Standard A1.2 – Medical certificate

1. The competent authority shall require that, prior to beginning work on a ship, seafarers hold a valid medical certificate attesting that they are medically fit to perform the duties they are to carry out at sea.

2. In order to ensure that medical certificates genuinely reflect seafarers' state of health, in light of the duties they are to perform, the competent authority shall, after consultation with the shipowners' and seafarers' organizations concerned, and giving due consideration to applicable international guidelines referred to in Part B of this Code, prescribe the nature of the medical examination and certificate.

3. This Standard is without prejudice to the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers, 1978, as amended ("STCW"). A medical certificate issued in accordance with the requirements of STCW shall be accepted by the competent authority, for the purpose of Regulation 1.2. A medical certificate meeting the substance of those requirements, in the case of seafarers not covered by STCW, shall similarly be accepted.

4. The medical certificate shall be issued by a duly qualified medical practitioner or, in the case of a certificate solely concerning eyesight, by a person recognized by the competent authority as qualified to issue such a certificate. Practitioners must enjoy full professional independence in exercising their medical judgement in undertaking medical examination procedures.

5. Seafarers that have been refused a certificate or have had a limitation imposed on their ability to work, in particular with respect to time, field of work or trading area, shall be given the opportunity to have a further examination by another independent medical practitioner or by an independent medical referee.

6. Each medical certificate shall state in particular that:

(a) the hearing and sight of the seafarer concerned, and the colour vision in the case of a seafarer to be employed in capacities where fitness for the work to be performed is liable to be affected by defective colour vision, are all satisfactory; and

(b) the seafarer concerned is not suffering from any medical condition likely to be aggravated by service at sea or to render the seafarer unfit for such service or to endanger the health of other persons on board.

7. Unless a shorter period is required by reason of the specific duties to be performed by the seafarer concerned or is required under STCW:

(a) a medical certificate shall be valid for a maximum period of two years unless the seafarer is under the age of 18, in which case the maximum period of validity shall be one year;

(b) a certification of colour vision shall be valid for a maximum period of six years.

8. In urgent cases the competent authority may permit a seafarer to work without a valid medical certificate until the next port of call where the seafarer can obtain a medical certificate from a qualified medical practitioner, provided that:

(a) the period of such permission does not exceed three months; and

(b) the seafarer concerned is in possession of an expired medical certificate of recent date.

9. If the period of validity of a certificate expires in the course of a voyage, the certificate shall continue in force until the next port of call where the seafarer can obtain a medical certificate from a qualified medical practitioner, provided that the period shall not exceed three months.

10. The medical certificates for seafarers working on ships ordinarily engaged on international voyages must as a minimum be provided in English.

Guideline B1.2 – Medical certificate

Guideline B1.2.1 – International guidelines

1. The competent authority, medical practitioners, examiners, shipowners, seafarers' representatives and all other persons concerned with the conduct of medical fitness examinations of seafarer candidates and serving seafarers should follow the ILO/WHO *Guidelines for Conducting Pre-sea and Periodic Medical Fitness Examinations for Seafarers*, including any subsequent versions, and any other applicable international guidelines published by the International Labour Organization, the International Maritime Organization or the World Health Organization.

Regulation 1.3 – Training and qualifications

Purpose: To ensure that seafarers are trained or qualified to carry out their duties on board ship

1. Seafarers shall not work on a ship unless they are trained or certified as competent or otherwise qualified to perform their duties.

2. Seafarers shall not be permitted to work on a ship unless they have successfully completed training for personal safety on board ship.

3. Training and certification in accordance with the mandatory instruments adopted by the International Maritime Organization shall be considered as meeting the requirements of paragraphs 1 and 2 of this Regulation.

4. Any Member which, at the time of its ratification of this Convention, was bound by the Certification of Able Seamen Convention, 1946 (No. 74), shall continue to carry out the obligations under that Convention unless and until mandatory provisions covering its subject matter have been adopted by the International Maritime Organization and entered into force, or until five years have elapsed since the entry into force of this Convention in accordance with paragraph 3 of Article VIII, whichever date is earlier.

Regulation 1.4 – Recruitment and placement

Purpose: To ensure that seafarers have access to an efficient and well-regulated seafarer recruitment and placement system

1. All seafarers shall have access to an efficient, adequate and accountable system for finding employment on board ship without charge to the seafarer.

2. Seafarer recruitment and placement services operating in a Member's territory shall conform to the standards set out in the Code.

3. Each Member shall require, in respect of seafarers who work on ships that fly its flag, that shipowners who use seafarer recruitment and placement services that are based in countries or territories in which this Convention does not apply, ensure that those services conform to the requirements set out in the Code.