

# Chief Mate

---

**This guideline is for new applicants for  
a Chief Mate certificate of competency**



# Chief Mate

---

Last updated: June 2016.

This document is uncontrolled if printed, please refer to the Maritime New Zealand website for the latest version.

---

## In this guide

1. Overview	2
2. Requirements	3
2.1 Prior certification and qualifications	3
2.2 Sea service	4
2.3 Training and experience	4
2.4 Fit and proper person	7
2.5 Medical examination and eyesight tests	8
2.6 Identity	9
3. When and how to apply	10
3.1 Copies of supporting documents	10
3.2 Fees and payment options	11
3.3 Application process	12
3.4 Checklist	14
3.5 Where to send your application	16
4. Contact us for help	17
5. Forms	18

# 1. Overview

---

## Chief Mate

This guideline is for new applicants for the Chief Mate certificate of competency. It does not cover recognition of an equivalent certificate obtained outside New Zealand.

The information in this guideline covers training, sea service and other requirements for the certificate, how to apply and pay for your certificate, and where to find more information.

Your Chief Mate certificate is valid for five years.

For more information about the requirements for recognition and renewal (revalidation) of certificates, refer to the Maritime New Zealand (MNZ) website:

**[maritimenz.govt.nz/seafarers](https://maritimenz.govt.nz/seafarers)**

This certificate corresponds with a certificate issued under regulation II/2 of the International Convention on the Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers, 1978, as amended (STCW).

With this certificate, you can perform the functions and duties of Chief Mate on a vessel of any size in any operating area.

You can also perform the functions and duties of Watchkeeper Deck on a vessel of any gross tonnage (GT) in any operating area.

From Chief Mate, you can progress to Master.

### **Disclaimer:**

These guidelines provide information and explanations about the requirements set out in the maritime rules, but are not a substitute for the rules themselves, which are the law. These guidelines refer to provisions in the Maritime Rules Part 32, Seafarer Certification. The Director of Maritime New Zealand (MNZ) will grant a certificate only when satisfied that all requirements have been met. In this guideline, any references to 'we' or Maritime New Zealand (MNZ) relating to a decision about the issue or renewal of any seafarer certificate are references to the Director or a person acting under the Director's delegated authority.

**[maritimenz.govt.nz/rules](https://maritimenz.govt.nz/rules)**

## 2. Requirements

---

Before you spend time doing sea service and training, we recommend you check that you can meet the medical fitness and eyesight standards (including for colour vision), and that you understand the fit and proper person requirements.

To get this certificate, you need to prove that you meet all of the requirements. In summary, you need to:

- be medically fit and have good eyesight
- be of good character and a fit and proper person
- have a certificate of competency as Watchkeeper Deck or equivalent
- prove you have met the minimum sea service requirements
- complete and pass an approved Chief Mate training course
- have the required ancillary certificates
- pass MNZ's final exam.

Each of these requirements and how to prove that you meet them is explained below.

You must also have English conversation, reading and writing skills appropriate to the responsibilities and functions for the level of your certificate, so that you can satisfactorily complete training, pass examinations and discharge your duties.

### **2.1 Prior certification and qualifications**

You must have a Watchkeeper Deck certificate of competency or equivalent.

## 2. Requirements (continued)

---

### 2.2 Sea service

Your sea service must be relevant and appropriate to the requirements set out in the maritime rules. In practice, this will require you to obtain at least 12 months' sea service on board vessels of 500GT or more while holding a Watchkeeper Deck certificate or equivalent.

All of your sea service must be completed in the 10 years immediately before you apply for the certificate.

#### Proving your sea service

You are responsible for making sure your sea service is documented and verified by your ship's master or company.

To support your sea service, you must provide at least one of the following documents for each vessel you have served on:

- *certificate of sea service* (available on MNZ's website)
- completed seafarer's record book
- discharge certificate or discharge book (ensuring that any section on watchkeeping is appropriately signed off).

If it is not included in one of the documents above, you must also provide a reference (on company letterhead), from the ship's master or your employer. The reference(s) must state the start and end dates of your service and duties while in service. Any references must cover your experience, conduct, sobriety and ability.

The documents you provide must contain all of the following details for each vessel you have served on:

- your employer's name and contact details
- the name, tonnage and type of vessel (for example, cargo vessel, tanker, bulk carrier)
- the type of cargo carried and area of operation
- the dates you were employed and the sea time completed between those dates
- your duties (including watchkeeping).

Any statutory declarations you have made are *not* acceptable as proof of your sea service.

## 2. Requirements (continued)

---

### Calculating sea service for voyages

Relevant qualifying sea service is expected to be on voyages of 24 hours or more, calculated as follows:

- from the sign-on date of starting work on the ship to the sign-off date of discharge (both dates are inclusive)
- by counting each whole calendar month during this period as one month
- for multiple voyages, by adding extra days that do not fall within a calendar month together, with each addition of 30 days to be calculated as one month.

Extended time in port is generally not counted as sea service, and nor is time on leave.

#### Note:

Voyage means a voyage between a port or place of departure and a ship's final port or place of arrival. It includes any period of 24 hours (or more) where you are signed on or employed on the vessel and you remain on board.

**For example:** If your service record shows your sign-on date as 3 March and sign-off date as 14 April, your sea service would be calculated as one month (3 March to 2 April) and 12 days (from 3 to 14 April inclusive).

For more information about calculating your sea service, refer to the MNZ website:

[maritimenz.govt.nz/seafarers](https://maritimenz.govt.nz/seafarers)

### Sea service pre-assessment

If you are unsure about whether you have met the sea service requirements, you can ask us to assess your sea service time before you make your full application. We charge a fee to do this (see *3.2 Fees and payment options*).

To have your sea service pre-assessed, you need to:

- apply for pre-assessment using MNZ's *pre-assessment form*
- pay a pre-assessment fee
- send us the documents we need (see *Proving your sea service*) in order to check your sea service.

#### Note:

If you are pre-assessed and have the required sea service for the Chief Mate certificate, add your pre-assessment reference number to your *seafarer certificate application form*.

## 2. Requirements (continued)

---

### 2.3 Training and experience

The training and experience required for this certificate of competency must involve navigational watchkeeping functions and duties at the management level and be supervised by the master or appropriately qualified deck officer.

#### Training

You must attend and pass a Chief mate training course that is acceptable to the Director of MNZ to achieve all of the required competencies for this certificate, as specified in STCW Convention section A-II/2. For more information about approved training providers and the Chief Mate competency framework, refer to the MNZ website:

**[maritimenz.govt.nz/seafarers](http://maritimenz.govt.nz/seafarers)**

#### Final examination

You must pass a final exam to show you have met the standards of competency specified in section A-II/2 of the STCW Convention.

The final exam is currently an oral examination by an MNZ-approved Maritime Examiner, which is usually arranged by your training provider.

Your results will be sent to MNZ.

Refer to the MNZ website for more information:

**[maritimenz.govt.nz/seafarers](http://maritimenz.govt.nz/seafarers)**

## 2. Requirements (continued)

### Ancillary certificates

You must provide copies of the ancillary certificates you gained as part of your Chief Mate training. Your training provider should also offer this training and will provide you with a certificate for each of these courses to confirm you have demonstrated proficiency in the required skills.

If you already have an ancillary certificate that demonstrates proficiency in the areas listed below, and at the required level, you may use it – as long as the specific requirements are met and the certificate is still current (not expired) at the time MNZ issues your Chief Mate certificate.

Document(s) you must provide	Ancillary certificate requirements
STCW basic training	STCW basic training that complies with STCW A-VI/1 paragraph 2 and covers basic personal survival techniques (A-VI/1-1), fire prevention and fire fighting (A-VI/1-2), elementary first aid (A-VI/1-3) and personal safety and social responsibility (A-VI/1-4). This may be issued as one certificate citing the four elements or as four separate certificates
Proficiency in survival craft and rescue boats other than fast rescue boats (PISC)	STCW survival craft and rescue boats other than fast rescue boats certificate that complies with STCW Code section A-VI/2 paragraphs 1-4 (Table A-VI/2-1)
Advanced fire fighting	STCW advanced fire-fighting certificate that complies with STCW Code section A-VI/3.6 paragraphs 1-4 (Table A-VI/3)
Medical care on board ship	STCW charge of medical care on board ship certificate that complies with STCW Code section A-VI/4.2
Global Maritime Distress and Safety System radio operator (GMDSS)	As provided for in Maritime Rule 32.114, or recognised equivalent certificate that complies with STCW IV/2

Your ancillary certificates must:

- be current (not expired) when we issue your Chief Mate certificate  
Note: The following STCW ancillary certificates must be less than five years old from the date of issue (or, if older, you must demonstrate that you have maintained the required standard of competency to undertake the tasks, duties and responsibilities specified in the relevant STCW tables):
  - STCW A-VI/1-1 basic personal survival techniques
  - STCW A-VI/1-2 fire prevention and fire fighting
  - STCW A-VI/2-1 proficiency in survival craft and rescue boats other than fast rescue boats (PISC)

STCW A-VI/3 advanced fire fighting

## 2. Requirements (continued)

---

Although not an STCW requirement, we encourage you to maintain the currency of your certificates for first aid and medical care on board ship, in accordance with the requirements of the issuing organisation (which usually require refresher training every two years).

Your certificates must also:

- conform to the STCW regulations and have the appropriate STCW regulation number
- be from a training provider approved under the New Zealand Education Act or by the Director of MNZ or from a training provider in a country where the Director has determined that ancillary training is STCW-compliant. (Refer to the recognition guidelines on MNZ's website for information about recognition of ancillary certificates obtained outside New Zealand)

be seen by us before we can issue your Chief Mate certificate.

### Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS) certificate

Before we can issue your Chief Mate certificate, you must provide MNZ with a certified copy of a valid GMDSS certificate of competency as a specialist radio operator that complies with STCW regulation IV/2. To be valid, your GMDSS certificate must be less than five years old from the date of issue.

A valid GMDSS certificate is required for the prerequisite Watchkeeper Deck certificate. Information about renewing your GMDSS certificate is available in the renewal guidelines on MNZ's website.

If you have a GMDSS certificate from a foreign country, refer to the recognition guidelines to see if it is from a country whose certificates we will recognise and the process that applies.

**Note:** If you intend to work on ship registered by a flag state other than New Zealand, you will need to check with the administration of that flag state whether it will recognise both your Chief Mate certificate and your GMDSS certificate (if it is from a country other than New Zealand).

### Security awareness training

MNZ strongly recommends that you also get an ancillary certificate of proficiency in security awareness training (STCW A-VI/6-1). This certificate is needed if you wish to work on any ship that the International Ship and Port Facility Security (ISPS) Code applies to.

If you do not provide this ancillary certificate, your certificate will have a condition stating that without a current certificate of proficiency in security awareness training certificate (STCW A-VI/6-1), it is not valid for vessels to which ISPS applies.

We will accept a proficiency in security awareness training certificate that has been approved by the administration of any country with which New Zealand has an agreement for recognition of STCW certificates.

For more information about security awareness training or the recognition process, refer to the ancillary guidelines or recognition guidelines, respectively, on the MNZ website:

**[maritimenz.govt.nz/seafarers](http://maritimenz.govt.nz/seafarers)**

## 2. Requirements (continued)

---

### 2.4 Fit and proper person

We need to confirm that you are of good character. To help us do this, there are several forms we need from you, which are outlined below.

Requirement	Document(s) you must provide
Be of good character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A completed <i>fit and proper person form</i>, which must have been signed and dated no more than three months before we receive your application</li><li>• A police clearance report for any country or countries outside New Zealand that you have lived in for 12 months or longer in the past five years (covering the entire period you lived in that country or countries)</li></ul>

---

Refer to 5. *Forms* for all of the forms that you will need to complete your application.

## 2. Requirements (continued)

---

### 2.5 Medical examination and eyesight tests

You need to prove that your medical fitness and eyesight meet the required standard.

Requirement	Document(s) you must provide
Be medically fit	<p>A certificate of medical fitness for seafarers that is valid at the time we issue your Chief Mate certificate.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• This is a special medical certificate that complies with STCW regulation I/9. You must get this from an approved medical practitioner, or from a medical practitioner approved for issuing seafarer medicals in another country that is party to STCW.</li><li>• You may use an existing medical certificate if it will be valid (usually less than two years old) when your Chief Mate certificate is issued.</li></ul>
Have good eyesight	<p>Eye test results from a registered optometrist showing you have met the required standards for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• visual acuity (including a letter eyesight test). Your visual acuity eyesight test results must be less than 12 months old at the time we issue your certificate</li><li>• colour vision – this is initially assessed using the Ishihara colour vision test. If you fail the Ishihara test, you will need to take an alternative colour vision test (for more details, refer to the Advisory Circular for Part 34 on MNZ's website).</li></ul> <p>Your colour vision test results (of either test) must be less than six years old at the time your Chief Mate certificate is issued.</p>

---

For more information about the medical and eyesight requirements for this certificate, refer to the guidelines on MNZ's website:

**[maritimenz.govt.nz/seafarers](https://maritimenz.govt.nz/seafarers)**

## 2. Requirements (continued)

---

### 2.6 Identity

We need to confirm your identity. There are several forms we need from you to help us do this.

Requirement	Document(s) you must provide
Prove your identity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Your completed <i>seafarer certificate application form</i></li><li>• Either your passport (make sure it has not expired) <i>or</i> your driver's licence and birth certificate</li><li>• Two passport-sized photographs (<i>or</i> ask the photographer to provide an electronic copy, which you can then forward to MNZ if you are emailing us your application)</li></ul>

---

Refer to 5. *Forms* for all of the forms that you will need to complete your application.

#### Links for these requirements

- Apply for or renew a passport [Internal Affairs website]
- Get your driver's licence [NZ Transport Agency website]
- Apply for your birth certificate [Internal Affairs website]

## 3. When and how to apply

---

Apply when you have completed all of the certificate requirements. Once we have received all of the information we need from you, it may take us up to 20 working days to process your application, so send it in as soon as possible (and at least one month before you need your certificate).

Make sure you include all of the documents we have asked for. Refer to *3.4 Checklist* to make sure you have everything you need for your application.

### **Note:**

If your application is incomplete, it will not be processed and we will return your application and other documents to you.

### **3.1 Copies of supporting documents**

We only need copies of your supporting documents, not the original versions.

The only exception is supporting documents for the *fit and proper person form* (your passport or driver's licence and birth certificate) – these need to be certified copies.

We do not need to see any of the documents you have already sent to us for other applications – just make a note about these documents in your application. However, if any of these documents have expired or will expire before we issue your certificate, we need to see a copy of the new or renewed document.

### 3. When and how to apply (continued)

---

#### 3.2 Fees and payment options

The fee for this certificate is NZ\$995, which includes goods and services tax (GST).

If you wish you may have your sea service pre-assessed for a fee of NZ\$398, including GST. With pre-assessment, the application fee for a Chief Mate certificate is reduced to NZ\$625.

You need to include payment by cheque or indicate your other chosen payment method on your *seafarer certificate application form*.

You can pay:

- online using a credit card or debit card, *or*
- by internet banking or bank deposit, *or*
- by cheque (which you include with your application).

Refer to the MNZ website for more information about how to pay your fees:

**[maritimenz.govt.nz/howtopay](https://maritimenz.govt.nz/howtopay)**

As well as the application fee, you may have other fees and expenses to pay. For example, you may need to pay for your eyesight tests, medical examination, training and ancillary courses.

### 3. When and how to apply (continued)

---

## 3.3 Application process

This is the application process for this certificate of competency. Complete each step before you move on to the next one.

### 1 Do you meet all the requirements?

Check that you meet all of the requirements for this certificate.

Move to step 2 once you know what the requirements are and that you can meet them.

### 2 Do you have the documents we need?

Prove that you meet the requirements. Include all of the documents we have asked for. Use the checklist (see 3.4 *Checklist*) to help you.

Remember: We need copies, not the originals.

Move to step 3 once you have copies of all of the documents we have asked for.

### 3 Complete the application forms

You need to complete several forms as part of your application. Use the checklist to help make sure that you have provided all of the information we need.

Remember: for the *fit and proper person form* we need certified copies of your identification documents.

Move to step 4 once you have completed all of the forms needed for your application.

### 4 Pay the application fee

You need to pay an application fee.

The options for payment are:

- pay by bank deposit or internet banking, *or*
- pay online using a credit card or debit card, *or*
- include a cheque with your application.

Move to step 5 when you know what you need to pay and have either included a cheque with your application or chosen another payment option.

### 3. When and how to apply (continued)

---

#### 5 Send us your application by courier or email

There are two options for you to send your application:

1. Use a courier to send us your completed application forms, supporting documents and cheque for the application fee (if using that payment option).
2. Send your application by email, attaching the scanned documents. (The application form has information about the requirements for electronic copies.)

Move to step 6 when you've ticked everything on the checklist and either couriered or emailed your completed application to MNZ (using the address provided at 3.5 *Where to send your application*).

#### 6 Confirmation and/or request sent

We will send you an email or letter to:

- confirm that we have received your application
- give you reference details to pay the application fee (if you did not include a cheque with your application)
- list any documents we need from you before we can assess your application.

We must receive your payment before we can progress your application.

#### 7 Assessment

After you have paid the fee and sent us all the documents we need, we will assess your application and make a decision. This will usually take 20 working days (about a month) from the time we let you know that we have received your application.

#### 8 Issue certificate

We will send you:

1. your certificate, if your application has been successful, *or*
2. a letter or email explaining why your application was unsuccessful.

### 3. When and how to apply (continued)

---

#### 3.4 Checklist

Use this checklist to make sure that you have everything you need for your application.

Check that your documents are complete and have been signed, dated and certified as required.

We need to see all of the documents listed below to confirm that you have met each requirement. The only exceptions to this are documents that you have already sent to us for other applications (just note this in your application). However, if a document has expired or will expire before we issue your certificate, we need to see a copy of the new or renewed document.

##### About you

- Seafarer certificate application form*
- Certified copies of your passport *or* driver's licence and birth certificate
- Two passport-sized photos *or* an electronic copy
- Fit and proper person form*
- Police clearance report for other countries (if applicable)
- Copy of certificate of medical fitness for seafarers
- Copy of eyesight test(s) results

### 3. When and how to apply (continued)

---

#### Your current certificate of competency

- A copy of your Watchkeeper Deck certificate or equivalent

#### Your sea service

Include at least *one* of the following for each vessel/period of sea service:

- Certificate of sea service*
- Discharge book (or discharge certificates)
- Seafarer's record book showing your seagoing service

Include the following to cover all of your sea service:

- Summary of sea service form*
- Master's and/or employer's reference (testimonial) (unless included in evidence of sea service above)

#### Your training

- Course completion letter and assessment record

#### Your ancillary certificates and GMDSS

- STCW A-VI/1 basic training
- STCW A-V1/2-1 proficiency in survival craft and rescue boats (PISC)
- STCW A-V1/3 advanced fire fighting
- STCW A-V1/4-2 medical care on board ship
- STCW A-VI/6-1 proficiency in security awareness training (if completed)
- GMDSS certificate of competency

### 3. When and how to apply (continued)

---

**Remember:**

- Either* include a cheque (in \$NZ) *or* indicate which other payment option you'd like to use
- Send your application to us by courier or email
- Send your application to us as early as you can
- Check that your examiner has sent your exam results to us

### 3. When and how to apply (continued)

---

#### 3.5 Where to send your application

To provide extra security, we recommend that you courier your application forms and documents to us.

Alternatively, you can scan and email your application and supporting documents (refer to the application form for information about how to send your documents electronically).

**Courier your application to:**

Seafarer Certification  
Maritime New Zealand  
1 Grey Street  
WELLINGTON 6011

*Or*

**Email your application to:**

seafarers@maritimenz.govt.nz

## 4. Contact us for help

---

If you need more information about the requirements for your application, visit the Seafarer Certification section of our website.

**[maritimenz.govt.nz/seafarers](https://maritimenz.govt.nz/seafarers)**

If you can't find the information you need, send us an email:

**[seafarers@maritimenz.govt.nz](mailto:seafarers@maritimenz.govt.nz)**

Tell us what you need help with and remember to include your contact details (email address and phone numbers).

We need your completed application before we can assess whether you meet the requirements for this certificate of competency.

## 5. Forms

---

To apply for a maritime certificate of competency, there are several forms that you must provide and some that you may provide, depending on your situation.

Everyone applying for this certificate of competency must complete and send us all of the following forms:

- *Seafarer certificate application form*
- *Fit and proper person form*

Other forms you may need to use:

- *Certificate of sea service*
- *Summary of seagoing service form*

**Each of these forms is available on the MNZ website:**

**[maritimenz.govt.nz/seafarers](https://maritimenz.govt.nz/seafarers)**

**Note:**

You must complete these forms correctly for your application to be valid. Carefully read any notes before you start.