

The Danish Maritime Authority's audit of authorized companies

Purpose

The purpose of the audit is to assess whether the company performs the task specified in accordance with the guidelines developed by the Danish Maritime Authority, including the order on technical regulation on the performance of certain tasks pursuant to the act on safety at sea on behalf of the Danish Maritime Authority, etc.

Definitions

Non-conformity: Non-compliance with specified requirements, such as:

- a requirement described in the quality documentation that is not met in practice,
- a number of defects which – if occurring as individual incidents – are not major non-conformities, but which – if occurring in large numbers – indicate systematically occurring defects,
- non-compliance with acts and provisions, or
- requirements for the quality management system that have not been documented.

Observation: A statement about facts identified during an audit and substantiated by objective evidence.

General requirements for being authorized by the Danish Maritime Authority

The general requirements for being authorized by the Danish Maritime Authority are the following:

1. The authorized company must have a quality assurance system containing the procedures necessary to ensure that the task specified is performed in accordance with the guidelines developed by the Danish Maritime Authority.
2. The person or company authorized must have wide experience performing the task specified as well as knowledge about the relevant regulations in force.
3. The person or company authorized must be in possession of the equipment necessary to perform the task specified.
4. The person or company authorized must ensure that the persons performing the task specified have completed relevant education and training and are sufficiently experienced within the area to perform the task specified.
5. The expenses incurred by the person or company authorized in connection with the task speci-

fied are irrelevant to the Danish Maritime Authority and considered an issue between the person or company ordering the task and the person or company authorized.

6. The person or company authorized must constantly be employed within the area in which it is authorized.
7. The person or company authorized is obliged to report changes made to the contact details, including changes to the company name, its postal address, name of contact person, e-mail, telephone number, etc. to the Danish Maritime Authority.

In addition, the descriptions of each individual authorization area give specific competence requirements to be met by the personnel as well as specific requirements for, for example, equipment and reporting.

Requirements for the company's quality assurance system

The company must have a quality assurance system containing the procedures necessary to ensure that the task specified is performed in accordance with the guidelines developed by the Danish Maritime Authority. The quality assurance system must be available to the company's employees and contain the following:

- Procedures (including work processes and the distribution of responsibilities) as well as instructions related to each individual work process ensuring that the task specified is performed in accordance with the forwarded guidelines developed by the Danish Maritime Authority, which include the current legal basis and regulations as well as the general requirements of the authorization manual.
- A description of how the company ensures and checks the quality of the task performed in connection with the authorization granted.
- An overview of the equipment required to be able to perform the task specified.
- An overview showing how the company's personnel hold the qualifications required according to the authorization granted.
- A brief description of how the company secures compliance with the competence requirements.

The validity of the authorization

The authorization remains valid for a maximum of five years after the date of issue. When the authorization expires, the holder must contact the Danish Maritime Authority again.

Special conditions may apply when an authorization is granted. The company authorized can, for example, be a company that only in exceptional cases performs tasks within the area concerned. In such cases, shorter periods of authorization may be granted.

Invalidation of an authorization

The Danish Maritime Authority can invalidate an authorization if:

- there are inconsistencies in the manner in which the task specified is performed and/or documented;
- the validity expires;
- persons holding the qualifications required are no longer employed by the company; or
- the general conditions on which the authorization is based cease.

An authorization can be invalidated only after having consulted the company and must be substantiated and accompanied by complaints guidelines.

Complaints about refusals

As a general rule, it is not possible to bring decisions made by the Danish Maritime Authority in pursuance of the act on safety at sea before any higher administrative authority.

Reference is also made to the order on the transfer of certain powers to the Danish Maritime Authority, on the right of appeal, etc. issued by the Danish Maritime Authority, which is available from the English webpage of the Danish Maritime Authority.

Questionnaire for the company before the audit

Before carrying out an audit, the Danish Maritime Authority will forward a short questionnaire to the company. Subsequently, the answers to the questionnaire will be discussed and verified by means of random checks during audits and inspections of the company.

Audit programme

Before the audit, the Danish Maritime Authority will forward an audit programme outlining the introductory meeting, the round of interviews and the final meeting.

The programme will be finally confirmed during the introductory meeting. Should the need arise to make major changes to the programme, please inform the Danish Maritime Authority as soon as possible.

Scope of the audit

The Danish Maritime Authority can at any time make unannounced visits to the company at which the valid certificates, etc. related to the authorization must be available.

On the same occasion, the Danish Maritime Authority will check that the persons from the company performing functions under the authorization hold the qualifications required.

The Danish Maritime Authority will also check compliance with the general requirements for being authorized by the Danish Maritime Authority (see above) as well as the company's internal procedures in relation to the authorization granted.

Furthermore, the Danish Maritime Authority will ensure that the company keeps updated about the rules and regulations in force at any time in the area in which the person or company authorized performs tasks on behalf of the Danish Maritime Authority. Reference is also made to the Danish Maritime Authority's "Authorization manual" (in Danish).

<http://www.soefartsstyrelsen.dk/Skibe/synafskibe/Autorisationer/Documents/Autorisationshåndbogen.pdf>

The Danish Maritime Authority's reporting in connection with audits and inspections

During the final meeting, the employee(s) of the Danish Maritime Authority will give brief oral feed-back. In addition, any non-conformities, observations and/or recommendations will be presented. Non-conformities will be documented through a special report on non-conformities.

No conclusions will be presented at the final meeting, such as on any invalidation of an authorization.

Subsequently, the Danish Maritime Authority will forward a short audit report to the company, which will also state whether the authorization continues to be valid.

Evaluation of audits and inspections

The auditors will ask the company for brief oral feed-back as well as an evaluation of the audit during the final meeting. Furthermore, the company can – after the audit and inspection – forward its evaluation and feed-back by mail to the Danish Maritime Authority (skibe@dma.dk).

The company itself can decide on the form and contents of this evaluation.

Danish Maritime Authority, 19 November 2013