Federal Communications Commission

§ 13.201 Qualifying for a commercial operator license or endorsement.

(a) To be qualified to hold any commercial radio operator license, an applicant must have a satisfactory knowledge of FCC rules and must have the ability to send correctly and receive correctly spoken messages in the English language.

(b) An applicant must pass an examination for the issuance of a new commercial radio operator license, other than the Restricted Radiotelephone Operator Permit and the Restricted Radiotelephone Operator Permit–Limited Use, and for each change in operator class. An applicant must pass an examination for the issuance of a new

entry in the station maintenance records giving:

(1) Pertinent details of all service and maintenance work performed by the operator or conducted under his or her supervision;

(2) His or her name and address; and

(3) The class, serial number, and expiration date (if applicable) of the license when the FCC has issued the operator a license; or the PPC serial number(s) and date(s) of issue when the operator is awaiting FCC action on an application.

(c) When the operator is on duty and in charge of transmitting systems, or performing service, maintenance or inspection functions, the license or permit document, or a photocopy thereof, or a copy of the application and PPC(s) received by the FCC, must be posted or in the operator’s personal possession, and available for inspection upon request by a FCC representative.

(d) The operator on duty and in charge of transmitting systems, or performing service, maintenance or inspection functions, shall not be subject to the requirements of paragraph (b) of this section at a station, or stations of one licensee at a single location, at which the operator is regularly employed and at which his or her license, or a photocopy, is posted.

§ 13.203

Ship Radar Endorsement. Each application for the class of license or endorsement specified below must pass, or otherwise receive credit for, the corresponding examination elements:

1. Radiotelegraph Operator License:
   (i) Telegraphy Elements 1 and 2;
   (ii) Written Elements 1 and 6.

2. General Radiotelephone Operator License: Written Elements 1 and 3.


4. GMDSS Radio Operator’s License: Written Elements 1 and 7, or a Proof of Passing Certificate (PPC) issued by the United States Coast Guard or its designee representing a certificate of competency from a Coast Guard-approved training course for a GMDSS endorsement.

5. Restricted GMDSS Radio Operator License: Written Elements 1 and 7R, or a Proof of Passing Certificate (PPC) issued by the United States Coast Guard or its designee representing a certificate of competency from a Coast Guard-approved training course for a GMDSS endorsement.

6. GMDSS Radio Maintainer’s License: Written Elements 1, 3, and 9.


(a) A written examination (written Element) must prove that the examinee possesses the operational and technical qualifications to perform the duties required by a person holding that class of commercial radio operator license. For each Element, the Commission shall establish through public notices or other appropriate means the number of questions to be included in the question pool, the number of questions to be included in the examination, and the number of questions that must be answered correctly to pass the examination. Each written examination must consist of questions relating to the pertinent subject matter, as follows:

(1) Element 1: Basic radio law and operating practice with which every maritime radio operator should be familiar. Questions concerning provisions of laws, treaties, regulations, and operating procedures and practices generally followed or required in communicating by means of radiotelephone stations.

(2) Element 3: General radiotelephone. Questions concerning electronic fundamentals and techniques required to adjust, repair, and maintain radio transmitters and receivers at stations licensed by the FCC in the aviation and maritime radio services.

(3) Element 6: Advanced radiotelegraph. Questions concerning technical, legal and other matters applicable to the operation of all classes of radiotelegraph stations, including operating procedures and practices in the maritime mobile services of public correspondence, and associated matters such as radio navigational aids, message traffic routing and accounting, etc.

(4) Element 7: GMDSS radio operating practices. Questions concerning GMDSS radio operating procedures and practices sufficient to show detailed practical knowledge of the operation of all GMDSS sub-systems and equipment; ability to send and receive correctly by radiotelephone and narrow-band direct-printing telegraphy; detailed knowledge of the regulations applying to radio communications, knowledge of the documents relating to charges for radio communications and knowledge of those provisions of the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea which relate to radio; sufficient knowledge of English to be able to express oneself satisfactorily both orally and in writing; knowledge of and ability to perform each function listed in §80.1081 of this chapter; and knowledge covering the requirements set forth in IMO Assembly Resolution on Training for Radio Personnel (GMDSS), Annex 3.

(5) Element 7R: Restricted GMDSS radio operating practices. Questions concerning those GMDSS radio operating procedures and practices that are applicable to ship stations on vessels that sail exclusively in sea area A1, as defined in §80.1069 of this chapter, sufficient to show detailed practical knowledge of the operation of pertinent GMDSS sub-systems and equipment; ability to send and receive correctly by