

Marine Engineer Class 1 (MEC 1)

**This guideline is for new applicants for a
Marine Engineer Class 1 certificate of competency**

SeaCert

Marine Engineer Class 1 (MEC 1)

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1. Overview

Marine Engineer Class 1 (MEC 1) certificate of competency

This guideline is for new applicants for the Marine Engineer Class 1 (MEC 1) certificate of competency. It does not cover recognition of an equivalent certificate obtained outside New Zealand.

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

Once you have your MEC 1 certificate, it is valid for five years. To continue using your certificate you will need to renew it before the expiry date. For more information about the requirements for renewals (revalidation), refer to the Maritime New Zealand (Maritime NZ) website.

maritimenz.govt.nz/seafarers

The MEC 1 certificate corresponds with the certificate issued under Regulation III/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 a chief engineer officer on ships powered by main propulsion machinery of any main propulsion power in any operating area. A chief engineer is the senior engineering officer responsible for the ship's mechanical propulsion, and for the operation and maintenance of its mechanical and electrical installations.

You can qualify on motor-powered (diesel) or steam-powered main propulsion systems, or on both. Your sea service and training must be appropriate for that type of propulsion power, and your certificate will show the main engine propulsion power you are qualified to operate on as chief engineer.

MEC 1 is the most senior engineering officer certificate.

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 NZ will grant a certificate only when satisfied that all requirements have been met.

In this guideline, any references to 'we' or Maritime New Zealand relating to a decision impacting on 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

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:

- prove you hold a current certificate of competency for Marine Class 3 (MEC 3) or Marine Class 2 (MEC 2), MEC 2 endorsed chief engineer, or MEC 2 on ships <3000 kW or equivalent **OR**
- prove you hold a current certificate of competency for Marine Class 3 (MEC 3) or Marine Class 2 (MEC 2) or equivalent
- prove you have met the minimum sea service requirements
- complete and pass the approved qualification for Marine Engineer Class 1
- have the required ancillary certificates
- pass Maritime NZ's final exam
- prove that you are a fit and proper person
- be medically fit and have good eyesight
- choose to specialise in steam-powered or motor-powered propulsion systems, or both.

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. Requirements (continued)

2.1 Prior certification

You must hold a current certificate of competency for Marine Engineer Class 3 (MEC 3), Marine Engineer Class 2 (MEC 2) or an equivalent STCW certificate.

2.2 Sea service

Your sea service must be relevant and appropriate to the requirements of Regulation III/2 of the STCW Convention. This means that it must be on vessels of 750 kW engine power or more.

All your sea service must be obtained within the 10 years preceding your application.

Sea service requirements

You can choose from two options for the sea service requirements for MEC 1, as shown below. You must complete one of them.

Option 1

At least 36 months of sea service as an officer in charge of engineering watch while holding a Marine Engineer Class 3 (or equivalent) or higher certificate.

Option 2

At least 24 months including a minimum of 12 months as a second engineer while holding a Marine Engineer Class 2 (MEC 2) (or equivalent) or higher certificate. The remaining months must be as an officer in charge of the engineering watch while holding MEC 3 (or equivalent) or higher certificate.

Note

The total time shown is for motor-powered or steam-powered certification. For a combined certificate, additional sea service is required for each type of propulsion power.

2. Requirements (continued)

Proving your sea service

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

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

- *certificate of sea service or record of employment* (available on Maritime NZ's website)
- completed seafarer's record book
- discharge certificate or discharge book (ensuring that any section on watchkeeping is appropriately signed off)
- letter from your employer.

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, gross tonnage details and type of vessel (for example, passenger, non-passenger, fishing)
- the type of cargo carried and area of operation
- the engine type and output power
- the dates you were employed and the sea time you completed between those dates
- your duties and the capacities you served in.

Any statutory declarations you have made are generally *not* acceptable as proof of your sea service. However, the Director will consider these in exceptional circumstances.

Calculating sea service

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 together extra days that do not fall within a calendar month, 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.

2. Requirements (continued)

Note

Voyage means a voyage between a port or place of departure and a ship's final port or place of arrival. It includes a 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 Maritime NZ website.

maritimenz.govt.nz/seafarers

Sea service pre-assessment

If you are unsure whether you have met the sea service requirements, you can ask us to assess your sea service time before you make your full application.

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

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

Note

If you are pre-assessed and have the required sea service for the MEC 1 certificate, add your pre-assessment reference number to your *seafarer certificate application form*.

If there is a delay between getting your pre-assessment completed and applying for your MEC 1 certificate, make sure your sea service was obtained within the 10 years preceding the date of your certificate application.

2. Requirements (continued)

2.3 Training

You must complete training that is acceptable to the Director of Maritime NZ to achieve all of the required competencies for this certificate, as specified in section A-III/2 of the STCW Convention.

Approved training

For Options 1 and 2 the approved training qualification of MEC 1 is the Masters and Chiefs Foreign Going Programme – Chief Engineer Foreign Going strand. Currently, there are no approved training providers offering the course for this certificate of competency in New Zealand. However, students can enrol in overseas courses and obtain a certificate of competency by an overseas administration with whom New Zealand has joint undertakings under the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers. Applicants who have already completed the diploma within New Zealand may still apply for a Certificate of Competency with Maritime New Zealand.

Documents you must provide with your application

Requirement	Document(s) you must provide
Options 1 and 2	
Masters and Chiefs Foreign Going Programme – Chief Engineer Foreign Going strand	The diploma certificate showing your name and the date of issue. Alternatively, a copy of your academic transcript evidencing completion of the qualification.

Note

This diploma is currently no longer being offered in New Zealand

For more information about approved training providers and the competency framework for MEC 1, refer to the Maritime NZ website or contact Maritime New Zealand for further information.

maritimenz.govt.nz/seafarers

For information on recognition of overseas courses, go to “recognition of foreign certificates.”

2. Requirements (continued)

Ancillary and other certificates

You must provide copies of the ancillary and other certificates required for your training as listed below. You need to provide evidence of the certificates and any refresher courses to confirm you have demonstrated proficiency in the required skills.

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, paragraphs 1-4 (Table A-VI/3)
Medical first aid	STCW medical first aid on board ship certificate that complies with STCW Code section A-VI/4, paragraphs 1-3 (Table A-VI/4-1)
Security awareness	STCW security awareness complies with the STCW Code Table A-VI/6-1. This is optional, but without it, your certificate will include the following limitation. <i>This certificate is not valid for use on ships for which the ISPS code applies without a current proficiency in security awareness training (STCW A-VI/6-1).</i>
A ships security officer certificate or Security awareness for seafarers with designated security duties certificate may be accepted as an alternative	The alternative must state that it meets the requirements of STCW Section A-VI/6 and Table A-VI/6-2

2. Requirements (continued)

If you already have an ancillary certificate that demonstrates proficiency in the areas listed above and at the required level, you may use it – as long as the certificate is current and specific requirements are met.

Your certificates must also conform to the STCW regulations and have the appropriate STCW regulation number.

The following ancillary certificates must be less than five years old from the date of issue when we issue your MEC 1 certificate.

- STCW Basic – Personal survival techniques
- STCW Basic – Fire prevention and fire fighting
- Advanced Fire Fighting

Acceptance of overseas STCW training

For STCW basic training, we will accept certificates issued by any training provider that is approved by any country on the STCW white list.

For the STCW advanced training, we will accept ancillary certificates issued by any training provider that is approved by a flag state which has a memorandum of understanding with Maritime NZ.

2.4 Final examination

After you have completed the approved training you must sit and pass the final examination.

This examination must be conducted by a Maritime NZ approved examiner. The examination checks that you have met the standards of competency specified in section A-III/2 of the STCW Convention. The final examination is currently an oral examination. It is usually organised by your training provider when you have completed all the requirements for the award of the NZ Diploma in Foreign-going Master or Chief (Level 7) / Masters and Chiefs Foreign Going Programme – Chief Engineer Foreign Going strand qualification.

2.5 Fit and proper person

We need to confirm that you are a fit and proper person. To help us do this, we need the following documents from you.

Requirement	Document(s) you must provide
Be a fit and proper person	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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.• 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).

2. Requirements (continued)

2.6 Medical examination and eyesight tests

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

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 MEC 1 certificate (after you have completed all of your exams and ancillary certificates).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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. The category must be A, A (T) or B.• You may use an existing medical certificate if it will be valid (usually less than two years old) when your MEC 1 certificate is issued.
Have good eyesight	<p>The medical practitioner will check that your eyesight meets the required standards for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• visual acuity (including a letter eyesight test). Your eyesight test results must be less than 12 months old at the time we issue your certificate• colour vision – this may initially be assessed as part of the seafarer’s certificate of medical fitness, using the Ishihara colour vision test. If you fail the Ishihara test, you will need to take an alternative colour vision test with a registered optometrist (for more details, refer to the Advisory Circular for Part 34 on Maritime NZ’s website). <p>Your colour vision test results (of either test) must be less than six years old at the time your certificate is issued.</p> <p>If the medical practitioner has any concerns about the eyesight test results, they may refer you to a registered optometrist for further tests. The optometrist must provide eyesight test results on the official form. This is available on the Maritime NZ website. Take the completed eyesight test form back to the medical practitioner who will then decide if you have met the required standards.</p>

For more information about the medical and eyesight requirements for this certificate, refer to the guidelines on Maritime NZ’s website.

maritimenz.govt.nz/seafarers

2. Requirements (continued)

2.7 Identity

We need to confirm your identity. Acceptable forms of identity are listed below. Refer to the *fit and proper person form* for the latest information.

You will need to provide two passport-sized photos or an electronic copy of a passport photo with your application.

All applicants must provide sighted and signed copies of both:

- a primary identification (ID) document **and**
- one other form of ID.

One of these forms of ID must be photographic.

A sighted and signed copy is a photocopy that has been sighted and signed by a trusted referee, in person, confirming that the person presenting the identity documents is the same person that the documents refer to. The trusted referee must sight the original identity document before signing the copy.

Trusted referees include a Justice of the Peace, a Notary public, a barrister or solicitor of the High Court of New Zealand, staff of an approved training provider, police, teachers, doctors, or Maritime NZ staff.

Primary ID	Other form of ID
Passport (NZ or overseas)	Driver's licence (NZ or overseas)
NZ full birth certificate issued on or after 1 January 1998	NZ full birth certificate issued prior to 1 January 1998
NZ firearms licence	Overseas birth certificate
NZ citizenship certificate	18+ card
NZ refugee travel document	Community services card
NZ emergency travel document	SuperGold card
NZ certificate of identity	NZ employee photo identification card
	NZ student photo identification card
	Inland Revenue number
	NZ issued utility bill (issued not more than six months earlier)
	NZ teachers registration certificate
	NZ electoral roll record
	International driving permit
	Steps to freedom form

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.

For the *fit and proper person form* you need to include sighted and signed copies of the ID documents specified.

3.2 Fees

There is a fee for your application. Refer to the Maritime NZ website for information about fees.

maritimenz.govt.nz/fees

You will be invoiced once we have formally received your application. A reference number and instructions explaining how to pay will be sent with the invoice.

You can pay:

- online using a credit card or debit card, *or*
- by internet banking or bank deposit.

Refer to the Maritime NZ website for more information about how to pay your fees.

maritimenz.govt.nz/howtopay

Other costs

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 of the requirements?

You need to check that you meet all of the requirements for this certificate.

Decide whether to specialise in a single or both types of propulsion system.

Identify the sea service option that best applies to you.

Apply for pre-assessment of your sea service if you are unsure about meeting the requirements.

2 Do you have the documents we need?

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

Remember we need copies, not the originals.

3 Send us your application by courier or email

There are two options for you to send your application:

1. Send your application by email, attaching the scanned documents.
The application form has information about the requirements for electronic copies.
2. Use a courier to send us your completed application forms and supporting documents.

The addresses are on the application form.

4 Confirmation and/or request sent

We will send you an email or letter to confirm that we have received your application and advise you of any documents we need from you before we can assess your application.

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

3. When and how to apply (continued)

5 Assessment

Once you have 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.

We will send you an invoice with your reference number and information on how to pay the application fee once we begin the assessment. Please note we cannot release your certificate unless payment has been received.

6 Issue certificate

We will send you:

- your certificate, if your application has been successful, or
- 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.

- Seafarer certificate application form*
- Two passport-sized photos *or* an electronic copy
- Fit and proper person form* – including sighted and signed copies of the ID documents specified
- Police clearance report for other countries (if applicable)
- Copy of certificate of medical fitness for seafarers
- Evidence of MEC 3 or MEC 2 certificate of competency or equivalent
- Evidence of your sea service
- Your pre-assessment reference number if we pre-assessed your sea service time
- Evidence of your approved training (Masters and Chiefs Foreign Going Programme – Chief Engineer Foreign Going Strand) or recognised overseas equivalent
- Copies of your ancillary certificates

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

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

seafarers@maritimenz.govt.nz

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

Alternatively, you can phone us toll free on 0508 SEACERT (0508 732 237).