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No.:	RSV 05-2019
Date:	18 June 2019
Journal No.:	2019/600085
Applicable until:	18 June 2024
Supersedes:	
Reference to:	Requirements for health certificate for masters in the Regulations on qualifications and certificates for seafarers, page 945 in Excerpts from the Norwegian passenger and cargo ship legislation 2019

Colour vision requirements for the issue of Certificate for Deck Officer Class 5 Pleasure Craft

Introduction

This circular clarifies which tests to be taken to make sure the colour vision requirements are fulfilled when issuing a Certificate for Deck Officer Class 5 Pleasure Craft.

The Norwegian Maritime Authority has, with the assistance of the Norwegian Centre for Maritime and Diving Medicine (NSMDM), considered which test would be most suitable to assess colour vision prior to issuing a Certificate for Deck Officer Class 5 Pleasure Craft. It has been decided that the same colour vision requirements should apply for this certificate as for professional certificates. A minimum standard for colour vision is set to CIE 2.

As before, candidates will be tested using the Ishihara charts or an equivalent test as the first choice for colour vision testing. This test will be taken at the doctor's office. Candidates who fail the test may be referred to a specialist for further tests. Such referrals must only be made if the doctor is in doubt and considers it possible that the candidate may meet the CIE standard 2 requirements if further tests are taken. If the candidate does not satisfy the colour vision requirements, a restricted certificate may be issued.

Grounds

The colour vision requirements for the issue of Certificate for Deck Officer Class 5 Pleasure Craft are based on the Regulations of 22 December 2011 No. 1523 on qualifications and certificates for seafarers (Qualification Regulations) section 30 (3):

The field of vision shall be normal in at least one eye and the colour vision examined with Ishihara charts or equivalent test shall be normal.

The colour vision requirements to be issued with a professional certificate for navigators are regulated in the STCW Convention. STCW Convention Table A-I/9 has three different standards for colour vision:

- Standard 1 shall be used for masters, deck officers and ratings required to undertake look-out duties on board ships of more than 500 gross tonnage.
- Standard 2 shall be used for masters, deck officers and ratings required to undertake look-out duties on board ships of less than 500 gross tonnage.
- Standard 3 shall be used for engineer officers and engine department personnel and electro-technical officers/ratings on board ships of more than 500 gross tonnage and with propulsion power of more than 750 kW.

Section 30 (3) of the Qualification Regulations states that colour vision must be examined by Ishihara charts or an equivalent test. This means that a CIE standard 1 will apply for the issue of Certificate for Deck Officer Class 5 Pleasure Craft. In practice, this means that there are stricter requirements for issuing these certificates than a professional certificate for navigators on ships of less than 500 gross tonnages.

However, the current practice is that if a seafarer fails the Ishihara test, the colour vision requirements may still be met by passing the lantern test. Compliance with the CIE standard has not been required for the lantern test.

Colour vision test requirements

As mentioned, candidates will still be tested using the Ishihara charts or an equivalent test as first choice for testing colour vision. If the test is failed and further testing is needed, the candidate must as a minimum satisfy CIE standard 2.

Testing of colour vision with regard to the issuing of Certificate for Deck Officer Class 5 Pleasure Craft are in compliance with the content of the Regulations of 5 June 2014 No. 805 on the medical examination of employees on Norwegian ships and mobile offshore units (Health Regulations). When issuing certificates, the colour vision requirements may therefore be satisfied by achieving CIE colour vision standard 2. To achieve CIE standard 2, the OPTEC 900 lantern test or equivalent must be passed in accordance with «*International Recommendations for Colour Vision Requirements for Transport*» from the International Commission on Illumination (CIE-143-2001) or a later edition.

There are two clinics in Norway that are approved to provide follow-up tests of colour vision in accordance with CIE-143-2001 or a later edition:

- Department of Occupational Medicine at Haukeland University Hospital;
- The eye clinic at the National Centre for Optics, Vision and Eye Care at the University of South-Eastern Norway.

Contact lenses or glasses may not be worn for the purpose of improving colour vision, including visual aids with red-tinted glass that enhances the contrast between green, yellow and brown tones.

Restricted certificate

A candidate who does not meet the requirements of normal colour vision may be granted a restricted Certificate for Deck Officer Class 5 Pleasure Craft, provided that the candidate does not operate the craft between sunset and sunrise and in restricted visibility.

If the candidate fails the Ishihara test at the doctor's office, no further tests are needed if the candidate wants to be issued with a restricted certificate.

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