

## Explanatory notice for the CESNI standards for models of crew-related documents in the field of inland navigation

Communication from the Secretariat

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### 1. Introduction

In October 2019, the European Committee for drawing up Standards in the field of Inland Navigation (CESNI) adopted

- Standards for certificates of qualification as a boatmaster and for certificates of qualification as a liquefied natural gas (LNG) expert and as a passenger navigation expert and
- Standards for the service record book combined with certificates of qualification referred to in Art. 11(3) of Directive (EU) 2017/2397 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the recognition of professional qualifications in inland navigation and repealing Council Directives 91/672/EEC and 96/50/EC<sup>1</sup> (the Directive),
- Standards for the practical simulator examination certificate referred to in Art. 18(3) of the Directive,
- Standards for the service record book and Standards for the logbook referred to in Art. 22(4) of the Directive.

These standards<sup>2</sup> are designed for integration in international, national and regional regulations (e.g. Regulations for Rhine Navigation Personnel (RPN)).

The CESNI Secretariat worked out an explanatory notice to document the features of the models, the instructions to complete them and consequences associated with the use of the models. This notice is for documentary purposes only.

This notice gives an overview on the current situation in inland navigation and provides for details on needs to be addressed by the models, possible alternatives and consequences of the adoption of the standards.

### 2. Methodology

For **certificates of qualification as a boatmaster**, CESNI experts examined whether the model of the Rhine patent in Annex D1 of the Regulations for Rhine Navigation Personnel (RPN), adopted by the Central Commission for Navigation of the Rhine (CCNR), or the model for the boatmaster license in Annex 1 of Directive 96/50/EC could provide an appropriate basis for establishing models for inland navigation in the EU in the light of the Directive. Models set out in line with both annexes are carried by the majority of personnel currently active in inland waterway transport on the Rhine and all Union waterways.

With a view to Art. 12(4) of the Directive, requesting the inclusion of the specific authorisations in the certificate of qualification as a boatmaster, CESNI experts proposed to **create a new model including information on specific authorisations**

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<sup>1</sup> Directive (EU) 2017/2397 of 12 December 2017, OJ L 345, 27.12.2017, p. 53

<sup>2</sup> Resolutions CESNI 2019-II-1 to 2019-II-5

- for sailing on waterways that have been identified as inland waterways with a maritime character (point (a) of Art. 6 of the Directive),
- for sailing on inland waterways that have been identified as stretches with specific risks (point (b) of Art. 6),
- for sailing with the aid of radar (point (c) of Art. 6) and
- for sailing large convoys (point (e) of Art. 6).

As the volume of data to be entered in the certificate of qualification as a boatmaster could not be predicted, mostly because of the amount of stretches identified as stretches with specific risks, experts developed a physical form (hard copy) and an electronic form allowing to contain more data than the currently used physical form. As for the physical form, an electronic format can serve as authentic proof of qualifications provided it contains appropriate safeguards to prevent fraud, it can be "carried" while exercising the occupation and it can be easily accessed by relevant authority.

For **certificates of qualification as an LNG expert** (see point (d) of Art. 6 and Art. 12(5)) **and as a passenger navigation expert**, entirely new models had to be developed by CESNI experts. Experts established a physical form and an electronic, too. CESNI collected expertise from Member States representatives and exam commissions for this purpose.

For **service record books and logbooks**, experts agreed that the models already existing RPN could serve in general as an example with a view to the data it contains. Experts noted that the model of the RPN found broad acceptance due to a multilateral agreement between the CCNR and Austria, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania and the Slovak Republic. However, experts also took into consideration that a distinction between navigation time on the Rhine and other inland waterways of the Union was no longer necessary. A similar situation was identified for logbooks.

The model for **certificate for practical examination** had to be developed by CESNI experts. CESNI collected expertise from Member State representatives, exam commissions and simulator operators for this purpose.

### 3. Impact on inland navigation

CESNI standards provide for harmonised models for crew-related documents as required by the Directive in order to facilitate controls.

Today, according to AQUAPOL (International police cooperation on the water), some one hundred different types of documents are used in inland navigation, e.g. separate documents for the qualification as a boatmaster, a radar certificate as well as several certificates for different stretches with specific risks issued by several authorities for the same holder.

The new set of standards allows to document the qualifications of all crew members by only five different harmonised models, including the process of passing a practical exam before having obtained the qualification. The combined model for service record book and certificates of qualification and the model of the logbook are suited to document and control all relevant qualifications in the light of manning requirements as they cover all crew members and not only deck crew members covered by the Directive. To cover all qualifications in inland navigation, only a few more documents are needed with a view to security personnel for specific operations (e.g. dealing with dangerous cargo according to ADN<sup>3</sup> serving as a first aid assistant or breathing apparatus wearer on board passenger vessels).

Standards provide for **better readability** of entries on the person of the holder in certificates of qualification and service record books, as names have to be entered and - if the spelling in UNICODE deviates from spelling in ASCII - transcribed in ASCII in brackets.

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<sup>3</sup> European Agreement concerning the International Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Inland Waterways

Standards also prepare the **use of data in the European Crew Database (ECDB)** with a view of adding serial numbers to easily identify the document.

### 3.1. **Specific impact of the harmonised models for crew members and experts for specific operations**

a) Certificate of qualification as a boatmaster or as an expert

**For the first time in inland navigation, an electronic certificate serves as an alternative format to paper (or other physical material) for certificates of qualifications of boatmasters and experts for LNG and for passenger navigation.** The electronic form can be issued easily, is accessible off-line on a computer, a tablet or a smartphone, can be conveniently modified by a competent authority in case of update e.g. medical restrictions or stretch for specific risk, is cheap to issue and not limited by an ID-card format, it can be printed-out and the original remains with the issuing authority (no lost). The model for the electronic certificate is the ECDB webpage of the crew member that shows all the data related to the concerned certificate of qualification (e.g. as a boatmaster) and which could, through an algorithm, generate a PDF document with all that information. That document would be the (electronic) certificate of qualification of the crew member. The ECDB mirror approach presents the advantage of having a certificate which is more consistent and exhaustive and facilitates checks.

The **origin and authenticity can be checked** in a simple way without requiring specific tools. The e-seal is embedded in PDF/A document, taking into account all info contained in the file (the text, photo and the 2D barcode, etc). Any modification of the PDF document after the sealing (digital signature of public authority) will invalidate the signature. Such an e-seal can be checked after sending the e-document to the controller (the certificate holder can pass it via USB, Bluetooth connection). This can be done with the software Adobe Acrobat Reader (on a PC) or an application (app) (to be developed). It can be checked if the seal is valid (generated by an entrusted authorities) and whether the document has not been tampered with.

The 2D Barcode shall consist in the link to the ECDB (URL). It could be read with any traditional 2D barcode device or app. CESNI experts expect that parameters can be transmitted to countries using the ECDB once the parameters of URL link will be known. As a result, a similar 2D barcode with the same parameters will be included on all documents regardless of their format (paper, plastic/polycarbonate, electronic).

The inclusion of electronic formats paves the way to use other documents in electronic format in inland navigation.

b) Service record books

For service record books, two standards were adopted, laying down harmonised instructions for the issuing authorities and characteristics of the document.

aa) Service record book for boatmasters

Standards for service record book for boatmasters allow to record service time on board with a view to ADN requirements as well as navigation times on specific stretches or on large convoys.

bb) Service record book for other crew members

For crew members not holding a certificate of qualification as a boatmaster, a single document combines the functions of the certificate of qualification and of the service record book.

For crew members other than boatmasters, certificates of qualification e.g. as a boatman or as a helmsman are included in the single document. This document also carries a 2D barcode as a link to the European Crew Database.

c) Logbook

The standards for logbook provide for a harmonised outer appearance and uniform instructions, by setting up a simple numbering system for functions on board.

For all above mentioned documents, the CESNI also identified a harmonised way to facilitate the identification of the document by a serial number.

d) Practical examination certificate

Finally, standards for practical simulator examination certificate provide for a standardised format, to certify that a practical examination for obtaining a certificate of qualification as a boatmaster or for a specific authorisation for sailing with the aid of radar has been passed on a simulator, when the theoretical part of the examination took place elsewhere.

### 3.2 Possible alternatives to the definition of harmonised standards

Keeping in mind the objective to harmonise regulation in the EU and CCNR Member States, there is no alternative to harmonised models. In behalf of the Directive, it is an explicit requirement. Without CESNI providing these standards, the Commission would have adopted harmonised models in line with Directive requirements without the technical expertise of CESNI. RPN will integrate the very same models.

CESNI standards allow the implementation of models in legal instruments that are applied as from 18 January 2022.

### 3.3 Outlook

Art. 22(5) of the Directive requests the European Commission to submit to the European Parliament and to the Council an assessment of tamper-proof electronic service record books, logbooks and professional cards that incorporate Union certificates of qualification in inland navigation, by 17 January 2026. The Commission is already working on it and plans a legislative proposal for the second part of 2020.

Before such a new framework is in place, CESNI experts could report on findings of the application of the new models of certificates of qualification, service record books, combined models, logbooks and practical examination certificates. CESNI experts could also provide feedback on the effect of the new models and their use in the context of the ECDB.

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