
Marine Engineer Class 3 Certificate of Competency (MEC3)

Please note:

This document is a guide to the [Maritime Rules Part 32, Ships' Personnel – Qualifications](#). For the full legal details, please read the rule itself.

Maritime New Zealand can only decide if you are eligible for a certificate **once your existing qualifications and relevant seagoing service have been checked and confirmed.**

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Part 1: What are the privileges of a Marine Engineer Class 3?

Marine Engineer Class 3 (MEC3) is a qualification issued in accordance with STCW regulation III/1.

As a Marine Engineer Class 3 (MEC3), you can:

- serve as an **officer in charge** of an engineering watch in a manned engine room, or
- be a **designated duty engineer** in a periodically unmanned engine room...

... in any vessel of any main propulsion power and in any waters.

- serve as a **second engineer** on ships of less than 3000kW main propulsion power in New Zealand near-coastal waters.
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Part 2: How do I obtain a MEC3?

Requirements – more details in [Part 4](#)

General	You must be over 18 years of age, be of good character and be medically fit.
Initial training and seagoing service	<p>There are three possible pathways for applicants to MEC3:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. You must have already gained a National Certificate in Mechanical Engineering Level 4 (NZ National Certificate), and have done at least 6 months’ seagoing service; <i>or</i> 2. You must have completed at least 12 months’ combined workshop skills training and seagoing service as part of a training course approved by MNZ; <i>or</i> 3. You must have completed at least 36 months’ of combined workshop skills training and seagoing service, including at least 30 months in the engine department. <p>The seagoing service must have been on commercial vessels or New Zealand warships with engines of 750kW or more, operating outside restricted limits. At least six months must have been served as an engineering watchkeeper under the supervision of an engineer officer.</p> <p>The MEC3 certificate is issued for either motor or steam-powered vessels, depending on the type of vessel you have served on. If you want to get a combined motor and steam certificate you need at least eight months’ service as a watchkeeper, with four months’ watchkeeping on each type of vessel.</p>
Training Record Book	During your seagoing service you must complete an approved Engineer’s Training Record Book and associated project work.
Doing the course	After meeting the training and seagoing service requirements, you attend an approved MEC3 training course , and pass the examinations.
Ancillary certificates	You must also hold STCW ancillary certificates at advanced level in first aid, fire-fighting and survival craft. As a pre-requisite to getting these certificates, you must have already completed the STCW basic safety training.

Help for applicants

Further information

What if my training isn't the NZ Certificate mentioned but I think it may be equivalent?

If you have done a similar course – at least 24 months long – you must provide MNZ with the information in [Part 4 section 2](#) below (**Your initial training**). We may then require you to be assessed to see if the training you have done is to the same standard as the NZ National Certificate:

- If it is deemed equivalent, you still need to do 6 months' seagoing service as above
- If it is *not* deemed equivalent, you can still qualify by doing 36 months' seagoing service.

I served in the Navy. Do I still need to do the MEC3 course?

If you have served in the Royal New Zealand Navy and have:

- *either* a Control Room **or** Boiler Room Watchkeeping Certificate; **and**
- an Auxiliary Machinery Certificate...

... then these cover most of the MEC3 course.

You only need to take the Stability and International Safety Management modules.

What is meant by 'watchkeeping'?

Watchkeeping means being on regular watch for at least eight hours per day in a manned engine room, and/or performing duties as an engineer for at least eight hours a day on vessels operating with a periodically unmanned engine room. During these periods the main engine(s) must be in full use.

I obtained my ancillary certificates overseas – is this okay?

MNZ can only accept certificates obtained through providers approved by ourselves, the Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) or the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) in the UK.

What is meant by workshop skills training?

Pathways 2 and 3 in the table above require that applicants have completed combined workshop skills training and seagoing service.

For Pathway 2, this must be as part of a training course approved by the Director. The total course must be at least 12 months long and a minimum of 6 months must be served as an engineering watchkeeper. Such courses must meet the competence requirements for MEC3 candidates covering each of the specified functions as set out in Table A-III/1 of the STCW Code. The MEC3 diploma course offered by the New Zealand Maritime School is the only such combined course approved by MNZ at present.

For Pathway 3 you must have at least 30 months seagoing service in the engine department.

Under the function "Maintenance and repair at the operational level" for engineer officers in the STCW Code, candidates must attain competence in:

- the appropriate use of hand tools, machine tools and measuring instruments for fabrication and repair on board; and
- maintenance and repair of shipboard machinery and equipment
- maintenance and repair of electrical and electronic equipment

More detail of the knowledge, proficiency and understanding required is set out in Table A-III/1. A copy of the Code is available on the [MNZ website](#).

Your engineer's training record book should provide sufficient details of the workshop skills training completed to enable it to be assessed against the specified competences in the STCW Code.

Help for applicants

I have a 1DTE (1st Class Diesel Trawler Engineer) certificate – can I get an MEC3?

Yes. You must provide evidence of seagoing service completed in the last 10 years on commercial ships of 750kW propulsion power or more that operate beyond restricted limits, while being the holder of that certificate. At least 6 months of that service must have been served as an engineering watchkeeper on those ships.

You will also need to:

- complete the Stability and International Safety Management modules of the approved MEC3 training course and pass the exam
- complete the ancillary courses
- complete and submit an Engineer's Training Record Book
- provide a current Certificate of Medical Fitness.

I have not sailed on ships with auxiliary steam systems – can I still get a MEC3?

If you have not sailed on ships with auxiliary steam boilers and steam systems, and achieved the necessary standards of competence in such systems, your certificate of competency will be endorsed with the limitation "Not valid for use on ships fitted with boilers".

My seagoing service has been gained on super yachts – is this acceptable?

Seagoing service on super yachts will be accepted but only the time actually spent at sea can be credited against the requirements for MEC3. You will need to provide evidence of this on an [Engineer Officer Testimonial Yacht form](#).

Part 3: The application process

These are the standard steps you take to gain your MEC3:

<p>1 Ensure you meet the requirements</p>	<p>Use the information in this guide to check that you meet the training and sea service requirements.</p> <p>Your employer or the training provider where you intend to do your MEC3 course may also be able to advise you.</p> <p>You can also email qualifications@maritimenz.govt.nz, for guidance, but MNZ can only make an official assessment once your formal application is received.</p>
<p>2 Apply to Maritime New Zealand (MNZ)</p>	<p>Complete the application form, provide all necessary documents and pay the fee.</p> <p>Read the list of requirements in Part 4 of this guide carefully to make sure your application is complete. Use the checklist in Part 5 to help you.</p> <p>We require 6-8 weeks to process your application, so please send it in as early as you can. We recommend that you send it to us no later than 1 month before the start of your MEC3 course.</p>
<p>3 MNZ assesses your application</p>	<p>We send you an acknowledgement that we have received your application.</p> <p>As long as you have provided all the necessary documentation, we can start the formal assessment.</p>
<p>4 Take the MEC3 course</p>	<p>MNZ has a list of approved training providers at which you can take your MEC3 course.</p> <p>After passing the written examinations, you must take an oral examination. Either you or the training provider must tell MNZ where and when the oral exam is to take place.</p>
<p>5 Get your ancillary certificates</p>	<p>If you have not already done so, you must also get your ancillary certificates in first aid, fire-fighting and survival craft. As a pre-requisite to getting these certificates, you must have already completed the STCW basic safety training.</p> <p>These may be available through your training provider. Check with them or contact MNZ for a list of approved training providers.</p>
<p>6 MNZ issues you an examination permit to take the oral exam</p>	<p>Once we have satisfactorily assessed your sea service and other requirements, we issue you a permit to take the oral exam.</p> <p>The permit proves to the examiner that you have been satisfactorily assessed by MNZ. You give the permit to the examiner at the start of the exam.</p> <p>Your training provider will send to us your exam results.</p>
<p>7 Send in your ancillary certificates</p>	<p>Once you have all your ancillary certificates, courier certified copies to MNZ. Please send them all together rather than one at a time.</p>
<p>8 MNZ issues your MEC3 certificate</p>	<p>Once we have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • your exam results • evidence of your ancillary certificates <p>...we will issue your MEC3 certificate.</p> <p>Please allow 20 working days (about a month) for this step.</p>

Part 4: Detailed requirements and how to prove you meet them

MNZ must see the documents listed below to confirm you have met each requirement.

We want to see originals of your Training Record Book and project work, but prefer *certified copies* of all other documents. A *certified copy* is a photocopy certified by a Justice of the Peace (JP) or a solicitor of the High Court of New Zealand as being a true and accurate copy. You can find JPs in the Yellow Pages. We also accept copies certified by your training provider.

You should courier your documents to MNZ. If you do send us original documents, we will courier back to you the documents we do not need to keep.

If you have already sent some of these documents for a previous application – and they have not expired – you do not need to send them to us again.

Where the name of a document is shown [like this](#) in this guide, an example can be found on the MNZ website: www.maritimenz.govt.nz.

1 About you

Requirement	Document(s) you must provide
You must be 18 or over and able to prove your identity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Your passport (make sure it has not expired); or Your birth certificate
You need to be of good character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A signed and dated character reference that describes what you are like as a person. It must not be from a family member, must refer to the last 12 months and must be signed and dated. Completed Fit and Proper and Consent to Disclosure forms. These allow MNZ to request a check of your record with the New Zealand Police. If you have lived for more than 12 months in the last five years in any country or countries other than New Zealand, you must also send us a Police clearance for that country or countries.
You need to pass the seafarers' medical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Certificate of Medical Fitness for Seafarers. This is a special type of medical certificate and must be from an MNZ approved medical practitioner or a medical practitioner approved for issuing seafarer medicals in a country (other than New Zealand) that is party to STCW. The medical certificate, which normally lasts for two years, must be valid at the time we issue your exam permit and certificate (that is, after you have completed all your exams and ancillary certificates).

Requirement	Document(s) you must provide
You must meet the prescribed eyesight standards	<p>If your certificate of medical fitness indicates that your eyesight has not met the prescribed standards, you may need to complete a separate eyesight examination by an MNZ-approved optometrist.</p> <p>You must meet the required standards for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a letter eyesight test and an Ishihara colour vision test (a series of plates with coloured dots). <p>These results are sent directly to Maritime New Zealand.</p> <p>The letter eyesight test results must be less than 12 months old at the time we issue your exam permit and certificate.</p> <p>The Ishihara test results are valid for six years.</p>

2 Your initial training

Initial training requirement	Document(s) you must provide
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Certificate in Mechanical Engineering Level 4, or Details of shore-side training such as an apprenticeship or similar, or An equivalent international qualification. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Certificate(s) showing your name and the date If you have obtained an equivalent international certificate, please also provide a certified transcript of your academic records, such as your annual mark sheets. Where these records are not in English, an official transcript of the documents in English must be provided. <p>Note: If you do not have any acceptable certificates then you must have longer service at sea instead (see below).</p>

3 Your service at sea

You must prove you have served your seagoing service. Make sure that the documents you supply contain all these details:

- Name and contact details of your employer
- Name and type of vessel (cargo ship, tanker, bulk carrier etc)
- Type of cargo carried and area of operation
- Engine type, make, model, and output power
- Dates of employment, and sea time between these dates
- Actual watchkeeping time.

Help for applicants

The total seagoing service required will depend on the initial training you have had (see [Part 2](#) above and the [table below](#)). This must have been served on commercial vessels (as defined in [Part 32](#)) or New Zealand warships powered by engines of 750kW or more operating outside restricted limits.

At least 12 months' seagoing service must have been completed within the 10 years immediately before you apply to sit the examination. Where less than 12 months' service is required, it must all have been completed within the last 10 years.

At least six months of that service must have been on engine-room watchkeeping duties under the supervision of an engineer officer. For a combined motor and steam certificate, a minimum of eight months is required – four months on motor ships and four months on steam ships.

Please note:

- Seagoing service acquired as a marine engineer cadet leading to the satisfactory completion of a training programme approved for this qualification by the Director may be counted in full.
- Seagoing service as engineer on commercial ships or New Zealand warships operating **within** restricted limits with:
 - a) main propulsion machinery:
 - i) of 750kW or more; **and**
 - ii) maintained by the ship's engineer; **and**
 - iii) not under a manufacturer's maintenance warranty; **and**
 - b) three or more different types of engineering systems acceptable to the Director,
...may be counted, equivalent to half of the time served, up to a maximum of two months.
- Seagoing service on foreign warships may be counted as equivalent to that on New Zealand warships.
- Seagoing service on pleasure craft with main propulsion machinery of 750 kW or more may be counted in full, if the individual was in paid employment as an engineer on the ship while acquiring that service.

A [seagoing service summary form](#) for recording your sea service is attached to the end of this document.

Help for applicants

Seagoing service requirement	Document(s) you must provide
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For national certificate holders, at least six months' service on vessels powered by engines of 750kW or more operating outside restricted limits; six months must have been on engine room watchkeeping duties. • For those on an approved MEC3 training course, 12 months' combined seagoing service and workshop skills training, on vessels powered by engines of 750kW or more operating outside restricted limits, including at least six months on engine room watchkeeping duties. • For applicants with no initial training: 36 months combined seagoing service and workshop skills training, on vessels powered by engines of 750kW or more operating outside restricted limits, including at least 6 months on engine room watchkeeping duties. • For a combined motor and steam certificate, a minimum of eight months on engine room watchkeeping duties on vessels powered by engines of 750kW or more is required; four of these must have been on motor engine room and four on steam engine room watchkeeping duties. <p>At least 12 months' seagoing service (unless less than 12 months' service is required) must have been completed within the 10 years immediately before you apply to sit the examination.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Certificate of seagoing service or • A discharge book (or discharge certificates) or • A completed Seafarer's Record Book; <p>and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Chief Engineer's, a Master's, or an Employer's reference, including the start and leaving dates and duties undertaken while in service; or • If you have served on pleasure vessels with engines of 750 kW or more, you may enter your sea service on an Engineer Officer Testimonial Yacht form. <p>Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • References must cover your experience, conduct, sobriety and ability • Statutory declarations made by you are not acceptable proof • For discharge books, certified copies must include the personal details page
<p>Engineer's Training Record Book</p>	<p>An Engineer's Training Record Book for Officer in charge of an engineering watch, together with your project work detailing tasks carried out, such as piping diagrams or engine-start procedures.</p> <p>MNZ prefers the International Shipping Federation's <i>On Board Training – Record Book for Engineer Cadets</i>, but others may be acceptable.</p>

4 Your ancillary certificates

These certificates must conform to the International Convention on Standards of Training Certification and Watchkeeping (STCW) – the certificates have an STCW regulation number on them.

Each certificate must also be from an [approved training provider](#), the Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA), or the UK's Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA). Certificates from other providers cannot be accepted.

All certificates must be **less than five years old**.

Ancillary certificates requirement	Document(s) you must provide
Proficiency in Medical First Aid certificate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="715 689 1305 719">• The STCW A-V1/4 Medical First Aid certificate
Advanced Fire-Fighting certificate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="715 757 1385 786">• The STCW A-V1/3 Advanced Fire-Fighting certificate
Proficiency in Survival Craft and Rescue Boats certificate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="715 824 1369 875">• The STCW A-V1/2 Proficiency in Survival Craft and Rescue Boats certificate

Help for applicants

Part 5: Application checklist

Courier your complete application, including all necessary documents and the fee, to:

**Certification and Ship Registration
Maritime New Zealand
Level 10
1 Grey Street
WELLINGTON 6011**

Before sending your application, use this checklist to make sure you have enclosed all the necessary documents. Make sure all documents are complete and **signed** and **dated** if appropriate.

We require 6-8 weeks to process your application, so please send it in as early as you can. We recommend that you send it to us no later than one month before the start of your MEC3 course.



	The Application form – remember to sign in both boxes on page 3
	Four passport-sized photos
	Payment in New Zealand dollars
	Passport <i>or</i> Birth Certificate
	Change of name document (only if needed)
	The Fit and Proper Person form , including the Consent to Disclosure
	Character reference
	Employer's reference
	Seafarer's medical certificate
	Certificate of seagoing service <i>or</i> Seafarer's Record Book showing your seagoing service
	Training Record Book and associated project work

Once you have your obtained your ancillary certificates, send them together to MNZ:

	Proficiency in Medical First Aid certificate
	Advanced Fire Fighting certificate
	Proficiency in Survival Craft and Rescue Boats certificate

