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Radiocommunication Information Circular

Professional Radio Operator Certificates

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Preface

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1. Intent

This document outlines procedures for obtaining any of the four professional radio operator certificates currently issued by Industry Canada.

2. Background

Canada issued its first professional radio operator certificate in 1912. Since then, a number of different radio operator certificates have been established in order to ensure that radio operators possess the level of expertise required. It should be noted that Canada does not currently have any reciprocal agreements with other foreign administrations which provide for an exchange of equivalent radio operator certificates.

To ensure proficiency in marine communication, the International Maritime Organization (IMO) has identified 4 levels of radio operator certification. However, in accordance with Canada's mandatory equipment carriage regulations for commercial vessels, only 2 of these levels of radio operator certification are required in Canada.

3. General Information

Successful candidates are required to complete application form IC2382, *Application for a Radio Operator's Certificate*. The information provided is used by the Department to produce the appropriate certificate and maintain certificate records. Examiners must be duly authorized by the Department and hold an equivalent or higher certificate than the certificate examination being administered.

4. Current Certificates

Currently, Industry Canada issues the following Professional Radio Operator Certificates:

4.1 Restricted Operator Certificate – Maritime (ROC-M)

This certificate is mainly intended for pleasure boaters, as they do not fall within the scope of Transport Canada's *Ship Station (Radio) Regulations, 1999*. As of September 1, 2000, Industry Canada delegated the examination and administration of the ROC-M certification program to Canadian Power and Sail Squadrons (CPS). Courses for this certificate are developed and delivered by private examiners and/or instructors associated with CPS. Application for this certificate can be obtained from CPS, and certificates are issued by CPS. Certificates are valid for life and there is no renewal requirement. No photograph of the holder is required, and there is no age or nationality restriction.

Additional information concerning this certificate can be obtained by telephoning CPS at 1-888-CPS-BOAT (1-888-277-2628) or by visiting its website at www.cps-ecp.ca.

4.2 Restricted Operator Certificate – Maritime Commercial (ROC-MC)

The Restricted Operator Certificate – Maritime Commercial (ROC-MC) is intended for mariners, serving on compulsorily fitted commercial ships within the North American A1 Sea Area, as defined in *Radio Aids to Marine Navigation*. The ROC-MC is modeled on the *International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers, 1978*, as amended (STCW 95 Regulation IV/2).

4.2.1 Accreditation

Industry Canada accredits maritime organizations and training institutes to provide training and assessment for the ROC-MC in accordance with Radiocommunication Information Circular RIC-25, *Syllabus for the Restricted Operator’s Certificate - Maritime Commercial (ROC-MC)*, and Client Procedures Circular CPC-2-7-04, *Accreditation of Institutes for Instruction of the ROC-MC and the GOC*.

For an accredited body in your area, please consult the list in Annex A of RIC-25.

4.2.2 Application

Application form IC2382 will be supplied by the accredited bodies.

4.2.3 Training and Examination

In accordance with the procedures outlined in RIC-25, the accredited body can offer a challenge exam, a 14-hour abridged course (10 hours of training and 4 hours of review and examination) and a complete 24-hour course (over 3 or 4 days, involving 20 hours of training and 4 hours of review and examination).

4.2.4 Eligibility

Candidates must be 18 years of age or older. There is no nationality restriction for this certificate.

4.2.5 Validation

The ROC-MC certificate is issued by Industry Canada once the accredited body submits the application form IC2382 confirming that a candidate has successfully completed the approved education and training. This certificate is good for life and therefore revalidation or renewals are not issued. No photograph is required in order to obtain this certificate.

4.3 General Operator Certificate (GOC)

The GOC is Canada’s highest level of radio operator certificate for operators of the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS). This certificate is mainly intended for personnel operating radio equipment while working on board compulsorily fitted vessels that sail in international sea areas and that are fitted with radio equipment in accordance with Transport Canada’s carriage requirements for these vessels and voyages.

4.3.1 Accreditation

Industry Canada accredits maritime organizations or institutes to provide training and assessment for the GOC certificate in accordance with Radiocommunication Information Circular RIC-26, *Syllabus for the General Operator Certificate (GOC)*, and CPC-2-7-04.

For an accredited body in your area, please consult the list in Annex A of RIC-26.

4.3.2 Application

Application form IC2382 will be supplied by the accredited bodies.

4.3.3 Training and Examination

The accredited body can offer the complete 10-day training and assessment course in accordance with RIC-26.

4.3.4 Eligibility

Candidates must be 18 years of age or older. There is no nationality restriction for this certificate.

4.3.5 Validation

This certificate is issued by Industry Canada once the accredited body submits the application form IC2382 confirming that a candidate has successfully completed the approved education and training. This certificate is valid for 5 years following the issue date and requires 2 identical photographs taken within the last 6 months showing head and shoulders, measuring 2.54 cm × 3.18 cm (1 inch × 1¼ inches). The applicant must sign the back of the photographs. The photographs must be clear, well defined and taken against a plain white or light-coloured background. The applicant's face must be square to the camera with a neutral expression. Non-tinted prescription glasses can be worn as long as the eyes are clearly visible and the frame does not cover any part of the eyes. Sunglasses are not acceptable. If a head covering must be worn for religious reasons, applicants must ensure that their full facial features are not obscured.

4.3.6 Reissue of GOCs

Renewal of the GOC must be done before the certificate expires and it must be renewed every 5 years in order to be considered valid. The onus is on the operator to demonstrate professional competency in order to qualify for reissuance of the certificate.

Operators must demonstrate that they meet one of the following criteria:

- (1) seagoing service as an operator, master or mate in charge of the deck watch for a period of at least 1 year in total during the preceding 5 years on board a GMDSS vessel equipped as required by the IMO's and Transport Canada's regulations for operation within sea areas A2, A3 or A4; or

- (2) at least 3 months of sea service as an operator, master or mate in charge of the deck watch on board a GMDSS vessel equipped as required by the IMO's and Transport Canada's regulations for operation within sea areas A2, A3 or A4 within the last 12 months immediately before the certificate expires;
or
- (3) twenty-four (24) months of service performing radiocommunication-related functions similar to any of the following marine-related positions as:
- (I) a shore captain, marine superintendent or operations manager, who is in the employ of a ship owner / ship agent;
 - (II) a ship's pilot or pilot superintendent, who is licenced by a pilotage authority;
 - (III) a marine surveyor engaged in duties related to the survey or inspection of ships or ships' equipment or cargoes;
 - (IV) a harbour master, dock master, berth master, deputy harbour master, deputy dock master or deputy berth master;
 - (V) an operator, watchkeeper or supervisor of port operations, port traffic, or a search and rescue centre;
 - (VI) an operator, watchkeeper or supervisor of a coastal station GMDSS equipped for communication with vessels sailing within A2, A3, or A4 sea areas;
 - (VII) a hydrographic surveyor;
 - (VIII) an instructor, training officer or examiner engaged in the training of GMDSS/GOC Operators for an accredited institution;
 - (IX) an examiner of masters and mates
 - (X) a casualty investigator engaged in investigating marine casualties
 - (XI) a person engaged in marine emergency planning and operations
 - (XII) a radio technician engaged in the maintenance of modern GMDSS radio apparatus
 - (XIII) an Industry Canada Radio Inspector engaged in the delivery of the radio operator certification program;
 - (XIV) having successfully completed a refresher course or re-qualification examination through an accredited institution.

For the reissue of a GOC, there is a requirement for 2 identical photographs taken within the last 6 months showing the applicant's head and shoulders, measuring 2.54 cm × 3.18 cm (1 inch × 1¼ inches). The applicant must sign the back of the photographs. The photographs must be clear, well-defined and taken against a plain white or light-coloured background. The applicant's face must be

square to the camera with a neutral expression. Non-tinted prescription glasses can be worn as long as the eyes are clearly visible and the frame does not cover any part of the eyes. Sunglasses are not acceptable. If a head covering must be worn for religious reasons, applicants must ensure that their full facial features are not obscured.

4.4 Restricted Operator Certificate – Aeronautical (ROC-A)

Industry Canada has accredited examiners for the delivery of this certification. Examiners for this type of certificate are mainly flight training school instructors, airport personnel and airline staff. The ROC-A is intended for aircraft pilots, airport radio operators and ground staff working on, or in proximity to, landing strips (e.g. airline ground dispatchers, landing strip snow removers, fuel supply truck staff, airport firefighters, etc.). This certificate allows for the operation of radios utilizing frequencies in the aeronautical band on board aircraft, land vehicles or in base stations.

Application form IC2382 will be supplied by the examiner (departmental or accredited) at the time of the examination. Training courses and examinations for the ROC-A certificate are delivered by examiners accredited by Industry Canada, in accordance with Radiocommunication Information Circular RIC-21, *Study Guide for the Restricted Operator Certificate With Aeronautical Qualification*. Industry Canada issues this certificate upon notification from the accredited examiner of the successful candidate. This certificate is good for life and there is no renewal required. No photo is required and there is no age or nationality restriction.

5. Radiocommunication Operator General Certificate Maritime (RGMC)

The GMDSS was adopted on February 1, 1999. Under the GMDSS, all ocean-going passenger ships and cargo ships of 300 gross tonnage must be equipped with radio apparatus that conforms to international standards. Likewise, radio operators on these vessels must also hold the appropriate radio operator certification compliant with standards adopted by the IMO. Previously existing maritime radio operator certificates, such as the RGMC, are not GMDSS-compliant and are therefore no longer acceptable for operation on board vessels regulated by Canada's *Ship Station (Radio) Regulations, 1999*.

Not all countries are members of the IMO and, as a result, Industry Canada offices occasionally receive requests from holders of an RGMC for reissuance (validation) or replacement. Although the RGMC is no longer recognized as a valid certificate for operation of radiocommunication equipment on board compulsorily fitted Canadian ships, Industry Canada will consider reissuance (validation) or replacement of this certificate to a bonafide holder.

The request for reissuance (validation) or replacement must be accompanied by 2 identical photographs taken within the last 6 months showing the applicant's head and shoulders, measuring 2.54 cm × 3.18 cm (1 inch × 1¼ inches). The applicant must sign the back of the photographs. The photographs must be clear, well-defined and taken against a plain white or light-coloured background. The applicant's face must be square to the camera with a neutral expression. Non-tinted prescription glasses can be worn as long as the eyes are clearly visible and the frame does not cover any part of the eyes. Sunglasses are not acceptable. If a head covering must be worn for religious reasons, applicants must ensure that their full facial features are not obscured.

The certificate is valid for 5 years following the reissue date. Under no circumstances will Industry Canada consider individuals holding an RGMC for an exchange of certification to a GMDSS-compliant radio operator certificate, such as the GOC or ROC-MC.

6. Summary of Current Radio Operator Certificates

Certificate Name	Acronym	Status			Photo Required	Age	Validity
		Issue	Validation	Replace			
Restricted Operator Certificate – Aeronautical	ROC-A	Y	N	Y	N	N	Lifetime
Restricted Operator Certificate – Maritime	ROC-M	Y	N	Y	N	N	Lifetime
Restricted Operator Certificate – Maritime Commercial	ROC-MC	Y	N	Y	N	18	Lifetime
General Operator Certificate	GOC	Y	Y	Y	Y	18	5 Years
Radiocommunication Operator General Certificate – Maritime	RGMC	N	Y	Y	Y	18	5 Years

7. Certificates No Longer Issued

The following certificates are no longer relevant, supported, issued or reissued (validated):

Certificate of Proficiency in Radio First Class	FIRST CLASS
Certificate of Proficiency in Radio Second Class	SECOND CLASS
Radiotelephone Operator's General Certificate (Maritime)	ROG(M)
Radiotelephone Operator's General Certificate (Aeronautical)	ROG(A)
Radiotelephone Operator's General Certificate (Land)	ROG(L)
Radiotelephone Operator's Restricted Certificate (Maritime)	ROR(M)
Radiotelephone Operator's Restricted Certificate (Land)	ROR(L)
Coast Guard Radiotelephone Operator's Certificate	CGRO R/T
Coast Guard Radiotelegraph Operator's Certificate	CGRO W/T
Radiotelephone Operator's Restricted Certificate (Compulsory)	ROR(C)
Radiotelephone Operator's Restricted Certificate (Voluntary)	ROR(V)