
2. The affidavit described above must be accompanied by a certification from a current or most recent (if not currently employed) mariner employer, attesting to competence of the mariner. The individual certifying on behalf of the marine employer must be familiar with the mariner's work and must be able to judge the mariner's qualifications, performance and competence. Companies should authorize, but shall not require, individuals with appropriate knowledge of the mariner's performance and competence to provide these certifications. A sample certification can be found at the following link: <https://dco.uscg.mil/Mid-Atlantic-Maritime-Academy-Course/>.
3. If unable to provide an affidavit or marine employer certification, the mariner may retest at Maritime Institute (who purchased Mid-Atlantic Maritime Academy in late 2021) using the end of course test for the current version of the impacted courses. Coordination for retaking the tests must be done directly with Maritime Institute and comply with their requirements.

4. If unable to take and pass an end of course test, the mariner must retake the course to obtain credit and retain any associated endorsements.
5. All documentation should be sent to the following e-mail: MCFTF@uscg.mil.

Individuals with no valid MMC or no valid endorsements related to the impacted courses:

If a course certificate is not expired on the date of this bulletin, individuals without a valid MMC may retest at Maritime Institute using the end of course test for the current version of the impacted courses to retain credit for the course. The time to retest will be up until the date that the certificate would have expired (using expiration terms applicable on the date of this bulletin) or six months from the date of this bulletin, whichever is later.

Failure to take action:

An individual who does not take any action, as indicated above, will lose any endorsements received in connection with the impacted courses. Furthermore, sea service earned while sailing under endorsements to which a mariner was not lawfully entitled may also be impacted.

Impacted mariners will receive an e-mail or letter from the NMC to advise if they are impacted by the unapproved evening courses. Mariners and marine employers with questions about this bulletin should contact the NMC Compliance Investigations Branch at (304) 433-3466 or via e-mail at MCFTF@uscg.mil.

Sincerely,

/B. W. Clare/

Bradley W. Clare
Captain, U.S. Coast Guard
Commanding Officer