

**Memorandum Circular
No. 16-12-2002**

Subject: Prescribing a Quality Standard System (QSS) on Radio Training Centers (RTC) offering short-term GMDSS radio communications courses

Whereas, the National Telecommunications Commission (NTC), pursuant to Executive Order No. 546, series of 1979 and Act 3846, as amended, is mandated to prescribe rules and regulations to be observed by radio training centers;

Whereas, the Maritime Training Council (MTC), pursuant to Letter of Instruction (LOI) 1404, is created to give full effect to the 1978 STCW Convention, as amended, and to ensure that concerned government agencies and instrumentalities are compliant to the said Convention;

Whereas, the NTC, as a member of the Maritime Training Council – Technical Working Group (MTC-TWG), is tasked to monitor the performance and the quality standards of all RTC offering short-term GMDSS radio communications courses for seafarers as prescribed under Regulation I/8 of STCW-78 Convention, as amended;

Whereas, in order to ensure quality in the delivery of service, the NTC shall prescribe internal and external high level quality support to ensure compliance with the International Standards set by the International Telecommunications Union (ITU) and the International Maritime Organization (IMO);

WHEREFORE, pursuant to the powers vested upon it by law to accredit, supervise and monitor the quality of service offered by Radio Training Centers (RTC) in offering short term GMDSS radio communications courses, the NTC hereby issues the herein Quality Standard System (QSS) that will put to effect the provisions of the STCW Convention, as amended, and of other relevant laws, rules and regulations:

I. GENERAL

- 1.1 The NTC is committed to ensure the implementation, compliance and effectiveness of its Quality Standard System through regular internal assessment and management review.
- 1.2 The NTC shall have qualified and trained personnel to implement the QSS policies and procedures.
- 1.3 The NTC shall regularly assess its personnel and take appropriate measures to qualify them at all times.

II. RESPONSIBILITY

- 2.1 A team shall be created in the central office and each of the regional offices to conduct yearly quality assessments of RTC.
- 2.2 Each team shall designate a team leader to ensure the strict compliance of the QSS by its members, particularly for RTC accreditation.
- 2.3 The NTC shall publish periodically the lists of accredited RTC offering GMDSS training. A list of those who failed to qualify for accreditation or renewal shall also be maintained, together with the reasons for its disqualification and those that have been deleted or stricken from the list of qualified RTC and the reason for such action.
- 2.4 The NTC shall review the QSS at least once a year to evaluate the system's effectiveness or to determine if there is a need for its amendment.
- 2.5 The NTC shall keep a record of all its policies, decisions and any amendments thereto. The QSS team leader shall be responsible for the dissemination of all existing policies.

III. ASSESSORS QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENT

Designated NTC assessors for administrative and technical functions in the implementation of the QSS shall be taken from the pool of qualified and competent personnel who have undergone appropriate training to implement the provisions of the QSS.

Administrative personnel are those directly involved in evaluating, encoding, screening and the processing of applications. Technical personnel are those directly involved in the formulation and implementation of radio regulations; the evaluation of technical compliance of RTC; the conduct of training for subordinate assessors, the conduct of examination activity, etc.

- 3.1 Administrative Personnel Qualification
 - 3.1.1 At least College Graduate.
 - 3.1.2 Civil Service Eligible.
 - 3.1.3 Attended an orientation seminar on GMDSS operation.
 - 3.1.4 At least six (6) months working experience as staff personnel with the technical department at the central office or any NTC regional offices, particularly on licensing and accreditation of radio training Center.

3.2 Technical Personnel Qualification

- 3.2.1 Electronics and Communications Engineer or graduate of BSECE.
- 3.2.2 Civil Service Eligible or has availed of R.A. 1080.
- 3.2.3 Attended an orientation seminar on local and international radio regulations, particularly the relevant provisions of International Telecommunications Convention and administrative regulations; with special training on maritime communications regulations, radio personnel training and certification.
- 3.2.4 At least six (6) months working experience as staff engineer with the technical department or any regional offices of the Commission, responsible for licensing and accreditation of RTC.
- 3.2.5 Attended at least forty (40) hours of local and/or international training or seminar on the implementation of SOLAS Convention and STCW Convention.
- 3.2.6 Attended at least forty (40) hours of GMDSS training on assessing the level of competence of seafarers and in the operation of GMDSS equipment and its sub-systems, as provided under Section A-I/6 of the STCW Code.

IV. ASSESSMENT SYSTEM

Assessment system refers to the sets of procedures in evaluating applications for accreditation of RTC.

4.1 Administrative Personnel

- 4.1.1 Evaluate applications as to completeness and authenticity of submitted documents.
- 4.1.2 Prepare order of payments.
- 4.1.3 Assign Registration Numbers.
- 4.1.4 Prepare and encode certificates, permits, and licenses and continuously update database.
- 4.1.5 Release certificates, permits and licenses to the applicant.

4.2 Technical Personnel

- 4.2.1 Implement guidelines on local laws, regulations and relevant provisions of the STCW Convention, and the ITU Rules and Regulations.
- 4.2.2 Supervise in the processing of permits, licenses, and certificates.
- 4.2.3 Conduct in-service examination.
- 4.2.4 Develop the format and questionnaires for examinations.
- 4.2.5 Validates and monitors compliance with QSS of RTC offering short-term GMDSS radio communications courses.

V. DOCUMENT CONTROL SYSTEM

Document control system refers to a systematic process in the handling, controlling and safekeeping of documents.

- 5.1 The NTC shall establish policies and procedures to ensure that all quality assessment manuals and documents relative to the implementation of the STCW Convention are properly maintained and updated for safekeeping.
- 5.2 The NTC shall designate the appropriate department/unit responsible for the production, update, dissemination, and distribution of manuals, circulars, procedures, and guidelines and a master file register for the same.
- 5.3 Copies of all valid documents shall be made readily available at all times.
- 5.4 Back-up copies, both in electronic and hard copy, shall be kept in a safe and separate storage area, and shall be available for retrievals.

VI. ACCREDITATION SYSTEM

A Certificate of Accreditation shall be issued to a radio training Center only after compliance of the herein listed administrative requirements and established technical criteria:

6.1 Administrative Requirements

- 6.1.1 Filing of a Letter of Intent;
- 6.1.2 Duly accomplished information sheets of the Board of Directors;

- 6.1.3 Feasibility study identifying the required capitalization in opening up a RTC;
 - 6.1.4 Certification from any banking institution showing applicant's financial capability;
 - 6.1.5 Ownership
 - 6.1.5.1 Corporation – Articles of Incorporation issued by the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC)
 - 6.1.5.2 Single-Proprietor – Registration of Business by the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI)
 - 6.1.6 Mayor' Permit;
 - 6.1.7 Proposed Course Curriculum;
 - 6.1.8 Class Programs;
 - 6.1.9 List of Instructors/Permit to Teach;
 - 6.1.10 Laboratory and Test Equipments;
 - 6.1.10 Textbooks and Magazines;
 - 6.1.11 Certificate of ownership of building or lease of contract
- 6.2 Technical Requirements
- 6.2.1 Permit to Purchase
 - 6.2.2 Permit to Possess
 - 6.2.3 Construction Permit/Radio Station of License
- 6.3 Conduct of Inspection
- 6.3.1 The NTC team shall conduct inspection to verify compliance with the provisions of this Circular.
 - 6.3.2 Any non-conformance with any of the requirements of this Circular shall be noted and the appropriate action taken.

- 6.3.3 Findings relevant to its operation shall be made known to the authorized officials of concerned RTC.
- 6.3.4 RTC with noted deficiencies shall be given a grace period of thirty (30) days to correct deficiency, and shall notify the Commission for the schedule of re-inspection.

VII. EXTERNAL EVALUATION SYSTEM

- 7.1 The QSS shall be reviewed as may be necessary by the NTC and at least once in every three (3) years by an external party pursuant to Section A-I/8 of STCW Code to ensure the level of competence of NTC personnel involved in any of the assessment activity of the Commission.
- 7.2 The NTC shall furnish a copy of the external evaluation report for submission to the Secretary General of the IMO pursuant to Executive Order No. 242 dated 12th May 2000.

This Circular shall take effect immediately and may be revised, revoked or amended in accordance with law and shall take effect fifteen (15) days after publication in a newspaper of general circulation, provided further, that at least three (3) certified true copies thereof shall be filed with the UP Law Center.

December 20, 2002, Quezon City, Philippines.

(Signed)
ARMI JANE R. BORJE
Commissioner

(Signed)
KATHLEEN G. HECETA
Deputy Commissioner

(Signed)
JORGE V. SARMIENTO
Deputy Commissioner