

# **Marine Engineer Class 3 (MEC 3)**

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**This guideline is for new applicants for a Marine  
Engineer Class 3 certificate of competency**

**SeaCert**

# Marine Engineer Class 3 (MEC 3)

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

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# 1. Overview

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## **Marine Engineer Class 3 (MEC 3) certificate of competency**

This guideline is for new applicants for the Marine Engineer Class 3 (MEC 3) 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 3 certificate it is valid for five years. To continue using your certificate you will need to renew it before the expiry date. For more details about the requirements for renewal (revalidation), refer to the Maritime New Zealand (Maritime NZ) website.

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

The MEC 3 certificate corresponds with a certificate, issued under Regulation III/1 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 for the vessel propulsion type you specialise in, on ships powered by main propulsion machinery, in any operational area as officer in charge of an engineering watch at an operational level in a manned engine room and as a designated duty engineer in a periodically unmanned engine room.

From MEC 3, you can progress to MEC 2 (second engineer) (includes MEC 2 ECE and MEC 2 <3000 kW) and MEC 1 (chief engineer).

### **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 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 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

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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 have the minimum combined training, workshop skills and sea service requirements
- choose to specialise in steam-powered or motor-powered propulsion systems, or both
- complete and pass the approved qualification for MEC 3
- complete an approved marine engineer's training record book (for the cadetship programme only)
- have the required STCW ancillary certificates
- pass Maritime NZ's final exam
- prove that you are a fit and proper person
- be medically fit and have good eyesight
- be at least 18 years old.

Each of these requirements and how to prove that you meet them is explained on the following pages.

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)

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### 2.1 Prior certification and qualifications

While no previous qualifications are required, prior training or experience in marine or mechanical engineering (but *not* in other engineering fields such as chemical or electrical engineering) may reduce the amount of sea service and training you need to complete (refer to 2.3 *Training* for more information).

### 2.2 Sea service

Your sea service must be relevant and appropriate to the requirements set out in the maritime rules. This means that your sea service must be on commercial vessels, naval vessels or warships.

All of your sea service must have been completed in the 10 years preceding your application.

It is preferred that you complete your sea service on ships that are powered by engines of 750 kilowatts (kW) or more, operating beyond restricted limits. However, sea service that does not meet this specific requirement will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

#### Sea service requirements

Your sea service requirement is dependent on the training pathway you take. You can choose from two options as shown below. You must complete one of them. Both options require you to complete the NZ Diploma in Marine Engineering (Level 6). See 2.3 *Training* for further information.

##### Option 1 – 12 months

At least 12 months of sea service as part of an approved cadet programme. This must include at least six months' experience in engine room watchkeeping under the supervision of the Chief Engineer or qualified engineering officer

##### Option 2 – 36 months

At least 36 months of sea service of which 30 months must be in the engine department. This must include at least six months' experience in engine room watchkeeping under the supervision of the Chief Engineer or qualified engineering officer.

## 2. Requirements (continued)

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### Proving your sea service

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

For Option 1 we suggest that you complete the summary of sea service form contained in your training record book.

For Option 2 you will need to keep track of your sea service. You may use the summary of sea service form available on the Maritime NZ website to help you achieve this. This form is not required to support your application.

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 (if using a New Zealand discharge book, make sure you get the watchkeeping section 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, 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
- 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.

## 2. Requirements (continued)

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### 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.

#### 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](http://maritimenz.govt.nz/seafarers)

### Pre-assessment of sea service

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.

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 3 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 3 certificate, make sure your sea service was obtained within the 10 years preceding the date of your certificate application.

## 2. Requirements (continued)

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### 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/1 of the STCW convention.

#### Approved training

For both options, the approved training qualification is the Diploma in Marine Engineering (Level 6). The diploma is available through the New Zealand Maritime School (Auckland) and the International Maritime Institute of New Zealand (Nelson).

| Requirement  | Document(s) you must provide   |
|--|--|
| <b>Option 1</b><br>NZ Diploma in Marine Engineering Level 6 with evidence of approved training programme, including on-board training and completion of your approved training record book | The diploma certificate showing your name and the date of issue. Alternatively, a copy of your academic transcript evidencing completion of the qualification.<br><br>Evidence of completion of an approved training programme that includes on-board training that has been documented in an accepted training record book. This is often referred to as a cadet programme. The evidence is likely to be a letter from the training provider. |
| <b>Option 2</b><br>NZ Diploma in Marine Engineering Level 6  | The diploma certificate showing your name and the date of issue. Alternatively, a copy of your academic transcript evidencing completion of the qualification.   |

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Previous training, such as a National Certificate in Mechanical Engineering (NCME) (Level 4) or equivalent, will be considered by the training provider. This may lead to a reduction in training required.

For more information about approved training providers and the competency framework for MEC 3 refer to the Maritime NZ website.

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



## 2. Requirements (continued)

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### Training record book

For Option 1 you must complete an approved engineer's training record book for officer in charge of an engineering watch (and associated project work).

You must provide the original of your training record book to a Maritime NZ-approved Maritime Examiner before you take your final exam. We recommend you use the International Shipping Federation's on-board training record book for engineer cadets.

A list of approved training record books is available on the Maritime NZ website. Refer to the training section at the following link.

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

The training record book needs to:

- be one that the Director of Maritime NZ has approved (your training provider will guide you on this)
- be the original, not a copy
- be completed while you carry out your sea service
- have all relevant records completed
- be signed by your chief engineer or supervising certificated officer to confirm that you have learnt and demonstrated the competency.

Keep your training record book in a safe place. We also recommend that you make a copy of the completed sections and associated evidence, and store these in a safe place as well (but separately from your training record book).

## 2. Requirements (continued)

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### Ancillary and other certificates

You must provide copies of the ancillary certificates you gained as part of your MEC 3 training. The training for all the certificates listed below is included within the Diploma in Marine Engineering Level 6. You should receive copies of the certificates when you complete your diploma to confirm you have demonstrated proficiency in the required skills.

| Documents you must provide   | Ancillary or other 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.<br>This is optional, but without it, your certificate will include the following limitation.<br><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  |

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.

## 2. Requirements (continued)

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The following ancillary certificates must be less than five years old from the date of issue when we issue your MEC 3 certificate.

- STCW basic – personal survival techniques
- STCW basic – fire prevention and fire fighting
- Proficiency in survival craft
- 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 exam must be conducted by a Maritime NZ approved examiner. The exam checks that you have met the standards of competency specified in section A-III/1 of the STCW convention.

The final examination is currently an oral examination. It is usually organised by your training provider when you have completed the requirements for the award of the Diploma in Marine Engineering Level 6 qualification.

If you completed Option 1 training you will need to provide your completed training record book to the examiner before you attend your examination.

## 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"><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> |

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## 2. Requirements (continued)

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### 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 3 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. The medical category must be A, A(T) or B.</li><li>• You may use an existing medical certificate if it will be valid (usually less than two years old) when your MEC 3 certificate is issued.</li></ul>   |
| Have good eyesight | <p>The medical practitioner will check that your eyesight meets the required standards for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 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</li><li>• 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).</li></ul> <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> |

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

## 2. Requirements (continued)

### 2.7 Age and identity

You must be at least 18 years old to hold this certificate.

We need to confirm your age and 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

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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 the checklist at 3.4 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](https://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](https://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)

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#### 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.

Apply for pre-assessment of your sea service and/or training or workshop skills 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 with your application form. 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)

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#### 5 Assessment and payment of application fee

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.

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)

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#### 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 sighted as required.

- 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 for other countries (if applicable)
- Copy of your certificate of medical fitness for seafarers
- Your pre-assessment reference number if we pre-assessed your sea service
- Evidence of your combined sea service training
- Evidence of your approved training (Diploma in Marine Engineering Level 6)
- Evidence of other training (if required)
- Copy of your ancillary certificates

## 4. Contact us for help

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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).

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