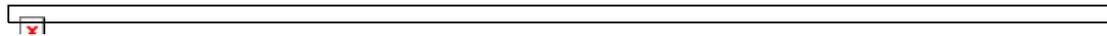


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	Marine Guidance Note (MGN)	

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MARINE GUIDANCE NOTE MGN 92 (M)

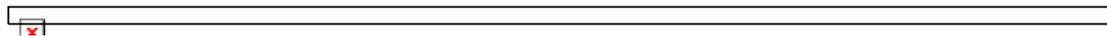


TRAINING AND CERTIFICATION GUIDANCE – PART 2

Certificates of Competency – Deck Department

Notice to Owners, Masters, Deck Officers and Ratings of Merchant Vessels and those concerned with Maritime Training

This Note supersedes Marine Guidance Note MGN 2(M) and should be read in conjunction with Merchant Shipping Notices Nos M1328 and MSN 1692(M) (or subsequent amendments).



For a printable version of this document [click here](#) (PDF Document 493kB)

Summary

This Marine Guidance Note (MGN) is part of a series which gives guidance regarding the application of the Merchant Shipping (Training and Certification) Regulations 1997¹.

In order for the guidance to be easy to use and to keep up-to-date, the individual Parts will retain the same Part number but the MGN number may change if and when revisions are necessary. The front sheet of any revised Part will list the latest MGN numbers. Any references to “Part” in this Note relates to this series of Guidance Notes as listed below.

Key Point

This Part gives information and guidance regarding the certification structure and requirements for **deck officers and navigation watch ratings**. It is additional to the general guidance given in Part 1 and is particular to the **deck department**.

LATEST INDEX TO PARTS

Part No.	Subject	Latest MGN Number	Issue Date
1	General requirements for certification and medical fitness	MGN 91 (M)	April

			2000
2	Certificates of competency - deck department	This note	April 2000
3	Certificates of competency - engine department	MGN 93 (M)	April 2000
4	Certificates of competency - radio personnel	MGN 94 (M)	May 2002
5	Special training requirements for personnel on certain types of ship	MGN 95 (M)	April 2000
6	Emergency, occupational safety, medical care and survival functions	MGN 96(M)	April 2000
7	Alternative certification - dual certification	MGN 7 (M)	April 2000
8	Education and training schemes	MGN 8 (M)	April 2000
9	Procedure for the issue and revalidation of certificates of competency, marine engine operator licences and tanker endorsements.	MGN 9 (M)	April 2000
10	Ratings	MGN 97 (M)	April 2000
11	Conduct of MCA oral examinations	MGN 69 (M)	April 2000
12	Safety training for concessionaires working on passenger ships	MGN 120 (M)	April 2000
13	Use of fishing vessel certificates of competency in standby, seismic survey, and oceanographic research vessels – revised arrangements	MGN 121 (M)	April 2000
14	STCW 95 application to certificates of service	MGN 116 (M)	April 2000
15	Certification of inshore tug personnel	MGN 117 (M)	April 2002
16	Certification of inshore craft personnel (other than tugs)	MGN 126(M)	Not yet issued

1 SI 1997/348 as amended by SI 1997/1911

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April 2000

MC124/1/021

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All references to “Parts” in this document are to other Parts of this series of Training and Certification Guidance Notes

1.0 Introduction

1.1 The Merchant Shipping (Training and Certification) Regulations 1997 (the Regulations) implement in the United Kingdom some of the requirements of the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping 1978 as amended in 1995, and its associated Code (STCW Code)², and prescribe mandatory minimum requirements for the certification of deck officers and navigational watch ratings.

1.2 Candidates for UK certificates of competency have to meet certain medical standards (including eyesight); satisfactorily complete the minimum period of seagoing service; reach the required vocational and academic standard; undertake ancillary technical training, and in the case of officer candidates, on completion of programmes of education and training approved by the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA), pass an oral examination conducted by an MCA examiner.

1.3 A pass in each part of every examination i.e. written MCA oral and, where appropriate, signals, will remain valid for a period of 3 years. Passes in Higher National Diplomas (HND), Ordinary National Diploma examinations and Certificates of Achievement will remain valid for certification purposes for 7 years.

2.0 Certificate Structure

2.1 The Regulations provide for the certification of masters and deck department personnel involved in bridge watchkeeping and navigational duties as shown below in Table 1. However, additional flexibility is provided by further limitations and restrictions on certification for specific ship types or trades, as appropriate.

Table 1

Capacity	Area Limitation	Tonnage Limitation	STCW 95 Regulation
OOW	near-coastal	less than 500gt	II/3
	none	none	II/1
Chief Mate	near-coastal	less than 3,000gt	II/2
	near-coastal	none	II/2
	none	less than 3,000gt	II/2
	none	none	II/2
Master	near-coastal	less than 500gt	II/3
	near-coastal	less than 3,000gt	II/3
	near-coastal	local domestic passenger vessels	II/2
	none	none	II/2
	none	less than 3,000gt	11/2
none	none	none	
Navigational watch rating	none	none	II/4

2.2 There are three routes to gaining the necessary skills and underpinning knowledge required for the issue of a certificate of competency: the Vocational Qualification (VQ) route, a route based on traditional examinations and a route combining the two. Where appropriate, any route can lead to other nationally recognised qualifications, such as a Higher National Diploma (HND) issued by Edexcel (previously BTEC) or the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA)³, or a degree.

2.3 Under transitional arrangements, additional categories of deck officer certificates may be issued to ease the transition between the existing standards and those of STCW 95 (see Merchant Shipping Notice MSN 1692(M) or subsequent amendments).

2.4 Further information on the various requirements for progression to each level of certification is illustrated in Table 2 below.

2 Available from the Publications Department, International Maritime Organization, 4 Albert Embankment, London SE1 7SR

3 With effect from 1 April 1997, the SQA took on the role and responsibilities of the Scottish Vocational and Educational Council (SCOTVEC) and the Scottish Examinations Board (SEB).

[Table 2 - Deck Officer Certificate Structure](#)
(PDF Document 24kB)

3.0 Approved Sea Service

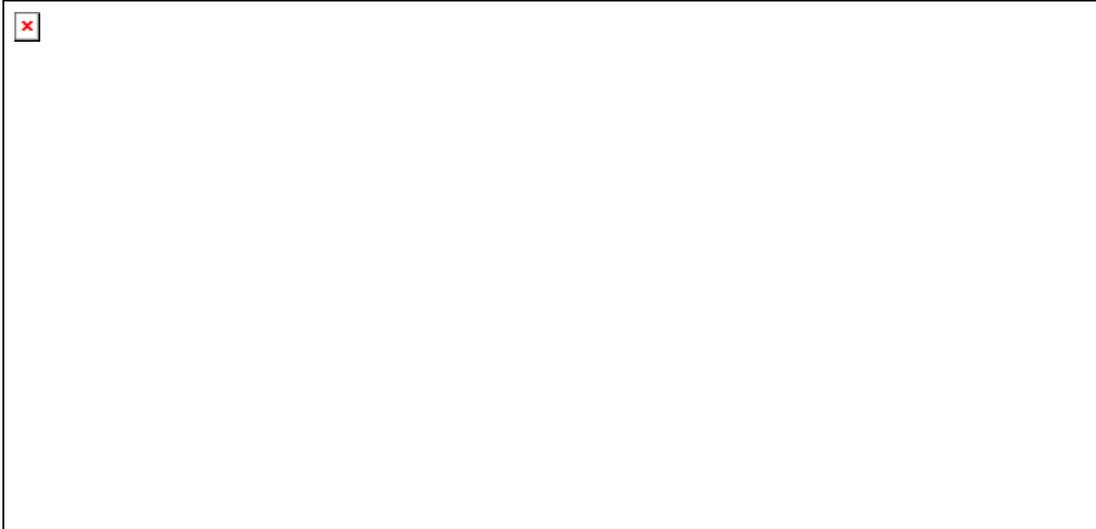
3.1 STCW 95 defines seagoing service as time spent on board a ship, relevant to the issue of a certificate or other qualification. The period of sea service required for certification varies with the level of certification and the training programme followed. The minimum requirements for the issue of a deck officer certificate of competency are shown in Table 3 below.

Table 3 Summary of Sea Service Requirements for Certificates of Competency

Unlimited trading area; unlimited ship size



Unlimited trading area; ships less than 3,000gt.



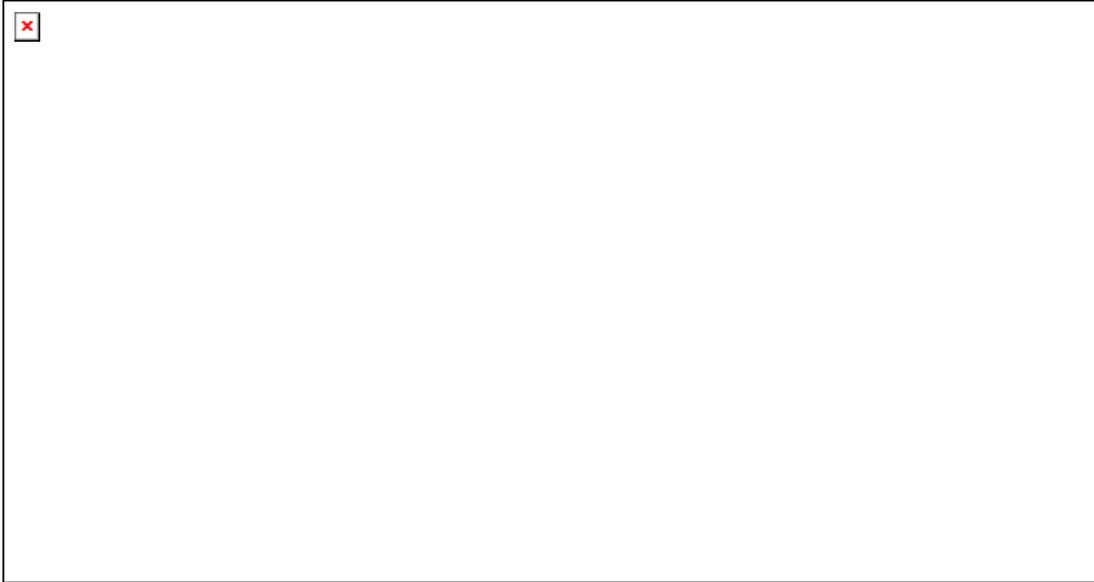
Near-coastal trading area; ships less than 500gt



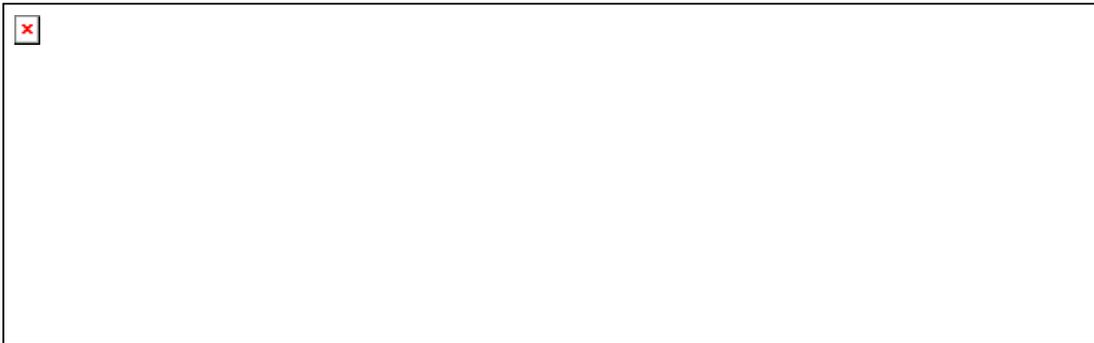
Near-coastal trading area; ships less than 3,000gt



Near-coastal trading area; unlimited ship size



Domestic passenger vessels operating in the near-coastal area within a nominated area



* 6 months of the last 12 months sea service must have been whilst engaged in bridge watchkeeping duties

3.2 General Requirements for Qualifying Sea Service

3.2.1 The qualifying service specified for any particular deck officer certificate of competency must be performed in the deck department and is reckoned from the date of engagement to the date of discharge. At least 6 months of the qualifying service must have been performed within the 5 years preceding the application. **Sea service should normally be performed on merchant ships of at least 24 metres in length or not less than 80gt proceeding to sea.** Other sea service may be accepted in lieu of a limited amount of service in specialised ships (see paragraph 3.7) or a limitation may be imposed on the certificate of competency.

3.2.2 Candidates for certification as officer of the navigational watch (OOW) are required to produce a statement from their employers, or the master(s) under whom they have served, that at least 6 of the last 12 months of their sea service have been spent on navigational watchkeeping duties under the supervision of a certificated officer. These duties may include keeping a lookout on the bridge or acting as helmsman but should not generally exceed 2 months out of the required 6 months. Where watchkeeping service is required for other certificates, candidates must provide proof of having served as watchkeeping officer for not less than 8 hours out of every 24 hours service claimed.

3.2.3 Trainee deck officers must produce evidence that an approved training programme (details in Part 8) has been followed, and that all service while on board ship was performed

in a satisfactory manner. Not more than 2 months of that service may have been spent standing-by a new vessel during the final stages of construction, in dry dock, or undergoing engine repairs. Candidates who fail to produce satisfactory evidence that they have followed a training programme approved by the MCA may be required to complete an additional period of sea service before being considered eligible for a certificate of competency. Other candidates may claim sea service reduction for attendance on approved training programmes or in recognition of higher academic achievements (see paragraph 3.6.3 below).

3.3 Verification of Service

3.3.1 Entries in a Discharge Book or Certificates of Discharge supported by testimonials will be treated as evidence of sea service. Where there are doubts about the sea service claimed or it cannot be verified as above, it will only be accepted upon written confirmation by some responsible person having personal knowledge of the facts to be established.

3.4 Calculation of Service

3.4.1 Sea service entered in official documents as in paragraph 3.3.1 above, will be reckoned by the calendar month, that is the time included between any given day in any month and the preceding day of the following month, both inclusive. The number of complete months from the commencement of the period, ascertained in this way, should be computed, after which the number of odd days should be counted. The day on which the crew agreement commenced, as well as that on which it terminated, should both be **included**, all leave of absence **excluded** and all odd days added together and reckoned at thirty days to the month.

3.5 Testimonials Required

3.5.1 All applicants for first and subsequent certificates of competency must produce testimonials covering character, standards of behaviour including sobriety, experience and ability on board ship and good conduct at sea, for at least the last twelve months of sea service preceding the date of application.

3.5.2 For applicants for certificates other than the first watchkeeping certificate, testimonials may be incorporated in the watchkeeping service certificates referred to in Part I.

3.5.3 For applicants for a first watchkeeping certificate of competency, the testimonials may be incorporated in a loose-leaf format into the Record Book or Training Portfolio for those following MNTB (Merchant Navy Training Board) approved training programmes. In other cases, the specimen forms at Appendix 1A and 1C of Part 1 may be used as a guide.

3.5.4 Unless there are exceptional circumstances, the required testimonials must be signed by the Master or Chief Engineer of the ships in which qualifying sea service has been performed. In the case of service as Master or Chief Engineer, the testimonials must be signed by a responsible official of the company concerned.

3.6 Sea Service Requirements for Candidates not Following an MNTB Approved/VQ Training Programme

3.6.1 The sea service requirements for candidates for deck officer II/1 certificates of competency as OOW who are not following approved cadet training programmes, may be varied as follows:

.1 **Cadets not following MNTB approved training programmes and ratings** with 36 months sea-service in the deck department (48 months if service was as a General Purpose rating), must have spent at least 6 of the last 12 months sea service on duties associated with bridge watchkeeping, under the supervision of a certificated deck officer.

.2 **Certificated Radio Officers** with at least 36 months service on merchant vessels will be required to complete *either*:

- .1 a further 18 months undertaking duties in both deck and radio departments; *or*
- .2 a further 12 months as a deck rating or trainee deck officer whilst maintaining a record of training in an approved Training Record Book obtainable from the MNTB. In both cases at least 6 months must be spent on duties associated with bridge watchkeeping under the supervision of a certificated deck officer;
- .3 **Royal Navy Officers** (Warfare Branch) with more than 36 months RN sea service will be required to complete a minimum of 3 months sea service on merchant vessels.
- .4 **Holders of Deck Officer (Fishing Vessel) Class 1 or Skipper (Full)** certificates of competency will not be required to undertake sea service on merchant ships prior to undertaking an STCW 95 Reg II/1 certificate of competency.
- .5 **Holders of Deck Officer (Fishing Vessel)** certificates of competency, other than those described above, will be required to complete 3 months sea service on merchant vessels.
- .6 **Persons who have served on fishing vessels or RN ships** in the deck department (other than those described above) with more than 36 months sea service, will be required to complete a minimum of 6 months sea service in the deck department on merchant ships, which must be spent on duties associated with bridge watchkeeping under the supervision of a certificated deck officer.
- .7 **Certificated engineer officers** will be required to complete 12 months sea service as a trainee deck officer. At least 6 months must be spent on duties associated with bridge watchkeeping under the supervision of a certificated deck officer.

3.6.2 Holders of Extended European or Middle Trade Command Endorsements who have served at least 36 months as master in vessels trading outside the Limited European area, will not be required to complete further sea service between being awarded a Chief Mate (unlimited) Reg II/2 certificate and being allowed to apply for a Master (unlimited) certificate. Certificates for Chief Mate (unlimited) under Reg II/2 will also be endorsed for Master, less than 3,000gt.

3.6.3 For those following the traditional route based on written examinations, for progression to a deck officer II/2 certificate of competency for service in the capacity of Chief Mate (unlimited), the officer will be required to have performed at least 18 months watchkeeping sea service while holding a OOW II/1 certificate. In order to obtain a deck officer II/2 certificate for the capacity of master, the officer will be required to have performed at least 18 months watchkeeping sea service whilst holding a II/2 certificate for the capacity of Chief Mate (unlimited).

3.6.4 Candidates for a deck officer II/2 certificate of competency for service as Chief Mate (nearcoastal) on ships more than 3,000gt, may count watchkeeping sea service performed at sea before obtaining a merchant navy certificate of competency towards the total required, provided that no such service is counted twice, i.e. towards both a first and subsequent certificate of competency. Not less than 6 months watchkeeping service holding a deck officer II/1 certificate of competency as OOW (unlimited) must be completed in all cases.

3.6.5 Holders of fishing vessel certificates of competency who qualify for the issue of a deck officer II/1 certificate of competency as OOW (unlimited) who then wish to obtain a deck officer II/2 certificate of competency for service as Chief Mate (near-coastal) on ships more than 3,000gt, will be given remission from the required watchkeeping service at the discretion of the MCA Examiner. Holders of Fishing Vessel Class 1 or Skipper (Full) certificates of competency, may also qualify for remission of sea service between deck officer II/2 certificate of competency for service as Chief Mate (near-coastal) on ships more than 3,000gt and that of deck officer II/2 certificate of competency for service as Master (near-coastal) on ships more than 500gt. Such remission shall be at the discretion of the MCA Examiner.

3.6.6 In certain exceptional circumstances, the MCA's Chief Examiner may allow a reduction in the sea service requirement or exemption from any part of the examinations to candidates who have achieved relevant academic achievement or technical training considered to be equivalent. Each case will be considered on a case by case basis.

3.7 Service in Specialised Ships

3.7.1 Service in the specialised ships listed in Tables 4 and 5 below will be counted towards the qualifying sea service required for a certificate of competency, subject to the conditions stated.

3.7.2 Candidates taking advantage of the sea service reductions in Table 5, will have their certificates of competency restricted to service in tugs until the full sea service requirements have been met.

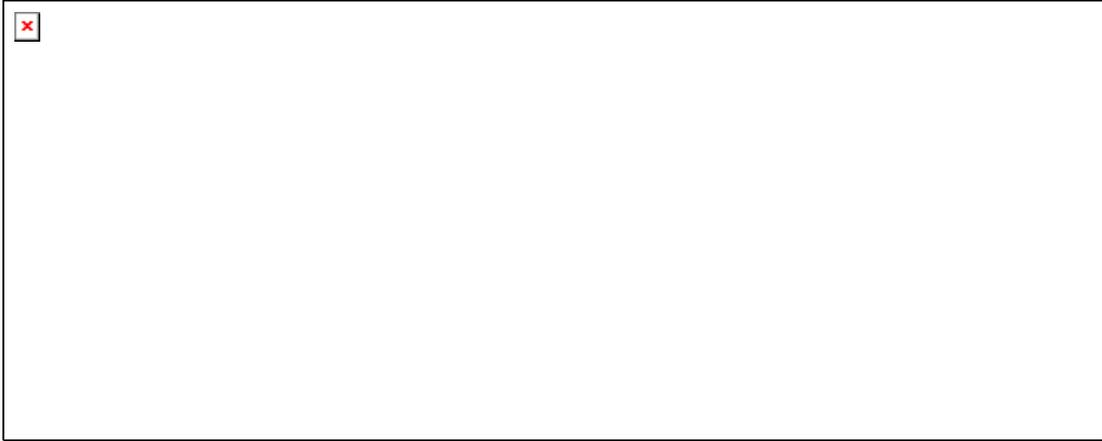
Table 4 Sea Service Allowances for Service in Specialised Ships



Key:

- RN – Royal Navy
- RMAS – Royal Maritime Auxillary Service
- RAF – Royal Air Force
- MOU – Mobile Offshore Unit
- FPSO – Floating Production & Storage Offtake
- w/k – Watchkeeping

Table 5 Sea-Service Allowances for Service in Tugs



* as defined in Merchant Shipping Notice MSN 1719 (M)

3.7.3 Where candidates have other types or combinations of sea service not included in the above tables, details of service together with documentary evidence should be submitted for consideration to the MCA's Chief Examiner at the address at the beginning of this MGN.

4.0 Navigational Watch Ratings

4.1 The STCW 95 requirements for navigational watch ratings are laid down in STCW Regulation II/4 and details of the training standard required are given in section A-II/4 of the STCW Code. Details of procedures relating to the certification of ratings are given in Part 10.

4.2 Owners of ships registered in the United Kingdom may apply to the MCA for authorisation to issue UK watch rating certificates on behalf of MCA.

5.0 Conversion Training

5.1 Details of requirements for holders of Deck Officer Class 5 and Deck Officer Class 1 (FV) certificates of competency who wish to convert to STCW 95 Regulation II/1 OOW certificates are set out in Part 8.

6.0 Ancillary Training

6.1 Ancillary training in safety and technical subjects is also required for the issue of a certificate of competency and is summarised below in Table 6. Although under the VQ system, this training may be subsumed in VQ units, a certificate for each ancillary course unit must be obtained by the candidate from the training provider.

6.2 Ancillary training certificates issued by overseas administrations in accordance with STCW/ILO, as listed at Appendix A, will be accepted by the MCA towards UK certificates of competency.

7.0 MCA Oral Examinations

7.1 Candidates for deck officer certificates of competency are required to take an oral examination conducted by an MCA examiner at an MCA Marine Office. The examination is to verify the candidate's ability to undertake the duties of OOW, chief mate, or master as appropriate. Details of procedures and syllabuses relating to examination and assessment leading to a UK certificate of competency are given in Parts 8, 9 and 11.

8.0 Medical Fitness Standards

8.1 It is a UK and International requirement that all certificated officers meet certain medical fitness and eyesight standards. Seafaring is a potentially hazardous occupation which calls for a high standard of health and fitness in those entering or re-entering the industry. Certificated officers must meet certain medical and eyesight standards, and hold a valid medical certificate issued under Merchant Shipping (Medical Examinations) Regulations 1983 3 or an acceptable equivalent.

8.2 Seafarers between the ages of 18 and 40 must be examined for medical fitness at intervals not exceeding five years, and seafarers aged 40 or over at intervals not exceeding two years. Further details of medical fitness requirements are set out in Part 1 and in MSN 1750 (M).

9.0 Further Advice

9.1 Further information if required is available from the MCA at any Marine Office or at the address given at the beginning of this MGN.

[Table 6 Ancillary Training and Other Requirements](#)
(PDF Document 25kB)

Table 6 Ancillary Training and Other Requirements

Additional Training Requirements	STCW 95 Regulation				STCW Code Ref.
	II/1	II/2	II/3	II/4	
Personal Survival Techniques	✓		✓	✓	A-V1/1-1
Fire Prevention and Fire Fighting	✓		✓	✓	A-VI/1-2
Elementary First Aid	✓		✓	✓	A-V1/1-3
Personal Safety and Social Responsibility	✓		✓	✓	A-V1/1-4
Proficiency in Survival Craft and Rescue Boats	✓		✓		A-V1/2*
Advanced Fire Fighting	✓		✓		A-VI/3
Medical First Aid	✓		✓		A-V1/4-1
Medical Care		✓			A-VI/4-2**
Radar and ARPA Simulator Trg - Operational level	✓		✓		A-II/1
Radar and ARPA Simulator Trg -		✓			A-II/2

Management level					
Efficient Deck Hand (EDH)	✓		✓		
GMDSS (GOC)	✓				A-IV/2
Restricted Operator Certificate (ROC)			✓		A-IV/2
Other Requirements					
Medical Fitness (including sight)	✓	✓	✓	✓	

* required for all seafarers in charge of lifesaving equipment

** required before taking up position as master or chief mate and by any other person on board designated as being in charge of medical care. In order to serve on a UK flag ship as master and/or person in charge of medical care, it will be necessary to have undertaken the approved medical care training within the previous five years or, if such training was taken earlier, to have at least undertaken an approved refresher course within the previous five years.

Safe Ships Clean Seas

¹SI 1983/808 as amended by SI 1985/512 and SI 1990/1995

Appendix A ACCEPTANCE OF OVERSEAS SHORT TRAINING PROGRAMMES FOR ISSUE OF UK CERTIFICATES OF COMPETENCY
(PDF Document 28kB)

Appendix A

**ACCEPTANCE OF OVERSEAS SHORT TRAINING PROGRAMMES FOR
ISSUE OF UK CERTIFICATES OF COMPETENCY**

TRAINING	ANY STCW SIGNATORY
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Basic Training: Personal Survival Techniques	✓
Basic Training: Fire Precautions & Fire-Fighting	✓
Basic Training: Elementary First-Aid (<i>not equivalent to First Aid at Sea</i>)	✓
Basic Training: Personal Safety & Social Responsibility	✓
Navigational or Engine-Room Watchrating certificate	✓
Efficient Deck Hand (EDH) (ILO)	✓
AB Certificate (ILO)	✓
Certificate of Proficiency in Survival Craft and Rescue Boats (CPSC & RB) (<i>replaces existing CPSC, which itself replaced the Lifeboatman Certificate</i>)	✓ ¹
CPSC & RB for Fast Rescue Boats	-
Advanced Fire-Fighting	✓ ²
Medical First-Aid (<i>replaces existing First Aid at Sea</i>)	✓ ³
Proficiency in Medical Care (<i>replaces existing Ship Captain's Medical Training</i>)	-
Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS) – General Operators Certificate	✓ ⁴
Radar-ARPA Simulator Training (operational level)	✓ ³
Radar-ARPA Simulator Training (management level)	-
Tanker Familiarisation Training	✓ ⁵
Specialised Tanker Training (oil/chemical/gas) (<i>for Tanker Endorsements</i>)	-
Medical Fitness Certificate	✓ ⁶
¹ Not when a requirement for the issue of a UK certificate of competency, but acceptable for engineer <i>revalidation</i> under STCW 95 if from a UK recognised administration as listed at paragraph 1 below ² Not when a requirement for the issue of a UK certificate of competency ³ Only when higher UK training in the same field is being undertaken ⁴ Only CEPT countries (and others with whom UK has bilateral agreements as listed at paragraph 2 below) ⁵ Ratings only (and officers when training for higher certificates of competency is being undertaken) ⁶ Only those countries specified in the relevant Merchant Shipping Notice (currently MSN 1750 (M))	

1. UK-Recognised Administrations (see note 1 in Table above)

Australia	Hong Kong	Portugal
Belgium	India	Singapore
Canada	Italy	Spain
Denmark	Malta	South Africa

Eire	Netherlands	Sweden
Faroe Islands	New Zealand	Ukraine
Finland	Norway	USA
France	Pakistan	
Germany	Poland	

The following countries are likely to be recognised in the near future

Croatia, Greece, Iceland and Philippines

2. GMDSS accepted from the Following Countries Only

Australia

Canada

Greece

New Zealand

South Africa

Hong Kong (if issued under UK sovereignty)

CEPT countries:	Croatia	Norway
	Czech Republic	Poland
	Denmark	Portugal
	Eire	Romania
	Finland	Sweden
	Germany	Switzerland
	Hungary	Turkey
	Iceland	United Kingdom
	Liechtenstein	
	Netherlands	
	Philippines*	

*Philippines' GMDSS accepted with certificates issued by the national authorities and with diplomas from:

Norwegian Training Centre, Manila

Consolidated Training Systems Inc, Manila, (former Consolidated Maritime

Resources Foundation Inc)

Philippine Transmarine Carriers Inc, Manila

A GMDSS General Operators Certificate which is not from one of the UK-recognised administrations listed in this section, will be acceptable as equivalent to a GMDSS Restricted Operators Certificate for the purpose of revalidation only, even though the UK does not otherwise recognise these GMDSS certificates.

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