PLEASE READ THIS TO AVOID DELAYS IN THE VERIFICATION OF TESTIMONIALS

SEA SERVICE DEFINITIONS (DECK)

- **ONBOARD YACHT SERVICE** is the time spent signed on a yacht irrespective of the vessel activity, i.e. dates on your contract, or in your discharge book, which will include the following.

- **SEA SERVICE** is the combination of days AT SEA (aka Actual Sea Service), Stand-by Service and/or Yard Service.

Do not confuse the two above. Sea Service does not usually amount to all the time signed on board. **Some days do not fit MCA definitions.**

- **Days AT SEA, aka Actual Sea Service or Actual Days at Sea,** is time spent at sea, which may include time at anchor or river and canal transits associated with a passage, with engines running for at least 4h within a 24h period. Completing more than 4 hours at sea cannot be counted as more than 1-day.

- **Stand-by Service IS NOT ANY DAY IN PORT,** it is only the time immediately following a voyage while the vessel is under preparation for a subsequent voyage. A maximum of 14 consecutive days may be counted at one time, but on no occasion, may a period of standby service exceed that of the previous voyage. Therefore, under no circumstances can your total standby service exceed your actual sea service.

- **Yard Service** is the time when standing by a build, refit, or serious repair. The MCA accepts a maximum of 90 days continuously or in separate periods (i.e., per NOE application, not per testimonial). General maintenance does not qualify as yard service.

- **Watchkeeping Service (only for those who have MCA OOW 3000)** is Actual Sea Service spent as a Watchkeeping Officer in full charge of a navigational watch where every 4 hours (as of April 9th, 2015) spent on watch may be counted as 1 day of watch keeping service. This may be achieved on a cumulative basis which means that the required 4 hours do not have to be within the same 24-hour period. You cannot carry the excess hours over though. Completing more than 4 hours of watchkeeping cannot be counted as more than 1-day watchkeeping time. **Watchkeeping can never be higher than actual days at sea.**

- **Time spent at anchor** may be accepted as **days at sea or watchkeeping service if it is associated with a 24-hour passage,** like a short period at anchor whilst waiting for a berth or to transit a canal or lock or other exceptional situations like harsh weather conditions or other adversities, where the departure is postponed to a later moment. This may be counted as Actual sea service but on no occasion may a period at anchor, on a buoy or mooring, exceed that of the previous voyage. On the contrary, if the period at anchor, on a buoy or mooring is at the conclusion of a passage (i.e. the vessel goes to anchor rather than to a berth) then time will be counted as Stand-by service or Onboard service.

HOW TO FILL IN A TESTIMONIAL

1. You need to submit a signed testimonial. Reference letters, log sheets, excel sheets, or other forms or similar documents are not accepted. You can find our templates here.

2. **PLEASE READ THE SEA SERVICE DEFINITIONS** so that you understand the different types of sea service. It will save you from delays in the verification of your sea time. If you have any questions on sea service, please contact us at srb@pya.org – better now than having to do the testimonials all over again.

3. Fill in both dates in the testimonial (start and end dates), even if you are still on board. You still have to put a date in the relevant box because your sea service corresponds to a specific period of time.

4. **SEA SERVICE and ONBOARD YACHT SERVICE are NOT the same.** Time signed on board normally should not equal sea service. Also, **STANDBY SERVICE is not any day that you are not at sea.** But you must already know that if you read the definitions, right?

5. Do not calculate your days at sea + yard service and enter the balance as stand-by service.

6. **Do not fill in watchkeeping days** if you have not yet obtained your OOW 3000 CoC. If you are applying for an OOW Unlimited CoC, to record any watchkeeping, you will have to provide a stand-alone testimonial in Merchant format (see MSN 1856 – Annex E) and a letter from your Captain stating that you have been shadowing him/her while on watch and mentioning what your duties were.

7. **Make sure the dates on your testimonials do not overlap with other testimonials.** The MCA does not accept overlapping testimonials because you cannot be physically on two vessels at the same time.

8. **The testimonials must be signed by an acceptable signatory. Not self-signed.** Captains can have their testimonials signed by owners or managers. Deckhands can have their testimonials signed by captains, chief officers, owners, or managers. Engineers can also ask the chief engineers. If not, the testimonial will be declined.

9. Make sure the **email address of the signatory is filled-in and legible.** If not, the verification will be delayed.