



# SHIP SAFETY BULLETIN

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**Subject:** Revised Temporary Measures Regarding Marine Personnel Certificates, Discharge Books, Marine Medical Certificates & Marine Counter Services

On April 1, 2021, this Ship Safety Bulletin (SSB) replaces [SSB #21/2020](#) issued on October 08, 2020.

## *Purpose*

This Bulletin provides revised temporary measures pertaining to marine personnel certificates, discharge books, marine medical certificates and general marine counter services implemented during the ongoing global COVID-19 pandemic.

## *Scope*

This Bulletin applies to:

- Canadian Seafarers; and
- Authorized Representatives of Canadian-flagged vessels.

## *What you need to know*

### **1. Marine Personnel Certificates**

Transport Canada Marine Safety and Security has determined, as specified below, that certain personnel certificates be granted an extension of validity to address challenges related to the limited availability of training and restricted movement during the global COVID-19 pandemic. This approach is aligned with the International Maritime Organization (IMO) Circular Letter [No. 4204/Add.5/Rev. 1](#), dated April 02, 2020, that

#### **Keywords:**

1. Marine Personnel Certificates
2. Medical Certificates
3. Discharge Books
4. Marine Counter Services
5. Oral Examinations

#### **Questions concerning this Bulletin should be addressed to:**

AMSP  
Transport Canada  
Marine Safety and Security  
Tower C, Place de Ville  
330 Sparks Street, 8<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0N8

**Contact us at:** [marinesafety-securitemaritime@tc.gc.ca](mailto:marinesafety-securitemaritime@tc.gc.ca) or 1-855-859-3123 (Toll Free).

encourages maritime administrations to take a pragmatic and practical approach regarding the extension of seafarer certificates.

Furthermore, the Master of a Canadian-flagged vessel is reminded of their obligation under subsection 206(2) of the *Marine Personnel Regulations* to ensure that each member of the vessel's crew, at the beginning of their employment, is trained to perform their assigned duties vital to safety or the prevention or mitigation of pollution.

There is no requirement to submit an application to obtain an extension referenced in this present Ship Safety Bulletin. It is recommended that you retain a copy of this Bulletin with your certificate, especially when serving on a vessel making an international voyage(s).

### **A) Extension of Certificates of Competency**

- 1) Any Certificate of Competency, that otherwise would have expired between October 1, 2019 and March 15, 2020 (but which was extended by previous Ship Safety Bulletins) is now further automatically extended until June 30, 2021.
- 2) Any Certificate of Competency, that otherwise would have expired between March 16, 2020 and June 30, 2021 (but which was extended by previous Ship Safety Bulletins) will now remain valid until the earlier of:
  - (a) 15 months from the date of expiry on the face of the certificate, or
  - (b) December 31, 2021.

Please note: This Ship Safety Bulletin has no application to a Certificate of Competency that already has an expiry date on the face of the certificate of after December 31, 2021.

### **B) Extension of Certificates of Proficiency**

Any Canadian seafarer, **holding a Certificate(s) of Proficiency** in marine emergency duties that has expired, or is otherwise set to expire on or before December 31, 2021, is granted, regarding their respective **Certificate(s) of Proficiency** in marine emergency duties, an extension until December 31, 2021. This extension only applies to the following certificates, issued in accordance with the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers, 1978, as amended,

- “STCW basic safety” Certificate of Proficiency
- “Survival craft and rescue boats other than fast rescue boats” Certificate of Proficiency
- “Advanced fire-fighting” Certificate of Proficiency

Despite this extension of the validity period, of the above referenced certificates, Canadian seafarers who require STCW refresher training are strongly encouraged to prioritize booking a course(s) with a recognized training institution. Please consult the Transport Canada publication titled [Recognized Institutions and Approved Training Courses – TP 10655E](#) for a complete list of training institutions and courses.

Please note: This Ship Safety Bulletin has no application to a Certificate of Proficiency that already has an expiry date on the face of the certificate of after December 31, 2021.

## **Renewal of Certificates**

Despite any extension granted under this Ship Safety Bulletin, it is strongly recommended that any seafarer in possession of a certificate that will soon expire, start the process to renew their certificate as soon as possible.

Please contact your local Marine Safety and Security Transport Canada Centre using the contact information contained within this Ship Safety Bulletin.

## **2. Medical Certificates**

### **Medical Certificates to work domestically:**

For seafarers who require a medical certificate to obtain or maintain a certificate of competency to work domestically, a Marine Medical Certificate that is currently valid, and that otherwise would have expired on or before August 31, 2021, is granted, regarding their **Marine Medical Certificate**, an extension until September 30, 2021. There is no requirement to submit an application to obtain this extension.

If your marine medical certificate is set to soon expire, we recommend you see a Transport Canada designated Marine Medical Examiner at your earliest opportunity.

### **Please note:**

1) The extended validity of a Transport Canada marine medical certificate does not extend the validity of a Certificate of Competency.

2) Nothing under this Ship Safety Bulletin affects the validity, duration, nor expiry date of a Provisional Marine Medical Certificate.

### **Medical Certificates to work internationally:**

Transport Canada Marine Safety wishes to remind all seafarers subject to subsection 200(7) of the *Marine Personnel Regulations*, that they must have a valid medical certificate to work overseas. To that end, if your marine medical certificate is set to soon

expire, we recommend you see a Transport Canada designated Marine Medical Examiner at your earliest opportunity; especially as the marine medical certificate extension referenced immediately above may not be recognized by a given international jurisdiction. Do not wait until the last minute. The list of designated Marine Medical Examiners can be found at the following link:

<https://wwwapps.tc.gc.ca/saf-sec-sur/4/mme-mdm/eng/marine-medical-examiners/search>

Also, we ask that you remind your Marine Medical Examiner to send your information to Transport Canada as soon as possible.

### **3. Discharge Books**

Marine Safety and Security Transport Canada Centres are issuing discharge books where health laws, regulations, other legal instruments, and guidelines and facilities permit. Please contact your local Transport Canada Centre to see if this in-person service can be provided, and if needing to seek an appointment.

#### **If you are unable to obtain a discharge book:**

The Master of the vessel on which you performed sea time duties, the Chief Engineer of the vessel, or the vessel's Authorized Representative can record, sign and stamp your sea service record using either nautical or engineering testimonial forms which are relevant to the position held. Both forms are readily available through the Transport Canada forms catalogue (Forms [82-0546](#) and [82-0666](#) respectively).

### **4. Marine Counter Services**

To ensure the health and safety of employees and clients, and minimize risk of exposure to COVID-19, 'walk-in' service at Marine Safety and Security Transport Canada Centres has been suspended.

However, we have expanded our ability to deliver services digitally, and have made some permanent changes to how we deliver our marine counter services, including:

- Delivery of in-person services (e.g. written exams, issuance of discharge books) will be delivered **'by appointment only.'** Appointments must be scheduled in advance to ensure physical distancing at Marine Safety and Security Transport Canada Centres can be maintained. To schedule an appointment, contact your local Transport Canada Centre by telephone.
- Clients are asked to make payments via telephone when making or confirming their appointment; credit cards will be the preferred method of payment.
- The opportunity to take oral exams virtually (via Microsoft Teams) will now be available (refer to #5), while certificates of competency and certificates of proficiency may also be completed through digital means (refer to #1).

- Coming in early 2021, submission of electronic/digital (e.g. scanned) documentation will be available via Canada Post's secure file transfer system (epost Connect), ensuring protection of clients' personal information.

As always, Transport Canada Marine Safety and Security remains committed to providing services over the phone at the numbers listed below.

Our intention is to continue to improve these interim solutions to further expand our ability to deliver services that are more consistent across our regions. We also aim to offer you a greater ability to access the support and services you need, when and how you like, leveraging a variety of digital solutions.

## **5. Oral Examinations**

In an effort to offer better services to our clients, oral examinations can now be administered using virtual tools. This will allow candidates to demonstrate their marine competencies in a secure environment, without having to physically travel to a Transport Canada office to conduct their oral examination. **This does not apply to written examinations.**

Please call your local office to discuss and make an appointment:

### **Atlantic Region:**

#### **New Brunswick**

- Bathurst: 506-548-7491
- Saint John: 506-636-4748

#### **Newfoundland & Labrador:**

- Corner Brook: 709-637-4390
- Lewisporte: 709-535-2503
- St. John's: 709-772-3430 or 709-727-8734

#### **Nova Scotia:**

- Dartmouth: 902-461-3861
- Port Hawkesbury: 902-625-0803
- Sydney: 902-564-7002
- Yarmouth: 902-742-6860

**Prince Edward Island:**

- Charlottetown: 902-566-7987 or 902-566-7986

**Ontario Region:**

- Sarnia: 519-383-1826
- Toronto.: 416-952-1018
- Kingston: 613-545-8676
- St. Catharines: 905-688-4360
- Thunder Bay: 807-766-2600

**Québec Region:**

- Îles-de-la-Madeleine: 418-986-6275
- Montréal: 1-855-842-7042 or 514-283-0574
- Québec: 1-888-649-6292 or 418-648-3238
- Rimouski: 1-800-427-4417 or 418-722-3040
- Sept-Îles: 418-968-4991

**Prairie & Northern Region:**

- All offices: 1-888-463-0521

**Pacific Region:**

- Vancouver: 604-666-0834
- Prince Rupert: 250-627-3045
- Victoria: 250-363-0394
- Nanaimo: 250-754-0244