



# AIMPE

Australian Institute of  
Marine and Power Engineers  
HEAD OFFICE

## **Marine Orders 3 and BRIDGE from Class 3 to Watchkeeper**

**NOT FOR ON WATCH**

**MDM 28 October 2009**

Despite the best of intentions there were some errors in the graphic representation printed in On Watch in order to show the BRIDGE the Institute seeks to have AMSA create between Class 3 and Watchkeeper for those who do not possess a Trade. The mistake was in relation to the setting out of the existing state & federal certificate structure.

Arising out of that were consequential mistakes in the TEXT of the Head Office Report printed in the September 2009 On Watch.

That Director Professional Standards Jim Mallows subsequently spent some weeks in Europe in connection with the STCW Convention review and that on the day he returned I went on leave for 4 weeks delayed analysis of the concerns reported from members.

In my diagrams I had tried to show the career path AIMPE was promoting via the new BRIDGE [from Class 3 to Watchkeeper] and so had looked for the qualifying-sea-service requirements to achieve MED3, MED 2, MED 1, Class 3, Watchkeeper, Class 2 and Class 1 respectively. The last 3 I could source from Marine Orders Part 3 ["MO3"], but not those for MED3, MED 2, MED 1 and Class 3 as these are not in the existing MO3. So I turned to the USL Code for these and in completing those diagrams I fell into the error of using MORE THAN THE qualifying-sea-service components of that diagram as reflecting the current certificate standard; that is I continued using the USL Code when setting out the horsepower and operational limitations. This was UNINTENTIONAL.

So when the discussions with AMSA broke down and I needed some ammunition for my letter to AMSA rejecting their proposals I asked Jim for suitable text about what was wrong with AMSA's proposal compared with what was in my diagram, hence Jim naturally adapted some text he had written about USL Code standards and AIMPE's opposition to NMSC's Part D since it's inception.

This mis-communication has now been identified thanks to the perseverance of a number of members, to whom I am indebted.

So, lets **set aside all previous reports** on this subject and **state the Institute's position afresh.**

1. AIMPE supports the current state & federal certificate structure as set out in Marine Orders Part 3 currently. .... remember that we debated it with AMSA and approved it in 2005 and we have not changed our mind about those things since then.
2. Also the Institute has worked long and hard with the Operations division of AMSA on arguing for constructive liberalisation of some elements of Trade-equivalency. E.g. in 2005 AIMPE proposed and AMSA accepted that in assessing whether a Trade was suitable instead of only looking at work done during the apprenticeship AMSA should now also have regard to the post-Trade work-experience to help a candidate get over the line. In the 4 years since we have done work about making up deficiencies in the case of applicants with good practical experience [for entry to Watchkeeper course] culminating in our proposals tabled to AMSA in October 2008 to do this for candidates who hold Class 3 but have NO Trade whatsoever.

3. Whilst none of these things appear in the Tinny-to-Tanker proposals from AMSA thus far AIMPE remains hopeful that the more problematic parts of AMSA's proposals [such as the dismantling of MED 3 and MED 2 certificates] will be amended before much longer.
4. AIMPE also trusts that our proposal for a BRIDGE to Watchkeeper for those Class 3 holders without a Trade will in due course be established in the revised Marine Order, with all decision-making power in relation to engineering certificates expressly given back to the Principal Examiner Engineers [not the 'Manager', who is not required to hold engineering qualifications].
5. As you know Marine Orders 3 stipulates there are only 2 ways of qualifying for entry to the Watchkeeper course:-
  - Cadet Entry to those with HSC English, Maths & Science; or
  - Trade – entry for those holding approved Trade-qualifications

Whilst a Class 3 – holder has always been able to gain entry to Watchkeeper if possessing the Cadet-entry standard in English Mathematics and Science many members would not meet that and many do not hold a Trade... so currently there is no way for them to achieve Watchkeeper.

However, as well as AIMPE's arguing for wider discretion by AMSA in alternative Trades, AIMPE is arguing that for the first time there should be such a way.

Changing this is a difficult question and requires considerable consideration by AMSA to determine what is equivalent to the technical trade-training plus 4 year apprenticeship and we will have to see precisely where we reach a landing on this but AMSA is responding positively to the challenge and we expect a determination from them in the near future. We are hoping they will accept this model, below, **in lieu of the lacked trade-training and 4 year apprenticeship:-**

- ✓ AMSA to create the BRIDGE to Watchkeeper for those Class 3 holders without a Trade but can demonstrate 30 months of qualifying sea service MAINTAINING + operating on vessels above 750kW whilst holding Engineer Class 3; and
- ✓ If rather than the Class 3 workshop modules the applicant did the Watchkeeper-level workshop [competencies from Cadet-course] before this 30 months experience in lieu of a Trade then the period is reduced to 24 months; and
- ✓ evidence of this qualifying sea service and maintenance-experience via affidavits for existing engineers and moving forward a training and record of service document would probably be developed.
- ✓ If the qualifying sea service meets the Watchkeeper qualifying sea service requirements a candidate who meets the above could gain entry to the Watchkeeper course and may immediately sit the AMSA Orals for Watchkeeper.

**for those without a Trade, AIMPE's proposed  
'bridge' from Class 3 to Watchkeeper**

Evaluation by Principal Examiner of Engineers of documentary evidence of maintenance capability + experience > 30 months sea service on vessels > 750 kW using Class 3 = potential for entry on case-by-case basis according to established principles.

If did the Trade-level workshop modules [rather than the lesser Class 3 Workshop modules] then can get a 6 month remission of sea-service [need only 24 months].

This service may well count towards Watchkeeper sea-service.

Henning Christiansen  
Federal Secretary

Jim Mallows  
Director Professional Standards