

NB: Unofficial translation, legally binding only in Finnish and Swedish

**Decree of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health
on the standards of eyesight and hearing required of seafarers
(224/2013)**

Section 1 – Vision standards

(1) The vision of seafarers serving in the deck and engine department shall meet the following minimum requirements:

	Distance vision				Near/immediate vision
	1. Aided or unaided		2. Unaided		Both eyes together, aided or unaided
	One eye	Other eye	One eye	Other eye	
Deck department	0.5	0.5	0.1	0.1	Vision required for ship's navigation (e.g., chart reference, use of bridge instrumentation and equipment and identification of aids to navigation)
Engine department	0.4	0.4	0.1	0.1	Vision required to read instruments in close proximity, to operate equipment, and to identify systems/components as necessary

(2) Visual acuity is tested using Snellen charts. Seafarers who achieve the minimum standard of column 1 only using spectacles must achieve the minimum standard of column 2 without spectacles. In this case seafarers must use spectacles at work and carry a spare pair of spectacles on board the ship.

(3) Seafarers serving in the deck and engine departments must have normal colour vision and normal visual fields, examined using confrontation tests. Persons serving in the deck and engine departments must have the night vision required to perform all necessary functions in darkness without compromise. If double vision (diplopia) is suspected during tests, an examination conducted by a specialist in ophthalmology is required.

(4) Seafarers other than those serving in the deck and engine departments must achieve the minimum eyesight standard of 0.1 without spectacle correction in each eye and they shall otherwise have vision sufficient to perform their routine and emergency duties safely and efficiently.

Section 2 – Hearing standards

	Tested during pre-sea medical examination using audiometry within the frequencies 500, 1 000, 2 000 and 3 000 Hz, average or speech threshold	During periodic medical examination distance for hearing conversational speech in metres; hearing to be tested at 6-year intervals by audiometry as during pre-sea examination
--	---	--

	One ear	Other ear	One ear	Other ear
			4 m	2 m
Deck and engine department	25 dB	25 dB	30 dB	40 dB
	One ear	One ear	To be tested with or without hearing aid	
			One ear	Other ear
			3 m	-
Other personnel	30 dB	-	35 dB	-

Section 3 – Medical conditions, disorders or impairments

The vision or hearing of seafarers must not be impaired by medical conditions, disorders or impairments, such as double vision or lack of night vision, which may affect their fitness for service at sea. If there are indications of eye diseases, the nature of the disease and its effect on the seafarer's fitness for service at sea must be assessed by a specialist in ophthalmology before a medical statement is issued.

Section 4 (795/2013) – Entry into force

- (1) This Decree enters into force on 1 April 2013.
- (2) This Decree repeals the decision of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health on the standards of eyesight and hearing required of seafarers (70/1985).
- (3) The requirements for normal colour vision and vision fields mentioned in section 1 of this Decree do not apply to seafarers
 - 1) who have served in the engine department before 1 April 2013,
 - 2) who have taken up their studies or been admitted to study before 1 January 2014 for certification as member of the engine department at a college or university of applied sciences providing maritime education,
 - 3) who have taken up their studies or been admitted to study before 1 January 2014 for an examination qualifying them to serve in the engine department or a part of such examination or studies in preparation for the examination.