

CONSULTATION OPEN ON QOL FRAMEWORK

Seafarers holding a Maritime New Zealand qualification are welcome to comment on how the proposed new and improved qualifications and operational limits framework (QOL framework), released on September 27, may affect them.

Maritime NZ had taken a fresh look at what commercial operators did and what they wanted to do, and identified the issues, challenges and opportunities they faced, said QOL review principal maritime advisor, John Mansell.

The proposed QOL framework aimed to provide better support for seafarers, while retaining the good parts of the current qualifications and adhering to New Zealand's international obligations.

Measuring competence is central to the new framework. Seafarers will have to demonstrate they are competent to gain, maintain and advance their qualifications.

Key changes include:

- shorter sea time at entry level
- the acceptance of recreational sea time towards qualifications
- the ability to progress in the industry without having to gain sea time further out to sea.

The proposed changes will have the greatest impact on people working within restricted limits (current enclosed and inshore limits) because this area has the highest level of maritime activity.

There is a shift in emphasis from gaining sea time to proving competence, through assessment and examination. The focus on competence is carried through to revalidation. It's proposed that this will be a requirement at all levels to ensure currency of skills and knowledge is maintained.

"You can really sum up the key differences between the old framework and the new one in three Cs – competence, consistency and clarity," Mansell said.

The aim was for relevant qualifications and appropriate operational limits that met the industry's needs, while ensuring the safety of vessels, their crew, passengers and cargo, and protection of the marine environment," Mansell said.

"We believe it reflects the diversity of New Zealand's commercial maritime operations and provides what they need to function effectively.

Many seafarers spent their entire career working near the coast and didn't want or need to gain higher qualifications to do their job, he said.

They would be able to advance their careers by gaining experience and endorsement of specialist skills within the operational limits they worked in. They would not need a higher qualification unless they had to become competent in a new area.

"Commercial operators will be able to work within the full extent of the exclusive economic zone using offshore qualifications. Certificates will clearly demonstrate where you can go and what you can do."

The changes would reduce barriers to entering the commercial maritime industry and provide logical pathways for careers, while maintaining the quality of qualifications, which was a priority, Mansell said. "We've taken a pragmatic and safety-based approach ... with extensive input from the industry.

All holders of Maritime NZ qualifications will be required to make the transition to the new qualifications from 2013. "This will happen gradually and helpfully." People would not be disadvantaged in the move to the new framework.

"If you wish to continue doing what you do now there is likely to be little impact. In fact, a lot of people will be able to do more."

Maritime NZ is holding presentations in 17 maritime centres in October and early November to explain the proposed changes and receive verbal feedback. All members of the maritime

community are invited to attend. (See the QOL Review roadshow schedule.) Submissions close on November 19.

The proposal is available from Maritime NZ, phone 04 473-0111, email qolreview@maritimenz.govt.nz or see www.maritimenz.govt.nz/quals-limits

STRONG RESPONSE TO MOSS

More than 100 submissions have been received on proposals to improve New Zealand's commercial vessel safety management system, indicating an excellent level of engagement in the process, says Maritime New Zealand.

Consultation on Maritime NZ's proposal to replace the current safe ship management (SSM) system with a simpler and more robust system, known as the maritime operator safety system (MOSS), took place between April 21 and July 30. Maritime NZ held a nationwide series of meetings to provide information about the MOSS proposal.

By the end of the consultation process, the Maritime NZ panel had received 101 written and 13 oral submissions.

The consultation revealed strong interest in what's being proposed and a high level of engagement with the process, says Maritime NZ's manager of safety research and analysis, Michael Peters.

"While, as expected, not all support the proposals, it is encouraging that so many people have taken the opportunity to have their say, and we'd like to thank everyone who has made a submission.

"A number of useful and constructive suggestions have come in through the process and these will be carefully considered to ensure we come up with the best possible system."

Once the submissions have been analysed, the results will be presented to the MOSS consultation panel, which will in turn make recommendations to Maritime NZ. It will decide what, if any, changes need to be made to the maritime rules. Any rule changes will then go as final drafts to the Ministry of Transport for consideration. If approved by MoT, they could be in place, with any amendments, by the end of 2011.

SEARCH SUSPENDED FOR MAN OVERBOARD

The Rescue Coordination Centre New Zealand suspended its search for a crewman missing from a merchant ship northwest of New Zealand on September 17.

The centre was alerted by maritime radio and mayday broadcasts late afternoon on September 16 that a man was believed to have fallen overboard from the Korean-owned bulk carrier *TPC Napier*, 230 miles northwest of Cape Reinga, while en route from Malaysia to Tauranga.

The man, a foreign national, was identified as missing at about 1730. He had changed into overalls and work boots to carry out maintenance and was not wearing a lifejacket.

The ship turned around and returned to the area where the man was believed to have fallen into the water about 75 minutes earlier. By then, darkness had fallen and wind and sea conditions were very rough, with swells of 3-4m. The location was too far offshore to send a helicopter and conditions prevented a fixed wing aircraft from locating a person in the water.

The tanker *Bunga Kelana Dua* responded to a call for assistance and arrived at the scene at about 0100 but was released at 0230.

Search and rescue officer Dave Wilson said RCCNZ used computer modelling to provide the *Napier* with a search plan. After searching for two hours for the missing man from daybreak, the ship's master advised he was resuming her voyage to Tauranga.

After considering all the survival factors, including a sea temperature of 16 degrees Celsius and the weather and sea

conditions, the centre assessed the man's maximum survival time was seven hours. As nearly 17 hours had elapsed since he was believed to have fallen overboard, the centre decided further searching would have no likelihood of success.

MORE EMAIL USE

Subscriptions to Maritime NZ's consultation email updates have been growing slowly. Users can now make their submissions for consultation or public engagement online. This was recently used for the first time on the maritime operator safety system (MOSS) review.

See www.maritimenz.govt.nz/consultation

BOOKLET MAKES STABILITY SIMPLE

The mysterious science of vessel stability is explained in a new Maritime New Zealand booklet to be released in late October.

Fishing Vessel Stability Guidelines is targeted at commercial fishing operators and others interested in the topic. Complementing the booklet is a laminated flipchart for use on board vessels that summarises the main points.

The booklet and chart aim to providing a clear understanding of how the stability of a boat is created and maintained, and to increase awareness of the most important stability hazards fishing vessels are exposed to.

"Some fishermen tend to look at inclining tests, hydrostatic tables and graphs as 'witchcraft', but these guidelines are about taking the witchcraft out of it," says naval architect Maurice Davis, a former commercial fisherman. He developed the resource with Maritime NZ's industry liaison advisor Darren Guard and nautical analyst Alexander Munro.

"The way the information has been presented hopefully makes it easier for fishermen to understand the mechanics of stability and the way their boat can be affected by different forces," said Davis.

Said Munro: "Although these guidelines have been developed for the fishing industry, the principles relating to the importance of stability and the basic forces that create or reduce stability are relevant to the whole maritime industry."

Email publications@maritimenz.govt.nz, phone 0508 22 55 22 or see www.maritimenz.govt.nz.

NEW RULES FOR PILOTAGE

The new Maritime Rules Part 90: Pilotage 2010, which come into force next April 1, replace pilotage rules introduced in 2003.

The introduction of the new rules follows an extensive review by Maritime New Zealand of the risk assessments developed for all the major ports and harbours under the Port and Harbour Marine Safety Code.

The new rules update existing pilotage limits and introduce new compulsory pilotage areas to better reflect navigation risks. Revalidation and ongoing proficiency requirements have been introduced for pilot licences and pilotage exemption certificates in line with international practice. Entry qualifications for trainee pilots have also been broadened. The changes clarify the training and examination processes for licences and exemption certificates and for continuing professional education for pilots.

Holders of existing pilot licences will be required to renew their licences by April 1, 2012, and holders of pilotage exemptions will have until April 1, 2013 to renew them.

Existing training course approvals stay valid until April 1, 2012, when Maritime NZ must reapprove courses. All licence and exemption holders will have to be assessed annually from April 1, 2012.

The new Part 90 can be found on the rules pages of www.maritimenz.govt.nz.



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