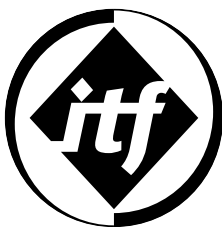


STCW-95: A GUIDE FOR SEAFARERS



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Foreword

The 1995 amendments to the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers 1978 Convention have significantly changed the way seafarers are trained and certificated for service on modern seagoing ships. It is therefore vital that all seafarers understand how these amendments will affect their ability to maintain their professional qualifications, and that they have a means for identifying where they need additional training to acquire a 1995 STCW certificate or endorsement.

This Guide, if read with care, can sufficiently introduce any seafarer to the essential scope and content of the Convention to allow him or her to appreciate the importance of the 1995 amendments and to follow up with knowledgeable questions where necessary.

While there can be honest differences of opinion about specific interpretations contained in this Guide (depending on such factors as the national system in which the amendments are to be applied), I strongly endorse the effort to make information about STCW-95 more easily available to seafarers who are most directly affected by its contents.

CHRIS YOUNG

CHAIR

**SUB-COMMITTEE ON STANDARDS OF TRAINING AND WATCHKEEPING
INTERNATIONAL MARITIME ORGANISATION (IMO)**

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About this Guide

This Guide is aimed at seafarers of all ranks and nationalities. Its main purpose is to help you find out how STCW-95 will affect you and explain how you can benefit from it. Although we have tried to make this Guide as accurate as possible, you should contact the maritime Administration issuing your certificate(s) of competency and endorsement(s) for specific information on the national requirements and deadlines you must meet.

You can read this Guide in any order you wish. Section 1 gives background information on the STCW-95 Convention, including deadlines to meet, and provides a brief glossary of terms.

Section 2 outlines the certificates you need to hold before signing on a ship to ensure you comply with STCW-95. This section consists of four parts. Part 1 tells you about STCW-95 certificates, certification paths and general requirements for officers and ratings. Part 2 lists the certificates and general requirements demanded according to rank. Part 3 tells you what certificates you need, depending on your function on board and the type of vessel you are working on. Part 4 gives guidance on training establishments, simulator requirements, English language and GMDSS certificates.

Section 3 deals with the requirements you need to meet once you are on board. This includes what documentation you must have with you at all times, ship-specific familiarisation training, training records and sea-going service. It also covers the regulations on alcohol and drug consumption, control procedures and penalties. There is also a section applying to watch-keeping personnel only, officers and ratings, on rest hour regulations and watch-keeping guidelines.

Section 4 tells you what you need to do to if you are a holder of an STCW-78 certificate and need to update your certificate to STCW-95. This section includes tables that summarise by rank the additional competencies you need to demonstrate to upgrade your certificate.

Finally, Section 5 lists other sources of information you can consult should you want to know more about STCW-95.

This Guide is produced by the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF). Copies are free of charge for seafarers and can be obtained through ITF maritime affiliates worldwide or by writing to the ITF Information Department, 49-60 Borough Road, London SE1 1DS, United Kingdom. You can also download a free version from our website at www.itf.org.uk



Introduction to STCW-95

The STCW Convention

The key to maintaining a safe shipping environment and keeping our oceans clean lies in all seafarers across the world observing high standards of competence and professionalism in the duties they perform on board. The International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers 1978, as amended in 1995 (STCW-95), sets those standards, governs the award of certificates and controls watchkeeping arrangements. Its provisions not only apply to seafarers, but also to ship-owners, training establishments and national maritime administrations.

The Convention was adopted by the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) in 1978 and came into force in 1984. During the late 1980s, it was clear that STCW-78 was not achieving its aim of raising professional standards world-wide, and so IMO members decided to amend it. This was done in the early 1990s, and the amended Convention is now referred to as STCW-95.

Whereas the STCW-78 Convention focused almost entirely on knowledge, the emphasis of STCW-95 has been shifted to practical skills and competence underpinned by theoretical knowledge. The standards set by the Convention applies to seafarers of all ranks serving on sea-going merchant ships registered under the flag of a country Party to the Convention.

The term “seagoing merchant ships” includes all commercial vessels engaged on domestic or international voyages. The STCW-95 Convention does not apply to seafarers serving on warships, naval auxiliaries or any other government owned or operated ship engaged in non-commercial service, fishing vessels (there is a separate Convention covering personnel on fishing vessels), pleasure yachts not engaged in trade and wooden ships of primitive build.

The Convention has already been accepted by 133 countries, including all major labour suppliers and shipping registries. This number represents more than 98% of the world’s merchant fleet. At the end of this Guide you will find a list of all countries that are Parties to the Convention and the dates of acceptance.

Layout of the Convention

The STCW-95 Convention is a book consisting of three sections.

1. **The Articles:** outline the legal responsibilities a Party has to meet.
2. **The Annex:** gives technical details on how the legal responsibilities referred to in the Articles should be met.
3. **The STCW Code:** specifies in more depth the technical details contained in the annex. It contains Part A and Part B.

Part A:

Mandatory standards of training, certification and watchkeeping.

Part B:

Recommended guidelines (not mandatory) on training, certification and watchkeeping.

The regulations in the Annex should be read in conjunction with the relevant Section of the STCW Code (Part A). It is a good idea to familiarise yourself with the Convention. After all, the standards of competence that you are expected to meet are specified there. A copy of the STCW-95 Convention is normally kept on board all sea-going merchant ships.



Deadlines to meet

The STCW-95 Convention came into force on 1 February 1997. However, there is a five-year transitional period, until 1 February 2002 to allow for a phased-in implementation of the provisions. After February 2002, all seafarers are required to meet STCW-95 standards. The three important dates to remember are:

1 February 1997

The STCW-95 Convention comes into force for all countries Party to the Convention. From 1 February 1997 onwards, requirements for basic safety training, special training for personnel on certain types of ships (tankers and ro-ro passengers), and familiarisation instruction when joining a new ship apply. Regulations covering personnel on board passenger ships other than ro-ro passengers comes into force in January 1999. Starting from 1 February 1997 and for a period of five years, until 1 February 2002, the different regulations contained in the Convention will be phased in. During this five-year transitional period, a Party may continue to issue certificates of competency in accordance with its previous practices.

1 August 1998

If you started your sea-going career (sea-going service or maritime education training) **after** 1 August 1998, your training and certification must be in full compliance with STCW-95 requirements. Seafarers who began their seafaring career **before** 1 August 1998 have until February 2002 to comply with STCW-95 requirements.

1 February 2002

Implementation period ends. From February 2002 onwards **all** seafarers on active service must comply with all STCW-95 requirements and be in possession of a valid STCW-95 certificate covering the functions performed on board.

Note:

In view of difficulties in meeting the February 2002 deadline, the IMO recommended in January 2002 that Flag States and Port Control authorities exercise flexibility as not all STCW-78 certificate holders have been able to revalidate to STCW-95 by the February deadline. Therefore, it has been agreed that under 'exceptional circumstances' provisions adopted by maritime administrations might enable seafarers to work aboard on the basis of STCW-78 certificates until 1 July 2002. Seafarers are advised to consult with the maritime administration issuing their certificate(s) as some may adopt shorter or nil periods of dispensation. In any case, there will be no further leeway after July 2002 for STCW-78 certificate holders.

Glossary of terms

You need to know the meaning of some basic terms that will be used in this Guide:

Administration:

The Government of the Party (country) whose flag a ship is entitled to fly. An Administration deals, among other things, with regulating the training, education and certification of seafarers in accordance with the requirements of the Convention.

Approved:

This means that a national maritime Administration has approved a training programme or seagoing service because it meets the requirements of the STCW-95 Convention.

Function:

This is a way of classifying shipboard tasks by functions and levels of responsibility. There are seven functional areas at three different levels of responsibility. The levels of responsibility are: **management** level (applies to senior officers); **operational** level (applies to junior officers); and **support** level (applies to ratings forming part of a navigational or engine watch). The following table lists the different functions and levels of responsibility at which the functions can be carried out.

FUNCTION		LEVEL OF RESPONSIBILITY		
		Management	Operational	Support
Deck	Navigation	✓	✓	✓
	Cargo handling and stowage	✓		
Deck + Engine	Controlling the operation of a ship and care for persons on board	✓	✓	
Engine	Marine Engineering	✓	✓	✓
	Maintenance and repair	✓	✓	
	Electrical, electronic and control engineering	✓	✓	
Radio	Radio communication		✓	

Party:

A country where the STCW Convention has entered into force. A Party is under the obligation to implement the standards contained in the Convention.

Seagoing service:

Service on board a ship relevant to the issue of a certificate or other qualification. For example, one of the requirements to qualify as a rating forming part of a navigational watch is to have approved seagoing service, including not less than six months' training and experience.

Seagoing ship:

A ship navigating in areas not close to inland or sheltered waters or where port regulations apply.

Standard of competence:

This term refers to the minimum knowledge, understanding and proficiency that seafarers must demonstrate to gain certification. The tables contained in Part A of the STCW Code specify the standards of competence to be achieved by the seafarer. The thinking behind dividing all duties on board into competencies, functions, and levels of responsibility is that certificates should be awarded on the basis of the specific duties the seafarer carries out on board rather than on ship departmental divisions (deck/engine).

For the complete tables and full details of standards of competence applying to the certificates you hold, refer to the STCW Code (Part A) in the STCW-95 Convention.





Certification Requirements

STCW-95 CERTIFICATES

Certificates

The term ‘certificates’ covers all official documents required under STCW-95. It includes certificates of competence, endorsements, certificates of proficiency, special certificates and any documentary evidence showing that a requirement of the Convention has been met.

Certificates are important as they are the main paper evidence you have on hand to prove that your level of maritime education and training, your length of service at sea, your professional competence, medical fitness and age all comply with STCW-95 standards. Every Party to the Convention has to ensure that certificates are only issued to those seafarers who meet STCW standards.

Certificate of competence:

This document is issued to masters, officers, radio operators and ratings forming part of a watch, who meet the standards of competence relevant to their particular functions and level of responsibility on board. The table below indicates the title of the certificates under STCW-95 and the various limitations and tonnage thresholds that apply.

CAPACITY	AREA LIMITATION	TONNAGE LIMITATION
Master	Near coastal	Less than 500 gt
	None	Less than 3,000 gt
	None	None
Chief Mate	None	Less than 3,000 gt
	None	None
Officer in charge of navigational watch (OOW)	Near coastal	Less than 500 gt
	None	None
Rating forming part of a navigational watch	None	None

CAPACITY	AREA LIMITATION
Radio operator	GMDSS (GOC or ROC)

CAPACITY	AREA LIMITATION	PROPULSION POWER LIMITATION
Chief engineer	None	750 kW to 3,000 kW
	None	3,000 kW or more
	Near coastal	750 kW to 3,000 kW
	Near coastal	3,000 kW or more
Second engineer officer	None	750 kW to 3,000 kW
	None	3,000 kW or more
	Near coastal	750 kW to 3,000 kW
	Near coastal	3,000 kW or more
Officer in charge of an engineering watch (OOW)	None	750 kW or more less than 3,000 kW
	Near coastal	
Rating forming part of an engineering watch	None	None

Endorsement:

A document issued to masters and officers, either as part of the certificate or as a separate document. This attests (endorses) that the national certificate has been issued in accordance with all STCW requirements.

Endorsement of recognition:

This document is issued by an Administration as an official recognition of the validity of a certificate issued by another Administration. This procedure is necessary as many merchant fleets are manned by seafarers certificated by other Administrations. In other words, if you hold a certificate from country 'x', but you are serving on a ship registered in country 'y', then you need to apply to the maritime Administration of country 'y' for a certificate authorising you to serve on ships registered under its flag. From February 2002 onwards, all seafarers serving on foreign ships must obtain an endorsement.

To obtain an endorsement of recognition, you will need to submit the original of your national certificate of competence to the representative of the issuing Administration. You cannot apply for an endorsement on the basis of another endorsement. Most Administrations will also require proof of identity. In most cases you will have to pay a processing fee that will vary depending on the type of certificate being endorsed and the charges set by different Administrations. If you are employed, the employer (shipowner or manning agent) will normally take care of all the necessary paperwork and fees. Even though it is not a requirement of the Convention, there are a number of Administrations that are now requiring a letter of employment as part of the documentation necessary to process an application for an endorsement of recognition.

The way to submit your documentation varies from Administration to Administration. While some will accept a postal application and copies of the documents, others will insist that the seafarer appears in person with all the original documentation. These face-to-face applications are processed before a representative of the Administration at a designated office (if overseas, this is normally held at the consulate of the country's Administration).

An STCW endorsement of recognition can only be issued by an Administration provided that the certificate being recognised was issued in accordance with STCW requirements and the original certificate presented is genuine. To verify that the certificate in question has been issued in accordance with all requirements of the Convention, an Administration may inspect the training facilities and certification procedures of another Administration.

To verify that the certificate is genuine, the documents that you submit to a foreign Administration will be checked for authenticity. This will include a visual check to verify security features in the certificate. Its number and details may also be cross-checked with the issuing Administration. This process may take time, so the Administration will issue a letter stating that your application is being processed. By producing this letter you are able to serve on board a ship registered under the Administration processing your application for a maximum period of three months.

Masters, chief mates, chief engineers or second engineers applying for an endorsement of recognition are also required to demonstrate knowledge of the maritime legislation of the flag State issuing the endorsement.

Certificates of proficiency and special certificates:

These are documents issued to the seafarer to certify that he or she has met the required standard of competence in a specific duty. These certificates include certificates for personnel serving on certain types of ship (tankers, ro-ro passenger ships and other passenger ships) and for those assigned with safety and pollution prevention duties. It certifies that the holder meets STCW-95 standards of competence in specific functions related to safety, care of persons, or cargo.

Documentary evidence:

This is a document which is not necessarily issued or recognised by the Administration (and is not, therefore, called a certificate). Documents issued by the shipowner or master of the vessel to attest that the seafarer has participated in a safety drill or has completed some type of training (for example familiarisation training) are examples of documentary evidence. It is important to keep these documents as they are one of the accepted ways of demonstrating that you have achieved proficiency in a given task (basic safety training, for example).

Under the STCW-95 Convention, all seafarers need to meet minimum standards of competence, age, medical fitness, and approved sea-going service. These standards are set by each national Administration, but as a minimum, they should reflect STCW-95 standards. The certificates you are required to hold depend on your rank, responsibilities you are assigned on board, and the type of vessel you are serving on. For example, if you are watch-keeping officer working on board a chemical tanker, and your duties include being crew of a fast rescue boat, then you will need to hold certificates covering all these aspects. The same applies to a rating serving on ro-ro passenger ships with designated safety duties or to a barman working on a passenger ship who is designated to assist passengers in emergencies.

Before you join a ship, make sure you have all the valid certificates you need to cover the functions you will be performing on board. This documentary evidence is proof of your competence and will be subject to inspection by the master, flag State and port State inspectors.

To obtain an STCW-95 certificate you first need to successfully complete a training programme approved by the issuing Administration or to complete a period of approved seagoing service. For most certificates you will need a combination of both. Some of the training can be provided at sea, but for more specialised and longer courses you will need to attend a period of shore-based instruction. Certificates are issued once you are able to prove your competence in and knowledge of the tasks covered by your certificate and this to the standards required. The requirements to upgrade a STCW-78 certificate to STCW-95 standards are outlined in Section 4 of this Guide.



Certification paths

There are two different ways of gaining your STCW-95 certificates. Whichever path you choose, the standards are identical. The difference lies in the number of functions you will be able to perform on board and this is reflected in the certificate awarded.

1. **The traditional method:** STCW certificates awarded in the traditional way are classified according to which departments of the ship (deck or engine) you work in. Most seafarers around the world have been awarded their certificates in this way. Under this method you will probably work in the same department (deck or engine) throughout your entire seafaring career.

The change introduced by STCW-95 in this path is that in order to qualify for a specific certificate, say watch-keeping officer in charge of a navigational watch, you will need to be competent in the specific functions stated for that level of responsibility.

Under the STCW-78 Convention, seafarers were also allowed to qualify for a certificate on the basis of sea-going service alone (ratings qualifying as watch-keeping officers, for example). This is no longer possible under STCW-95 provisions, as all seafarers are now required to complete approved sea-going service **and** to have completed an approved education and training programme before they are eligible for the next higher certificates of competence.

2. **The alternative method:** This refers to STCW certificates issued to enable the holder to perform different functions that are not necessarily within the same department. The certificate awarded will specify the functions and the level of responsibility. A candidate for alternative certification will need to qualify in all these functions at a determined level of responsibility in one department (deck or engine) before being able to qualify for other functions (at the same level of responsibility) in a different department. For example, a watch-keeping officer applying for an alternative certificate will have to qualify in all the functions of a watch-keeping officer, either in the deck or the engine department, before he or she can qualify for additional functions at the same level in other departments. Standards of competence, age and medical fitness are the same as for the traditional method.

The purpose of the alternative certification is to allow for shipboard organisation to be in line with modern technological developments and to open up a new career path for seafarers. Nowadays shipboard organisation on most high-speed vessels is based on a functional (or alternative) approach.

Under the Convention, shipowners are not allowed to use alternative certification as a means of reducing the number of crew members on board and increasing everybody else's workload, or to undermine the integrity of the profession by assigning combined deck and engine-room watch-keeping duties to a single certificate holder during a watch. Alternative certification is still optional for all Parties to the Convention. To date, very few Parties have elected to issue certificates in this way.



General requirements for officers

If you are an officer, you must meet minimum requirements in respect of standards of competence, seagoing service time, medical fitness and age. You should be in possession of a valid certificate of competence according to your rank and functions on board. This certificate should be endorsed (in the same certificate or in a separate document) by the issuing Administration. You should also have all the ancillary certificates required such as radar or ARPA, GMDSS, and those referring to safety duties on board specific types of ships. Part 2 and part 3 of this section will give you guidance as to what certificates officers require.

To know the exact requirements and standards of competence for each certificate you should consult chapters II (master and deck department), III (engine department), IV (radio personnel), V (training requirements for personnel on certain types of ships), VI (emergency, occupational safety, medical care and survival functions) of the STCW-95 Convention. These chapters should be read in conjunction with the respective section of Part A of the STCW Code.

Revalidation requirements for officers:

Certificates for masters, officers and radio operators must be endorsed by the issuing Administration and re-validated at intervals not exceeding five years. Certificates issued under STCW-78 standards should be upgraded to STCW-95 standards before February 2002 (see Section 4). Other certificates for specialised training are subject to refresher training (see part 2 in this Section).

Officers serving on ships registered under a foreign flag:

If you intend to serve on ships registered under the flag of a foreign country, then you need an endorsement of recognition issued by the Administration of that country. Some Administrations may also require an endorsement of recognition for specialised training certificates. In some instances, Administrations from other countries will only recognise training which has been completed at specific training establishments in your country of origin. If in doubt, ask the foreign Administration if it has any requirements in this respect.

Going for the next higher certificate:

If you eventually want to opt for the next higher certificate you will need to meet a number of requirements including approved training and education, minimum age, approved seagoing service and medical fitness.

Officers' duties on joining any ship:

All officers need to complete a period of ship-specific familiarisation training before being assigned any shipboard functions. There is no certificate awarded for this, but a record of the training should be kept in the ship's official logbook. This requirement applies to any member of the crew including hotel staff holding officer rank in passenger ships.

Basic safety training for officers:

Officers serving on any type of ship who are designated with safety and pollution prevention responsibilities in the operation of the ship, need basic safety training. Such training must cover personal survival techniques, basic fire prevention and fire fighting, elementary first aid, and personal and social responsibilities. This requirement applies to practically all officers serving on merchant ships. Cadets assigned with these duties also need to complete basic safety training before going to sea. Basic safety training should be documented as having taken place within five years of the officers' being assigned to safety and pollution prevention duties.

You may be exempted from basic safety training if you have already completed this training under STCW-78. To find out if this is the case, contact the Administration issuing your national certificate of competence. If you are not exempted, you need to complete an approved training course or provide evidence that you have achieved the required standards of competence within the previous five years (by participating in drills and exercises, for example, or assessment by a qualified assessor). There is no requirement for seafarers to hold an official certificate of basic training, but it is advisable that you do hold some form of documentary evidence to show that you have achieved competence in these functions within the previous 5 years (this may be in the form of record of drills or letters from a training centre).

General requirements for ratings

Ratings fall under three general categories; those forming part of a watch (deck or engine), those who are not assigned with watch-keeping duties, and those undergoing training. As a rating you are required to meet minimum standards of medical fitness, minimum age (if designated with watch-keeping duties), competence (if designated with watch-keeping duties), and seagoing service time (if designated with watch-keeping duties). Ratings who are **not** assigned with watch-keeping duties or those still undergoing training are not required to hold watch-keeping certificates.

All other certification requirements for ratings depend on the functions performed on board. Part 2 and part 3 of this section will give you guidance as to what certificates you require depending on the function you perform and the type of ship you are serving on. If you want to know the exact standards of competence you should meet, consult chapters II (master and deck department), III (engine department), IV (radio personnel), V (training requirements for personnel on certain types of ships), VI (emergency, occupational safety, medical care and survival functions) of the STCW-95 Convention. These chapters should be read in conjunction with the respective section of Part A of the STCW Code.

Ratings assigned with watch-keeping duties

Ratings forming part of a watch (deck or engine) need to be specifically certified for this function. If you are part of a navigational watch, you need to hold a certificate known as 'rating forming part of a navigational watch' certificate. On the other hand, if you are part of an engineering watch, you will need to hold a certificate known as 'rating forming part of an engineering watch' certificate. To obtain these certificates you need to show that you are competent in the functions set out in the following paragraphs. You can find the complete version of these in the STCW-95 Convention under section A-II/4 for deck personnel and A-III/4 for engine personnel. If you served for a period of not less than one year as a rating forming part of a watch before the Convention came into force for the Administration issuing your certificate (see the list at the end of this Guide), then you are considered to meet the competence requirements and will be certified accordingly without needing to undergo any further training.

Ratings forming part of a navigational watch

You should meet the competence requirements stated below. Some of these are new requirements which were not required under STCW-78. These do not apply to ratings on ships of below 500 gross tonnage. You must be able to:

1. Steer the ship and comply with helm orders issued in English (covers the use of magnetic and gyro compasses, helm orders, change over from automatic pilot to hand steering device and vice-versa).
2. Keep a proper look-out by sight and hearing (covers the responsibilities of a look-out including reporting the approximate bearing of a sound signal, light or other object in degrees or points).
3. Contribute to monitoring and controlling a safe watch (covers shipboard terms and definitions, use of internal communication and alarm systems, have the ability to understand orders and to communicate with the officer of the watch in matters relevant to watch-keeping duties, be familiar with the procedures for the relief, maintenance and hand-over of a watch, the information required to maintain a safe watch and basic environmental protection procedures).
4. Operate emergency equipment and apply emergency procedures (covers knowledge of emergency duties and alarm signals, knowledge of pyrotechnic distress signals, satellite EPIRB's and SARTS, avoidance of false distress alerts and action to be taken in the event of accidental activation).

Ratings forming part of an engineering watch

If you are part of an engineering watch you should meet the competence requirements stated below. The requirements are the same as for STCW-78. They do not apply to ratings on ships of below 750kW in propulsion power. You need to be able to:

1. Carry out a watch routine appropriate to the duties of a rating forming part of an engine room watch and communicate effectively in matters related to watch-keeping duties (covers terms used in machinery spaces and the names of machinery and equipment, engine-room watch-keeping procedures, safe working practices in engine-room operations, basic environmental protection procedures, use of internal communications systems, engine room alarm systems and ability to distinguish between the various alarms with special reference to fire-extinguishing gas alarms).
2. Keeping a boiler watch and maintain the correct water level and steam pressure (covers safe operation of boilers).
3. Operate emergency equipment and apply emergency procedures (covers knowledge of emergency duties, escape routes from machinery spaces, familiarity with the location and the use of fire fighting equipment in machinery areas).

Revalidation requirements for ratings

Certificates for ratings forming part of a watch are not subject to revalidation. Ratings in possession of STCW-78 documents do not need to upgrade them to STCW-95 standards. Other certificates are subject to refresher training (see part 2 in this Section).

Ratings serving on ships registered under a foreign flag

Under the Convention, certificated watch-keeping ratings are not required to have an endorsement of recognition when serving on ships registered under the flag of another country. However, the Administrations of some foreign countries require and issue endorsements for ratings forming part of a watch and other certificates relating to specific functions (tanker training, for example). Ask your employer (shipowner or manning agent), or the respective Administration directly to find out whether you need to obtain an endorsement of recognition. In some cases, an endorsement of recognition for a specialised certificate will only be issued if the training has been completed at a training centre approved by the Administration of the foreign country. Again, if in doubt, ask the Administration for any requirements in this respect.

Going for the next higher certificate

The progression through the ranks, particularly from rating to officer, is possible under STCW-95. However, you will need to complete approved seagoing service **and** complete an approved programme of training. Under the old system it was possible to progress through the ranks based on seagoing service time only.

Ratings' duties on joining any ship

All ratings need to complete a period of ship-specific familiarisation training before being assigned any shipboard functions. There is no certificate awarded for this, but a record should be kept of it in the ship's official logbook. This requirement applies to any member of the crew, including hotel staff in passenger ships.

Basic safety training for ratings

Ratings serving on any type of ship who are designated with safety and pollution prevention responsibilities in the operation of the ship need basic safety training. This covers personal survival techniques, basic fire prevention and fire-fighting, elementary first aid, and personal and social responsibilities. This requirement applies to practically all ratings serving on merchant ships as well as to ratings undergoing training. Basic safety training should be documented as having taken place within five years of a rating's being assigned to safety and pollution prevention duties.

You may be exempted from basic safety training if you have already completed this training under STCW-78. To find out if this is the case, contact the Administration issuing your national certificate of competence. If you are not exempt, you need to complete an approved training course or provide evidence that you have attained the required standards of competence within the previous five years (by participating in drills and exercises, for example, or assessment by a qualified assessor). There is no requirement for seafarers to hold an official certificate of basic training, but it is advisable that you possess some form of documentary evidence to show that you have attained competence in these functions within the previous 5 years (record of drills or letters from a training centre).



PART 2

CERTIFICATES AND GENERAL REQUIREMENTS BY RANK

Master

NAME OF CERTIFICATE	REVALIDATION	REG.
National certificate of competence and endorsement	Yes	I/2, II/2, II/3
Flag State endorsement of recognition ¹	Yes	I/10
GMDSS ² + endorsement	Yes	IV/2
Basic safety training* - Personal survival techniques - Fire prevention and fire-fighting - Elementary first aid - Personal safety and social responsibility	Achieved within previous 5 years	VI/1
Medical first aid*	No	VI/4
Survival craft and rescue boats*	No	VI/2
Advanced fire fighting*	No	VI/3
Medical fitness	Yes	I/9
Basic safety familiarisation	On assignment **	VI/1
Ship specific familiarisation	On assignment**	I/14

* Certificate not required, only evidence of having achieved competence within previous five years.

** Training conducted on board ship before being assigned to shipboard duties.

¹ Endorsement or documentary proof that it is being processed (validity 3 months). Endorsements required by all flag States from February 2002.

² In force from February 1997 for all seafarers in charge of radio duties on a GMDSS equipped ship. From 1 February 2002 mandatory for all deck officers and any other persons performing radio duties.

General requirements to obtain a certificate of competency as master

◆ Masters on ships of 3,000 gross tonnage or more must:

- a) **Previous certificate & seagoing service:** meet requirements for certification as an officer in charge of a navigational watch on ships of 500 gross tonnage or more and have at least 36 months' approved seagoing service in that capacity; however, this period may be reduced to not less than 24 months if not less than 12 months of such seagoing service has been served as chief mate.
- b) **Education & Training:** have completed a period of approved education and training and meet the standard of competence specified in section A-II/2 of the STCW Code for masters on ships of 3,000 gross tonnage or more.

◆ Masters on ships of 500 - 3,000 gross tonnage must:

- a) **Previous certificate & seagoing service:** meet requirements for certification as an officer in charge of a navigational watch on ships of 500 gross tonnage or more and have at least 36 months' approved seagoing service in that capacity; however, this period may be reduced to not less than 24 months if not less than 12 months of such seagoing service has been served as chief mate.
- b) **Education & Training:** have completed a period of approved education and training and meet the standard of competence specified in section A-II/2 of the STCW Code for masters on ships of between 500 and 3,000 gross tonnage.

Note: The same requirements apply for masters on ships of less than 500 gross tonnage not engaged on near-coastal voyages.

◆ Masters on ships of less than 500 gross tonnage must:

- a) **Age:** be not less than 20 years of age.
- b) **Seagoing service:** have approved seagoing service of not less than 12 months as officer in charge of a navigational watch.
- c) **Education & Training:** have completed a period of approved education and training and meet the standard of competence specified in section A-II/3 of the STCW Code for masters on ships of less than 500 gross tonnage engaged in near-coastal voyages.

Chief Mate

NAME OF CERTIFICATE	REVALIDATION	REG.
National certificate of competence and endorsement	Yes	I/2, II/2
Flag State Endorsement of recognition ¹	Yes	I/10
GMDSS ² and endorsement	Yes	IV/2
Basic safety training* - Personal survival techniques - Fire prevention and fire-fighting - Elementary first aid - Personal safety and social responsibility	Achieved within previous 5 years	VI/1
Medical First Aid*	No	VI/4
Survival craft and rescue boats*	No	VI/2
Advanced fire fighting*	No	VI/3
Medical fitness	Yes	I/9
Basic safety familiarisation	On assignment**	VI/1
Ship specific familiarisation	On assignment**	I/14

* Certificate not required, only evidence of having achieved competence within previous 5 years.

** Training conducted on board ship before being assigned to shipboard duties.

¹ Endorsement or documentary proof that it is being processed (validity 3 months). Endorsements required by all flag States from February 2002.

² In force from 1 February 1997 for all seafarers in charge of radio duties on GMDSS equipped ship. From 1 February 2002 mandatory for all deck officers and any other person performing radio duties.

General requirements to obtain a certificate of competency as chief mate

◆ Chief mates on ships of 3,000 gross tonnage or more must:

- a) **Previous certificate & seagoing service:** meet requirements for certification as an officer in charge of a navigational watch on ships of 500 gross tonnage or more and have at least 12 months' approved seagoing service in that capacity.
- b) **Education & Training:** have completed approved education and training and meet the standard of competence specified in section A-II/2 of the STCW Code for masters and chief mates on ships of 3,000 gross tonnage or more.

◆ Chief mates on ships of 500 - 3,000 gross tonnage must:

- a) **Education & Training:** have completed a period of approved education and training and meet the standard of competence specified in section A- II/2 of the STCW Code for masters and chief mates on ships of between 500 and 3,000 gross tonnage.



Officer in charge of a navigational watch

NAME OF CERTIFICATE	REVALIDATION	REG.
National certificate of competence and endorsement	Yes	I/2, II/1, II/3
Flag State endorsement of recognition ¹	Yes	I/10
GMDSS ² and endorsement	Yes	IV/2
Basic safety training* - Personal survival techniques - Fire prevention and fire-fighting - Elementary first aid - Personal safety and social responsibility	Achieved within previous 5 years	VI/1
Medical first aid*	No	VI/4
Survival craft and rescue boats*	No	VI/2
Advanced fire fighting*	No	VI/3
Medical fitness	Yes	I/9
Basic safety familiarisation	On assignment **	VI/1
Ship specific familiarisation	On assignment**	I/14

* Certificate not required only evidence of having achieved competence within previous 5 years.

** Training conducted on board ship before being assigned to shipboard duties.

¹ Endorsement or documentary proof that it is being processed (validity 3 months). Endorsements required by all flag States from February 2002.

² In force from 1 February 1997 for all seafarers in charge of radio duties on a GMDSS equipped ship. From 1 February 2002 mandatory for all deck officers and any other person performing radio duties.

General requirements to obtain a certificate of competency as officer in charge of a navigational watch

◆ Officers in charge of a navigational watch on ships of 500 gross tonnage or more must:

- a) **Age:** be not less than 18 years of age.
- b) **Seagoing service:** have approved seagoing service of not less than one year as part of an approved training programme, including on-board training. This training must meet the requirements of section A-II/1 of the STCW Code and be documented in an approved training record book. Otherwise, the seafarer must have approved seagoing service of not less than three years.
- c) **Bridge watch-keeping duties:** have performed, during the required seagoing service, bridge watch-keeping duties under the supervision of the master or a qualified officer for a period of not less than six months.
- d) **Radio duties:** meet the applicable requirements of the regulations in chapter IV (GMDSS), as appropriate, for performing designated radio duties in accordance with the Radio Regulations.
- e) **Education and Training:** have completed a period of approved education and training and meet the standard of competence specified in section A-II/1 of the STCW Code.

◆ **Officers in charge of a navigational watch on ships of less than 500 gross tonnage must:**

Ships not engaged on near-coastal voyages:

- a) **Certificate:** hold an appropriate certificate for ships of 500 gross tonnage or more

Ships engaged on near coastal voyages:

- a) **Age:** be not less than 18 years of age
- b) **Seagoing service:** have completed special training, including an appropriate period of seagoing service as required by the Administration, or approved seagoing service in the deck department of not less than three years.
- c) **Radio duties:** meet the applicable requirements of the regulations in chapter IV (GMDSS), as appropriate, for performing designated radio duties in accordance with the Radio Regulations.
- d) **Education & Training:** have completed a period of approved education and training and meet the standard of competence specified in section A-II/3 of the STCW Code for officers in charge of a navigational watch on ships of less than 500 gross tonnage engaged in near-coastal voyages.

Ratings forming part of a navigational watch

NAME OF CERTIFICATE	REVALIDATION	REG.
National certificate of competence	No	I/2, II/4
Basic safety training* - Personal survival techniques - Fire prevention and fire-fighting - Elementary first aid - Personal safety and social responsibility	Achieved within previous 5 years	VI/1
Basic safety familiarisation	On assignment **	VI/1
Ship specific familiarisation	On assignment**	I/14

* Certificate not required, only evidence of having achieved competence within previous five years.

** Training conducted on board ship before being assigned to shipboard duties.

General requirements to obtain a certificate of competency as a rating forming part of a navigational watch

Applies only for service on ships of 500 gross tonnage or more.

◆ The rating must:

- a) **Age:** be not less than 16 years of age.
- b) **Seagoing Service:** have completed approved seagoing service, including not less than six months' training and experience, **or**
- c) **Education & training:** have received special training, either pre-sea or onboard ship, including an approved period of seagoing service which shall not be less than two months; **and**
- d) **Competence:** meet the standard of competence specified in section A-II/4 of the STCW Code.

Radio operators

NAME OF CERTIFICATE	REVALIDATION	REG.
For radio personnel on board GMDSS ships: - General Operator's Certificate (GOC) and endorsement or - Restricted Operator's Certificate (ROC) and endorsement The type of certificate required depends on whether you are serving on a ship trading in a GMDSS zone A1 (coastal) or GMDSS A2 and A3 (deep-sea)	Yes	I/2 IV/2
For radio personnel on ships not required to comply with GMDSS:- National certificate of competence (ITU Radio Regulations) and endorsement	Yes	
Flag State endorsement of recognition ¹	Yes	I/10
Basic safety training* - Personal survival techniques - Fire prevention and fire-fighting - Elementary first aid - Personal safety and social responsibility	Achieved within previous 5 years	VI/1
Basic safety familiarisation	On assignment **	VI/1
Ship specific familiarisation	On assignment**	I/14

* Certificate not required, only evidence of having achieved competence within previous 5 years.

** Training conducted on board ship before being assigned to shipboard duties.

¹ Endorsement or documentary proof that it is being processed (valid 3 months).
Endorsements required by all flag States from 1 February 2002.

General requirements to obtain a certificate of competency as a GMDSS operator

- a) **Age:** be not less than 18 years of age.
- b) **Education & Training:** have completed a period of approved education and training and meet the standard of competence specified in section A-IV/2 of the STCW Code.

Chief engineer

NAME OF CERTIFICATE	REVALIDATION	REG.
National certificate of competence and endorsement	Yes	I/2, III/2, III/3
Flag State endorsement of recognition ¹	Yes	I/10
Basic safety training* - Personal survival techniques - Fire prevention and fire-fighting - Elementary first aid - Personal safety and social responsibility	Achieved within previous 5 years	VI/1
Medical first aid*	No	VI/4
Survival craft and rescue boats*	No	VI/2
Advanced fire fighting*	No	VI/3
Medical fitness	Yes	I/9
Basic safety familiarisation	On assignment **	VI/1
Ship specific familiarisation	On assignment**	I/14

* Certificate not required, only evidence of having achieved competence within previous 5 years.

** Training conducted on board ship before being assigned to shipboard duties.

¹ Endorsement or documentary proof that it is being processed (validity 3 months). Endorsements required by all flag States from 1 February 2002.

General requirements to obtain a certificate of competency as a chief engineer

- ◆ **Chief engineer officers on ships powered by main propulsion machinery of 3,000 kW propulsion power or more must:**
 - a) **Previous certificate & seagoing service:** meet the requirements for certification as an officer in charge of an engineering watch and have not less than 36 months' approved seagoing service, of which not less than 12 months shall have been served as an engineer officer in a position of responsibility while qualified to serve as second engineer officer.
 - b) **Education & Training:** have completed approved education and training and meet the standard of competence specified in section A-III/2 of the STCW Code.

- ◆ **Chief engineer officers on ships powered by main propulsion machinery of 750 kW - 3,000 kW propulsion power must:**
 - a) **Previous certificate & seagoing service:** meet the requirements for certification as an officer in charge of an engineering watch and have not less than 24 months' approved seagoing service, of which not less than 12 months shall have been served while qualified to serve as second engineer officer.
 - b) **Education & Training:** have completed approved education and training and meet the standard of competence specified in section A-III/3 of the STCW Code.

Second Engineer

NAME OF CERTIFICATE	REVALIDATION	REG.
National certificate of competence and endorsement	Yes	I/2, III/2, III/3
Flag State endorsement of recognition ¹	Yes	I/10
Basic safety training* - Personal survival techniques - Fire prevention and fire-fighting - Elementary first aid - Personal safety and social responsibility	Achieved within previous 5 years	VI/1
Medical first aid*	No	VI/4
Survival craft and rescue boats*	No	VI/2
Advanced fire fighting*	No	VI/3
Medical fitness	Yes	I/9
Basic safety familiarisation	On assignment **	VI/1
Ship specific familiarisation	On assignment**	I/14

* Certificate not required only evidence of having achieved competence within previous 5 years.

** Training conducted on board ship before being assigned to shipboard duties.

¹ Endorsement or documentary proof that it is being processed (validity 3 months). Endorsements required by all flag States from 1 February 2002.

General requirements to obtain a certificate as a second engineer

◆ **Second engineer officers on ships powered by main propulsion machinery of 3,000 kW propulsion power or more must:**

- a) **Previous certificate & seagoing service:** meet the requirements for certification as an officer in charge of an engineering watch and have not less than 12 months' approved seagoing service as assistant engineer officer or engineer officer.
- b) **Education & Training:** have completed approved education and training and meet the standard of competence specified in section A-III/2 of the STCW Code.

***Note:** Second engineer officers qualified for service on ships powered by main propulsion machinery of 3,000 kW propulsion power or more, may serve as chief engineer officer on ships powered by main propulsion machinery of less than 3,000 kW propulsion power provided not less than 12 months' approved seagoing service shall have been served as an engineer officer in a position of responsibility and the certificate is so endorsed.*

◆ **Second engineer officers on ships powered by main propulsion machinery of 750 kW - 3,000 kW propulsion power must:**

- a) **Previous certificate & seagoing service:** meet the requirements for certification as an officer in charge of an engineering watch and have not less than 12 months' approved seagoing service as assistant engineer officer or engineer officer.
- b) **Education & Training:** have completed approved education and training and meet the standard of competence specified in section A-III/3 of the STCW Code.

Officer in charge of an engineering watch

NAME OF CERTIFICATE	REVALIDATION	REG.
National certificate of competence and endorsement	Yes	I/2, III/1
Flag State endorsement of recognition ¹	Yes	I/10
Basic safety training* - Personal survival techniques - Fire prevention and fire-fighting - Elementary first aid - Personal safety and social responsibility	Achieved within previous 5 years	VI/1
Medical first aid*	No	VI/4
Survival craft and rescue boats*	No	VI/2
Advanced fire fighting*	No	VI/3
Medical fitness	Yes	I/9
Basic safety familiarisation	On assignment **	VI/1
Ship specific familiarisation	On assignment**	I/14

* Certificate not required, only evidence of having achieved competence in previous 5 years.

** Training conducted on board ship before being assigned to shipboard duties.

¹ Endorsement or documentary proof that it is being processed (validity 3 months). Endorsements required by all flag States from 1 February 2002.

General requirements to obtain a certificate of competency as an officer in charge of an engineering watch

- ◆ **Officers in charge of an engineering watch in a manned engine-room or designated duty engineers in a periodically unmanned engine-room (750 kW propulsion power or more) must:**
 - a) **Age:** be not less than 18 years of age.
 - b) **Seagoing service:** have completed not less than six months' seagoing service in the engine department in accordance with section A-III/1 of the STCW Code.
 - c) **Education & Training:** have completed approved education and training of at least 30 months which includes onboard training. This must be documented in an approved training record book and meet the standards of competence specified in section A-III/1 of the STCW Code.



Ratings forming part of an engineering watch

NAME OF CERTIFICATE	REVALIDATION	REG.
National certificate of competence	No	I/2, II/4,
Basic safety training* - Personal survival techniques - Fire prevention and fire-fighting - Elementary first aid - Personal safety and social responsibility	Achieved within previous 5 years	VI/1
Basic safety familiarisation	On assignment **	VI/1
Ship specific familiarisation	On assignment**	I/14

* Certificate not required, only evidence of having achieved competence in previous years.

** Training conducted on board ship before being assigned to shipboard duties.

General requirements to obtain a certificate of competency as a rating forming part of a watch in a manned engine-room or designated to perform duties in a periodically unmanned engine room

Applies only for service on ships of 750 kW propulsion power or more.

◆ The rating must:

- Age:** be not less than 16 years of age.
- Seagoing service:** have completed approved seagoing service including not less than six months' training and experience, **or**
- Education & Training:** special training, either pre-sea or onboard ship, including an approved period of seagoing service which shall not be less than two months; **and**
- meet the standard of competence specified in section A-II/4 of the STCW Code.

Any other crew member

(including ratings not forming part of a navigational watch and hotel staff on passenger vessels)

NAME OF CERTIFICATE	REVALIDATION	REG.
Basic safety familiarisation	On assignment **	VI/1
Ship specific familiarisation	On assignment**	I/14

** Training conducted on board ship before being assigned to shipboard duties.



PART 3

OTHER CERTIFICATES ACCORDING TO FUNCTION PERFORMED ON BOARD AND TYPE OF VESSEL

For personnel on any type of ship

1. If designated with safety or pollution prevention duties in the operation of the ships:

NAME OF CERTIFICATE	REVALIDATION	REG.
Basic safety training* - Personal survival techniques - Fire prevention and fire-fighting - Elementary first aid - Personal safety and social responsibility	Achieved within previous 5 years	VI/1

* Certificate not required, only evidence of having achieved competence in previous five years before being assigned to safety or pollution prevention duties

2. If in charge of survival craft or rescue boats (other than fast rescue boats):

NAME OF CERTIFICATE	REVALIDATION	REG.
Survival craft certificate of proficiency	No	VI/2

3. If designated as crew of a fast rescue boat:

NAME OF CERTIFICATE	REVALIDATION	REG.
Fast rescue boat certificate	No	VI/2

4. If designated to control fire-fighting operations:

NAME OF CERTIFICATE	REVALIDATION	REG.
Advanced fire-fighting	Achieved within previous 5 years	VI/3

5. If designated to provide first aid:

NAME OF CERTIFICATE	REVALIDATION	REG.
Medical first aid	No	VI/4

6. If designated to provide medical care:

NAME OF CERTIFICATE	REVALIDATION	REG.
Medical care	No	VI/4



For personnel working on a tanker

1. For officers and ratings assigned specific duties and responsibilities relating to cargo or cargo equipment (applies to oil, chemical and liquefied gas tankers):

NAME OF CERTIFICATE	REVALIDATION	REG.
Tanker familiarisation course or three months' approved seagoing service on tankers	No	V/1
Shore-based fire-fighting course	No	V/1

2. For masters, chief engineer officers, chief mates, second engineer officers and any person with immediate responsibility for loading, discharging and care in transit for handling of cargo (applies to oil, chemical and liquefied gas tankers):

NAME OF CERTIFICATE	REVALIDATION	REG.
Oil tanker specialised training	Yes	V/1
Chemical tanker specialised training	Yes	V/1
Liquefied gas tanker specialised training	Yes	V/1

For personnel working on a ro-ro passenger ship engaged in international voyages

1. For masters, officers and other personnel designated on muster lists to assist passengers in emergency situations:

NAME OF CERTIFICATE	REVALIDATION	REG.
Ro-ro passenger ship crowd management training	Yes (refresher)	V/2

2. For master, officers and other personnel assigned specific safety duties and responsibilities:

NAME OF CERTIFICATE	REVALIDATION	REG.
Ro-ro passenger ship familiarisation training	No	V/2

3. For personnel providing direct service to passengers in passenger spaces on board ro-ro passenger ships:

NAME OF CERTIFICATE	REVALIDATION	REG.
Ro-ro passenger ship safety training	No	V/2

4. For master, chief mates, chief engineer officers, second engineer officers and any person assigned immediate responsibility for embarking and disembarking passengers, loading, discharging or securing cargo, or closing hull openings:

NAME OF CERTIFICATE	REVALIDATION	REG.
Ro-ro passenger ship passenger safety, cargo safety and hull integrity training	Yes	V/2

5. For masters, chief mates, chief engineer officers, second engineer officers and any person having responsibility for safety of passengers in emergency situations on board ro-ro passenger ships:

NAME OF CERTIFICATE	REVALIDATION	REG.
Ro-ro passenger ships crisis management training	Yes	V/2

For personnel working on a passenger ship (other than a ro-ro passenger ship) engaged in international voyages

1. For masters, officers and other personnel designated on muster lists to assist passengers in emergency situations:

NAME OF CERTIFICATE	REVALIDATION	REG.
Passenger ship crowd management training	Yes (refresher)	V/2

2. For masters, officers and other personnel assigned specific safety duties and responsibilities:

NAME OF CERTIFICATE	REVALIDATION	REG.
Passenger ship familiarisation training	No	V/2

3. For personnel providing direct service to passengers in passenger spaces on board passenger ships:

NAME OF CERTIFICATE	REVALIDATION	REG.
Passenger ship safety training	No	V/2

4. For masters, chief mates, chief engineer officers, second engineer officers and any person assigned immediate responsibility for embarking and disembarking passengers, loading, discharging or securing cargo, or closing hull openings:

NAME OF CERTIFICATE	REVALIDATION	REG.
Passenger ship passenger safety training	Yes	V/2

5. For masters, chief mates, chief engineer officers, second engineer officers and any person having responsibility for the safety of passengers in emergency situations on board passenger ships:

NAME OF CERTIFICATE	REVALIDATION	REG.
Passenger ship crisis management training	Yes	V/2

SECTION TWO



PART 4

TRAINING ISSUES

Education and training centres

All training programmes and assessments provided in connection with an STCW-95 certificate need to comply with STCW-95 standards and must be approved by the respective Administration. The competence tables contained in the STCW Code (Part A) provide information on what should be included in the teaching programme, the criteria by which competence is assessed, and what standard of ability the student performing that competence needs to demonstrate. These regulations apply to training given both on board and ashore.

All instructors, supervisors and assessors need to be qualified and experienced in the particular types and levels of training and assessment they give. They also need to know about teaching techniques. For example, an instructor teaching fire-fighting techniques should be qualified and have practical experience in teaching fire-fighting principles and techniques. Each education and training institution needs to have its academic and training programme approved by the Administration issuing the certificate.

It is common for educational and training institutions to issue their own certificates for the courses they run. Before enrolling on any course, find out first if the programmes offered comply with STCW-95 standards and, more importantly, if the training centre has been authorised by the respective Administration to provide the courses and services offered and, where applicable, to issue STCW-95 certificates for short courses. In case you intend to use these certificates for service under foreign flags, you should also check if the Administrations in the countries concerned recognise the certificates issued by the training institution where you attended any courses. You are entitled to ask the training institution for all this information. Remember, if a training centre is not properly authorised to run the course(s) offered, or to issue STCW certificates on behalf of the Administration, you could end up with certificates which will not be accepted as proof of competence.

Simulator training under STCW-95

The only mandatory simulator training under STCW-95 is that relating to the use of radar and ARPA. In these two specific cases, simulators are the only accepted methods of demonstrating competence. In all other instances, approved simulator training and assessment is not mandatory, being just one of the methods accepted by the Convention for training and demonstrating competence. (The use of other methods such as in-service experience or training ship experience are equally acceptable.) This category of optional simulator training and assessment covers navigation and ship handling, cargo handling, GMDSS communication, propulsion and auxiliary machinery.

Simulators need to comply with prescribed standards. This does not imply that all simulators need to be highly expensive and complex electronic artefacts. Although certain simulators, such as radar or ARPA, do fall under this category, other tasks can be taught and assessed using more basic simulators. For example, ship models are widely used for providing training in ship stability and for assessment purposes, and even an orange, when used for teaching injection techniques in first aid training, can be considered as a simulator. Instructors and assessors engaged in simulator-based training need to be properly qualified in the use of such equipment.

English language requirements

Under the STCW Convention, all officers in charge of a watch (navigational or engineering) must have a good command of spoken and written English. Senior officers with functions at a managerial level must also speak and write English, since this is a requirement at the previous level of responsibility. Ratings forming part of a navigational watch are required to be able to comply with helm orders issued in English. Crew members assisting passengers during emergency situations should be able to communicate safety-related issues in English or in the language spoken by the passengers and other personnel on board.

In these days of multi-national and multi-lingual crews, the importance of sharing a common language cannot be underestimated. It will not only improve safety and operational efficiency, but will also make life on board easier and more pleasant.

Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS) certificates

If you are in charge of distress and safety communications on a ship required to comply with GMDSS, then you need to hold a GMDSS certificate. There are two types of GMDSS certificates:

- 1 The General Operator's Certificate (GOC), for personnel assigned to radio-communication duties on deep-sea ships operating beyond VHF coast station coverage.
- 2 The Restricted Operator's Certificate (ROC), for personnel on board ships operating **only** in sea areas within VHF coverage (coastal areas).

The type of certificate you need (and the communications equipment needed on board) depends on the GMDSS sea area (or areas) in which the ship you are serving on operates.

Since 1st February 1999, GMDSS has been mandatory for all ocean-going passenger ships (carrying more than 12 passengers) and cargo ships of 300 gross tonnage and upwards on international voyages. This requirement has been interpreted, however, in different ways. Some Parties require all officers on board GMDSS ships to hold a GMDSS certificate, while others require only one or two persons on board to have this qualification. Whichever interpretation applies, from 1 February 2002 all seafarers performing navigation duties at operational and management levels (master and officers), and any other person assigned to radio-communication duties, need to hold a GMDSS certificate. Most ship owners and Parties are already enforcing this requirement for all masters and deck officers on GMDSS ships.

If you hold a STCW-78 master's or deck-officer's certificate, you should consult the Party issuing your certificate – and your employer – as to whether you require to go for a GMDSS certificate before 1st February 2002. The answer is probably yes.

If you are in charge of radio communications on a ship not required to participate in GMDSS, then you are not required to hold GMDSS certification.

Medical standards

A seafarer needs to be reasonably fit and in good health. Although the Convention does not stipulate mandatory minimum standards of medical fitness for seafarers, most Administrations already enforce strict standards, particularly with regards to eyesight and hearing for watch-keeping personnel.

If you meet the medical standards, you will be issued with a medical certificate. This certificate is subject to revalidation at least every 5 years. If you want to know more about the medical standards that apply to you, the examination procedures and revalidation requirements, contact the Administration that issued your certificate.





On Board Requirements

This section will tell you how to comply with STCW-95 once you are on board. The requirements outlined in this section came into force on 1 February 1997 and apply to the master, chief engineer, officers, ratings and any other crew member on board ships of any tonnage, from a coaster to a very large tanker. The last two parts of this section (hours of work and watch-keeping regulations) only apply to officers and ratings forming part of a watch (deck or engine).

Certificates and documentary evidence to be carried on board

The certificates and any other documentary evidence you hold are official proof of your competency. Before joining a ship, it is your duty, and that of your employer, to check that you hold the correct certificates. Once on board, the master and inspectors from port and flag state authorities will check your documentation. If during the course of these inspections they find that you do not hold the appropriate certificates, or that these have expired, you will probably be discharged until you complete the training required and/or the certificates required have been revalidated. In many cases this is a cause for your employer to terminate your contract.

According to STCW-95 you should carry on board **the originals** of all certificates and endorsements. Photocopies are **not** acceptable. You need to have the following documents on you at all times:

1. **National certificate of competence and endorsement** (The endorsement may be part of the certificate or may be issued as a separate document). Refer to the previous section to see what certificates you need to hold.
2. **Certificates and documentary evidence covering specific safety or pollution prevention duties and service on board certain types of ship.** Refer to the previous section to see what certificates you need to hold.
3. **Endorsements of recognition.** This is a requirement from 1 February 2002.

When applying for an endorsement of recognition, remember the following:

- ◆ You need to hold separate endorsements for each flag State.
- ◆ No endorsement of recognition will be granted if the original national certificate is not valid or has expired.
- ◆ STCW-95 endorsements are only issued for STCW-95 certificates. You cannot obtain a STCW-95 endorsement on the basis of a STCW-78 certificate.
- ◆ You cannot apply for an endorsement of recognition from one Party on the basis of an endorsement issued by another Party. Endorsements can only be issued on the basis of the original certificate.
- ◆ If you have already applied for an endorsement, but this is being processed by the respective flag administration, you have a period of grace of up to 3 months from the date you join the ship. During this period you will be able to serve without an endorsement provided you have documentary evidence (a letter from the flag administration or consulate) stating that you have applied for an endorsement of recognition.
- ◆ Masters, chief mates, chief engineers and second engineers are required to have adequate knowledge of the maritime legislation of the recognising Party. This requirement may be assessed by written examination.

4. **Medical certificate** (including vaccination records)

Note: Remember to check the expiry date on all of the above certificates and documents as expired certificates are not valid for service on board .



Mandatory safety and ship-board familiarisation training

Every time you join a new ship you need to undergo the basic safety familiarisation and ship-specific familiarisation training.

1. **Basic safety familiarisation** gives information and instruction about what to do in the case of an emergency. Before being assigned to shipboard duties, you should receive either approved training in personal survival techniques or sufficient information to be able to:
 - a) communicate with other persons on board on safety issues
 - b) understand safety information symbols, signs and alarm signals
 - c) know the procedures for man overboard, fire or smoke detected, and abandon ship alarms
 - d) identify muster and embarkation stations
 - e) identify escape
 - f) locate and don life jackets
 - g) use fire extinguishers
 - h) take immediate action upon encountering an accident or other medical emergency
 - i) operate fire, weather-tight and watertight doors fitted in the particular ship other than those for hull openings.

Note: *Basic familiarisation training is different from basic safety training. For information on basic safety training refer to the general requirements for officers or ratings shown in Section 2.*

2. **Ship-specific familiarisation** gives you the opportunity to become acquainted with the specific equipment you will be using, and ship-specific watch-keeping, safety, environmental protection and emergency procedures and arrangements you need to know to perform any assigned duties properly. This training should be completed at the earliest possible opportunity after joining the ship.

Both types of familiarisation instruction are to be given by a responsible person on board the ship, normally an officer, and must be delivered in a language that you are able to understand. They can take place at the same time. No certificates are given for completing the familiarisation instruction, but the master or responsible officer should make a signed entry in the ship's logbook stating when the safety familiarisation training and ship-specific familiarisation was provided. You should also keep a record of it yourself and keep it together with your documents.

In addition to the familiarisation instruction, it is very important that you take every opportunity to familiarise yourself with the equipment used to perform your functions, as well as all safety and emergency procedures. Allow your curiosity free reign and consult manuals, posters, films and any other audio-visual materials available on board.

Also, try to introduce discussions with your colleagues. You will be surprised how much you can learn from them. Don't be afraid to ask questions if you have any doubts about your duties, safe working practices or emergency procedures. If your immediate superior is unable to give you a satisfactory answer, raise the issue with the next person in the hierarchical chain or with the master.

If you are still not satisfied with the answer, raise the issue with the person in charge of fleet management in the shipping company's office. According to the International Safety Management Code (ISM) there should always be a person in the shipping company's head office designated to deal with safety queries (including STCW).

On-board training and assessment

The STCW-95 Convention lays great emphasis on practical competence. Therefore an important part of any STCW training programme is to put into practice what you have learned from books or with an instructor in a classroom. For some specific skills this is best done at approved training establishments in purpose built installations ashore (fire-fighting courses, for example). However, to gain certain other competencies the best way is to practice them at sea under the supervision of a person with appropriate training and experience. This is why it is extremely important that experienced seafarers take every opportunity to train less experienced seafarers. This is the best way of passing on knowledge to new generations of seafarers.

Any training that is carried out on-board, as part of an approved training programme, must be recorded in a training record book. This book is approved by the Administration issuing the certificate and lists the specific tasks that should be completed by the student while he/she is at sea to demonstrate that competency has been achieved. All trainee officers must document their on-board training in a training record book.

The tasks assigned in this book should be completed by the candidate under the supervision of a training supervisor on board. This will normally be a designated officer. The training supervisor will inspect the progress made by the student and sign the book accordingly. Training record books should also be checked regularly by the master.

On completion of all the tasks contained in the record book, this is submitted to examiners from the Administration or from training establishments. They will inspect it as part of the evidence to demonstrate that the candidate has achieved the standard of competence in order to qualify for an STCW-95 certificate.

Remember that training and assessment, both on board and ashore, should always be conducted by instructors and assessors qualified in the tasks that are being taught. The training programme must be approved by the maritime Administration issuing the certificate.

Seagoing service

Many STCW-95 certificates require seafarers to have had sufficient time of service on board relevant to the issue of a certificate. The exact requirements are given in Section 2.

In other words, if you want to apply for a certificate, you need to provide satisfactory proof that you have completed the required seagoing service for the certificate you are applying for. For example, one of the requirements to obtain a certificate as an officer in charge of a navigational watch on ships of less than 500 gross tonnage is to “have approved seagoing service in the deck department of not less than three years”. (Reg 11/3).

If you are applying for any of the following certificates you will need to meet minimum seagoing service requirements (for details see Section 2, Part 2): master, chief mate, officer in charge of a navigational watch, rating forming part of a navigational watch, chief engineer, second engineer, officer in charge of an engineering watch, rating forming part of an engineering watch, rating forming part of a watch in a manned engine room, officer or rating assigned with specific duties related to cargo equipment on tankers.

You can gain approved seagoing service on any type of ship as long as your duties on board are relevant to the certificate you are applying for. For example, if you intend to apply for a certificate as an officer in charge of a navigational watch, you will need to have approved seagoing service in the deck department. Although there are no specific requirements stating the size or propulsion power of the ships in which you are obtaining your seagoing service time, these should be adequate to the certificate being issued. You should contact the maritime Administration from which you intend to obtain the certificate to check if there are any minimum limitations in size or tonnage to obtain approved seagoing service.

When signing off the ship, the seagoing service time is written in your discharge book and this will be stamped and signed by the master of the ship. It will include dates and port of joining and leaving ship. If it does not include particulars of the ship (tonnage, propulsion power, flag, call sign), it might be worth making note of these and keeping them in a separate record in case you are required to provide them later on to the Administration.

Alcohol and drug consumption

Consumption of alcohol or illegal drugs can severely impair any seafarer's fitness for duty. In most countries, consumption of drugs is strictly forbidden and anyone convicted of this offence could face severe penalties, including imprisonment, and the almost certain termination of their contract. A seafarer can expect little sympathy from their employer or the authorities if caught in possession of, or using, illegal substances. The adverse effects on personal health and general safety on board are also compelling reasons for avoiding alcohol and drug abuse.

The consumption of alcohol on board ship is being progressively phased out through strict regulations and screening. Many companies now enforce a no-alcohol policy on board their ships and it is not unknown for companies and port State inspectors to carry out random alcohol tests on crew members. The Convention guideline is that watch-keepers should not consume any alcohol within four hours of going on watch. Some Parties have already adopted policies to enforce maximum blood-alcohol levels, similar to those applying to road drivers.



Control provisions

The effectiveness of STCW-95 will depend on whether the standards laid down in the Convention can be enforced and maintained. So a number of control measures have been introduced to give it some teeth.

The enforcers include seafarers, the Parties (acting as flag States and port States), the IMO, and shipping companies.

By far the best enforcers are seafarers. After all there is a lot to gain if proper standards are maintained. Any accident occurring on board affects seafarers in one way or another, and maintaining high standards of competence is an effective way of preventing accidents and providing a safe working environment for all.

Parties to the Convention, acting as flag or port States, are responsible for ensuring that seafarers coming under their jurisdiction meet the prescribed standards of competency. You come under the jurisdiction of a flag State when you hold a certificate issued by that administration or you serve on board a ship registered under its flag. In turn, you will be under the jurisdiction of a port State whenever your ship is in port.

A flag State will exercise control by regulating the certification process, the training and education of seafarers, and by assessing the competence of seafarers prior to certification.

A port State exercises control by inspecting ships calling at their ports. The Convention contains a provision for port State authorities to inspect any ship calling at any of their ports. Under this provision inspectors are authorised to verify that seafarers hold appropriate certificates for the functions they perform, that manning level requirements are complied with, and that seafarers are competent in their watch-keeping, safety, and pollution prevention duties.

When a port State Inspector comes on board, he or she will check these aspects in the following ways. First, by examining all certificates and documentary evidence of crew members on board. Second, by verifying that the number of crew is in accordance with the Safe Manning Document. Third, by checking that watch-keeping procedures are being observed, including rest periods. Fourth, if there is a reason to believe that standards are not being maintained, the inspector is entitled to make an assessment of the ability of seafarers to maintain watch-keeping standards. For this the inspector may ask the crew about emergency or safety procedures, or to perform a specific emergency drill, or may ask any individual crew member to perform a task relevant to his or her duty on board. For example, a deck

watch-keeping officer may be asked practical questions about operating bridge equipment, while engineering officer may be asked to operate the propulsion or electricity generating plant. The sort of questions the inspectors will ask cover the competencies set out in Part A of the STCW Code. Port State control has become a feature of modern seafaring – and it is here to stay.

Another equally important control procedure, contained in the Convention is the accountability of each Party to both the IMO and to other Parties. Every Party is under an obligation to submit a report to IMO on its implementation of the Convention. This information is examined by the IMO and a decision is reached as to whether or not the Party is complying in full with the Convention. The list of Parties identified by IMO as being in full compliance will be included in what is known as the White List (see Annex B).

All administrations included in the White List are subject to a re-evaluation by the panel of experts every five years. Should it be found that, at the time of the re-evaluation, the country is not giving full and effective compliance to the Convention, its name will be removed. Similarly, new countries may be added if they meet the criteria for inclusion.

The importance of this for you is that if a Party included in the White List issues your certificate, then this is accepted as proof that you meet STCW-95 standards in all respects. This may be an advantage if you are applying for endorsements of recognition or seeking employment in the international fleet. It may even make the visit of the port State Inspector that much shorter.

However, it does not mean that seafarers holding certificates issued by a Party **not** listed in the White List will be unable to find employment at sea. They can still be employed, but will probably be subject to additional scrutiny from employers and other Administrations before being employed. Holders of certificates issued by countries that are not in the White List will **not** be able to obtain an STCW-95 endorsement of recognition issued by another Administration Party to the Convention from February 2002 onwards.

Furthermore, a Flag State Party to the Convention may decide not to accept seafarers for service aboard its ships who hold certificates issued by countries not included in the White List. If it does accept such seafarers, they will be required from February 2002 onwards, to hold an endorsement issued by the Flag State to show that their certificate is recognised by the Flag State.

Any Party not included on the initial White List will have to correct the deficiencies identified by the IMO before it can be recognised as having fully implemented the Convention.

Penalties

Those who breach the Convention will face penalties and disciplinary measures ranging from cancellation of certificates to the imposition of heavy fines, not to mention job loss.

Each Party has internal disciplinary procedures in place to deal with those breaching the Convention where such breaches cause a threat to the safety of life, to property at sea or to the maritime environment through incompetence, act or omission.

The Convention lists three specific cases in which penalties are to be applied:

1. **To a company or master:** if found to engage a person not holding a certificate as required by the Convention.
2. **To a master:** if found to allow an unduly qualified person (not holding a valid certificate, dispensation or documentary evidence) to perform a function or service in any capacity in which proper certification is required.
3. **To any person:** if found to be serving on board with a fraudulent or forged certificate.

Additionally, if a port State Inspector detects a fault, the ship will be detained in port until these deficiencies have been corrected. Deficiencies under this category include:

- ◆ failure of seafarers to hold a valid certificate for the function they perform on board
- ◆ failure to comply with safe manning requirements
- ◆ failure to conform with specified engineering or navigational watch arrangements
- ◆ absence during a watch of a person qualified to operate equipment essential to navigation, safety, radio communication, or pollution prevention measures
- ◆ during the first watch at the beginning of a voyage, inability to provide persons who are sufficiently rested and otherwise fit for duty.

Regulations affecting watch-keeping personnel only

The following two regulations apply only to officers and ratings who are part of a navigational, engine room or radio watch.

1. Minimum hours of rest for watch personnel

The minimum number of hours of rest for ratings and officers assigned to watch-keeping duties is **10 hours in any 24 hour period**. This does not mean that the other 14 hours should be spent on duty. The master and other personnel who do not have watch-keeping responsibilities are exempted from this provision.

The 24 hour period is calculated from the time the watch-keeper's duty starts, and not from 00:00 hours. The 10 hour rest period may be divided into no more than two periods, one of which must be at least 6 hours long. The minimum rest period is not obligatory in the case of emergencies, drills or overriding operational conditions. The 10 hour rest period can be reduced to not less than 6 consecutive hours provided such reduction does not extend beyond 2 days and not less than 70 hours of rest are provided each 7 day period. A summary of the rest hour regulations is given in the following table (the shaded areas indicate the mandatory hours of rest).

In any 24 hour period			
8 hours duty	6 hours rest	6 hours duty	4 hours rest

or

14 hours duty	10 hours rest
---------------	---------------

or (for a maximum of 2 consecutive days as long as not less than 70 hours of rest are provided in a 7 day period)

18 hours duty	6 hours rest
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All watch arrangements should be posted where they are clearly visible; normally in the bridge, in the engine control room or in the mess room.

If you have watch-keeping duties, you are strongly recommended to maintain a personal log of your working hours. This will allow you to keep a constant check on the number of hours of rest. If you are having a rest period below the minimum prescribed by the Convention, you can bring this situation to the attention of your supervisor or safety officer.

2. Watch-keeping principles and arrangements

The STCW-95 Convention contains guidance for watch-keeping personnel on how to keep a safe watch at all times, whether at sea or in port. The complete guidelines can be found in section A-VIII/2 of the Convention. The master, chief engineer and all watch-keeping personnel (navigation, propulsion and radio) are required to perform their duties according to these principles and guidelines. Operations procedure manuals kept on board are also likely to contain some of this information and it is in your own interest, to read them. Shipping companies are required to provide clear procedures to be followed by watch-keeping personnel. Not only are you required to abide by these provisions, but it is also a useful reminder of procedures seafarers already know but tend to forget.

The master has direct responsibility for ensuring that all watch-keeping principles and arrangements are adhered to at all times and under all circumstances. However, he or she can only be successful through the commitment and co-operation of the whole team, both on board and ashore.





Implications of
STCW-95
for
STCW-78

Certificate Holders

Upgrading and revalidation

From 1 February 2002, STCW-78 certificates are no longer valid for service aboard ships of Administrations party to the Convention. Under 'exceptional circumstances' some Administrations may decide to give a short dispensation, until 1 July 2002, to allow seafarers to revalidate their certificates (see page 7).

You have two options to re-validate your STCW-78 certificate:

1. Re-validate under STCW-78 regulations, in which case you do not have to meet STCW-95 standards. However, a certificate re-validated under STCW-78 regulations will not be valid for service beyond 1 February 2002 (or beyond the five-year transitional period for certificates issued by a Party whose obligations under the Convention came into force after 1 February 1997).
2. You can re-validate it under STCW-95 regulations. This means you are updating your certificate, so you need to meet STCW-95 standards of medical fitness and competence. For the latter, you will probably need refresher courses or updated training and assessments. Your updated certificate will then be valid for service after 1 February 2002, but will be subject to re-validation every five years.

You should also remember that from 1 February 1997 onwards, all STCW-78 certificate holders must satisfy competence requirements if either of the following applies:

1. If you serve on specialised types of ships (tankers, ro-ro passenger ships, other passenger ships) **or**
2. If you are responsible for emergency, occupational safety, medical care or survival functions on any type of ship. Basic safety training applies to all seafarers.

Note:

If you update an STCW-78 certificate to STCW-95 standards, the tonnage limitations change from '200 gross registered tons' to '500 gross tonnage', and from '1,600 registered tons' to '3,000 gross tonnage'.

Additional competence requirements under STCW-95 (by rank)

The rest of this section shows which additional requirements are included in STCW-95 which were not required under STCW-78. To upgrade an STCW-78 certificate to STCW-95 standards, you will need to prove competence in these tasks. The tables are organised by rank within each shipboard division.

Master and deck department

◆ Officers in charge of a navigational watch on ships of 500 gross tonnage* or more

1. Use of electronic chart display and information systems (ECDIS).
2. Use of Automatic Radar Plotting Aids (ARPA) to maintain safety of navigation.
Simulator based training and assessment mandatory.
Note: *Training and assessment in the use of ARPA is not required for those who serve exclusively on ships not fitted with ARPA.*
3. Application of effective bridge teamwork procedures.
4. Application of advanced fire-fighting techniques.
5. Transmit and receive information using GMDSS and fulfil its functional requirements *if in charge or performing radio duties on a ship required to participate in GMDSS.*
6. Monitor compliance with legislative requirements.

*200 gross registered tons limit replaced by 500 gross tonnage

◆ **Masters and chief mates on ships of 500 gross tonnage* or more**

A. Masters and chief mates on ships of 3,000 gross tonnage or more

1. Meet requirements for certification as an officer in charge of a navigational watch (see previous table).
2. Application of effective bridge teamwork procedures.
3. Application of constant rate of turn techniques.
4. Use of, and manoeuvring in and near, traffic separation schemes and in vessel traffic service areas (VTS).
5. Use of stability and trim diagrams and stress-calculating equipment, including automatic data-based (ADB) equipment.
6. Maintain safe navigation through the use of radar and ARPA simulator based training and assessment mandatory.

Note: *Training and assessment in the use of ARPA is not required for those who serve exclusively on ships not fitted with ARPA.*

7. Develop emergency and damage control plans and handle emergency situations.

Note: *The level of knowledge shall be sufficient to enable the candidate to serve in the capacity of master or chief mate.*

B. Masters and chief mates on ships of 500 - 3,000 gross tonnage

1. Chief mates should meet the requirements of an officer in charge of a navigational watch on ships of 500 gross tonnage or more.
2. Master should meet the requirements of an officer in charge of a navigational watch on ships of 500 gross tonnage or more and have 36 months' approved seagoing service in that capacity.

Note:

1. *The level of theoretical knowledge, understanding and proficiency may be lower than that required for service on ships of 3,000 gross tonnage or more.*
2. *The level of knowledge shall be sufficient to enable the candidate to serve in the capacity of master or chief mate.*

*200 gross registered tons limit replaced by 500 gross tonnage

◆ **Officers in charge of a navigational watch and masters on ships of less than 500 gross tonnage***

A. Ships not engaged on near coastal voyages: officers in charge of navigational watch and masters

1. Officers are required to hold a certificate for service on ships of 500 gross tonnage or more and for service on ships between 500 and 3,000 gross tonnage.
2. Masters are required to hold a certificate of service on ships of between 500 and 3,000 gross tonnage.

B. Ships engaged on near coastal voyages: officers in charge of navigational watch

1. Required to have completed special training, or approved seagoing service in the deck department of no less than three years.
2. Required to have completed approved education and training and to meet the standard of competence specified in the Convention.
3. Hold an appropriate certificate for performing VHF radio-communications.
4. If designated to have primary responsibility for radio communications during distress incidents, hold an appropriate certificate issued or recognised under the radio regulations.

C. Ships engaged on near coastal voyages: masters

1. Meet the requirements of an officer in charge of a navigational watch.
2. Have served 12 months as officer in charge of a navigational watch.

* 200 gross registered tons limited replaced by 500 gross tonnage

◆ Ratings forming part of a navigational watch

No upgrading of STCW-78 authorised documents is required.

Under STCW-95 those qualifying as ratings forming part of a navigational watch are required to be duly certified. New knowledge requirements for those obtaining certification under STCW-95 are:

1. Ability to comply with helm orders, including those given in the English language.
2. Procedures for the relief, maintenance and handover of the watch.
3. Information required to maintain a safe watch.
4. Basic environmental protection procedures.
5. Knowledge of satellite Emergency Position Indicating Beacons (EPIRB) and Search and Rescue Transponders (SART).
6. Avoidance of false distress alerts and action to be taken in event of accidental activation.



Engine department

◆ **Chief engineer officers and second engineer officers on ships of 3,000 kW propulsion power or more**

1. Ability to control trim, stability and stress (requirements extended).
2. Monitor and control compliance with legislative requirements and measures to ensure safety of life at sea and the protection of the marine environment (requirements extended).
3. Maintain safety and security of the vessel, crew and passengers and the operational condition of life-saving, fire-fighting and other safety systems.
4. Application of advanced fire-fighting techniques.

◆ **Chief engineer officers and second engineer officers on ships of 750 - 3,000 kW propulsion power**

1. Ability to control trim, stability and stress (requirements extended).
2. Monitor and control compliance with legislative requirements and measures to ensure safety of life at sea and the protection of the marine environment (requirements extended).
3. Maintain safety and security of the vessel, crew and passengers and the operational condition of life-saving, fire-fighting and other safety systems.
4. Application of advanced fire-fighting techniques.

◆ **Officers in charge of an engineering watch in a manned engine-room or designated duty engineers in a periodically unmanned engine-room**

1. Adequate knowledge of the English language to enable the officer to use engineering publications and to perform engineering duties.
2. Working knowledge and application of the theory of ship stability.
3. General knowledge of ship construction.
4. Application of advanced fire-fighting techniques.

◆ **Ratings forming part of an engineering watch**

Under STCW-78, ratings forming part of an engineering watch do not require an authorised document or certificate. Under STCW-95, ratings forming part of an engineering watch are required to meet the standards of competence and be certificated.

Under STCW-95, a Party may consider seafarers to have met the standards of competence required if they have served as ratings forming part of an engineering watch for a period of not less than one year within the five years preceding the Convention's coming into force for that Party.

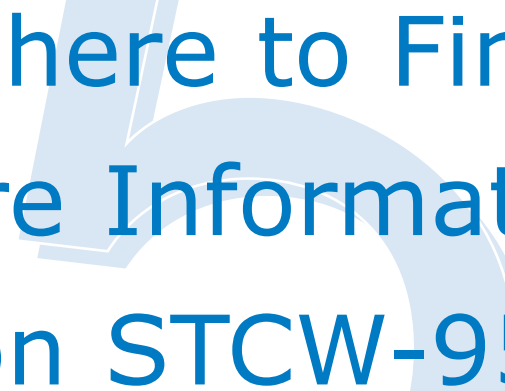
Note: *No certificate is necessary for personnel on ships of below 750 kW propulsion power.*

Radio department

◆ **Radio-communication and Radio Personnel**

New regulations apply to personnel in charge of performing radio duties on a ship required to participate in the GMDSS. Radio personnel on ships not required to comply with the GMDSS provisions are certificated as required under radio regulations.

1. Transmit and receive information using GMDSS sub systems and equipment.
2. Fulfilling the functional requirements of GMDSS.
3. Provide GMDSS radio services in emergencies.



**Where to Find
More Information
on STCW-95**

We hope this guide has provided you with a better understanding of STCW-95 requirements. However, remember that any requirements are subject to the particular arrangements that each individual Party has made for implementing the Convention. Therefore, your first port of call should be the Authority issuing your certificate. They can inform you in more detail about specific requirements and deadlines for satisfying the standards of the Convention and obtaining STCW-95 certification. Many Administrations around the world publish this information on a regular basis.

Another good source of information is training institutions (provided they are in the business of complying with STCW-95 requirements). They will normally know what the requirements are for certification and point you in the right direction should you need further information.

Your employer should also be in a position to give you guidance (and hopefully financial assistance) to help fulfil STCW-95 requirements. If you are affiliated to a national trade union they may also be able to give you guidance.

As well as this being on the internet at www.itf.org.uk, the following websites contain information on STCW-95 and other maritime-related topics:

- www.uscg.mil
- www.natinst.org
- www.imo.org
- www.sea-man.com
- www.shipping.pages.com
- www.hal-pc.org/nugent/index.html
- www.amsa.gov.au

The best source of written information on STCW-95 is, of course, the Convention itself. There are also short guides produced by some of the Parties and short articles published in specialised nautical journals such as Seaways, Fairplay and BIMCO. The International Shipping Federation has produced a series of publications on STCW, including 'The Revised STCW Convention: A Guide for the Shipping Industry'. They have also produced 'ISF Training and Service Record Books' which help you keep track of all your certificates and any other documentary evidence such as records of drills, familiarisation instruction and sea service.

If you want a deeper understanding of the Convention, the most comprehensive publication on the subject is the book written by Captain W.S.G. Morrison: 'Competent Crews = Safer Ships – An Aid to Understanding STCW 95'. Available from the World Maritime University, it is a Must for all those involved in the implementation and enforcement of the Convention.

At the end of this Guide we are also including a copy of two IMO circulars clarifying some of the requirements prescribed by STCW-95. These may prove valuable if you come across Port State inspectors misinterpreting the actual requirements set by the Convention.

Remember, ignorance of the Convention and its requirements is no excuse for non-compliance. Besides, it is in your best professional and safety interests as a seafarer to comply with STCW-95 standards.



List of countries Party to STCW 1978, as amended in 1995
(including the date on which the Convention came into force)

COUNTRY	DATE	COUNTRY	DATE	COUNTRY	DATE
ALGERIA	28 JAN 1989	GERMANY ⁽³⁾	28 APR 1984	PANAMA	29 SEPT 1992
ANGOLA	3 JAN 1992	GHANA	26 APR 1989	PAPUA NEW GUINEA	28 JAN 1992
ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA	5 MAY 1997	GREECE	28 APR 1984	PERU	28 APR 1984
ARGENTINA	28 APR 1984	GUINEA	5 NOV 1994	PHILIPPINES	22 MAY 1984
AUSTRALIA	28 APR 1984	HAITI	6 JUL 1989	POLAND	28 APR 1984
AUSTRIA	29 APR 1997	HONDURAS	24 DEC 1985	PORTUGAL	30 JAN 1986
AZERBAIJAN	1 OCT 1997	HUNGARY	15 JAN 1986	REP OF KOREA	4 JUL 1985
BAHAMAS	28 APR 1984	ICELAND	21 JUN 1995	ROMANIA	11 APR 1993
BAHRAIN	13 SEPT 1996	INDIA	16 FEB 1985	RUSSIAN FEDERATION ⁽⁶⁾	28 APR 1984
BANGLADESH	28 APR 1984	INDONESIA	27 APR 1987	ST VINCENT & THE GRENADINES	28 SEP 1995
BARBADOS	6 AUG 1994	IRAN	1 NOV 1996	SAMOA	24 AUG 1993
BELGIUM	28 APR 1984	IRELAND	11 DEC 1984	SAO TOME AND PRINCIPE	29 JAN 1999
BELIZE	24 APR 1997	ISRAEL	16 APR 1986	SAUDI ARABIA	1 MAR 1991
BENIN	1 FEB 1986	ITALY	26 NOV 1987	SENEGAL	16 APR 1997
BOLIVIA	11 JUL 1988	JAMAICA	19 MAY 1987	SEYCHELLES	22 NOV 1988
BRAZIL	28 APR 1984	JAPAN	28 APR 1984	SIERRA LEONE	13 NOV 1993
BRUNEI	23 JAN 1987	KAZAKHSTAN	7 JUN 1994	SINGAPORE	1 AUG 1988
BULGARIA	28 APR 1984	KENYA	15 MAR 1993	SLOVAKIA	1 JAN 1993
CAMEROON	6 SEPT 1989	KIRIBATI	5 NOV 1987	SLOVENIA	25 JUN 1991
CANADA	6 FEB 1988	LATVIA	20 AUG 1992	SOLOMON ISLANDS	1 SEPT 1994
CAPE VERDE	18 DEC 1989	LEBANON	5 MAR 1995	SOUTH AFRICA	28 APR 1984
CHILE	9 SEPT 1987	LIBERIA	28 APR 1984	SPAIN	28 APR 1984
CHINA ⁽⁴⁾	28 APR 1984	LIBYA	28 APR 1984	SRI LANKA	22 APR 1987
COLOMBIA	28 APR 1984	LITHUANIA	4 MAR 1992	SUDAN	26 MAY 1997
COTE D'IVOIRE	5 JAN 1988	LUXEMBOURG	14 MAY 1991	SWEDEN	28 APR 1984
CROATIA	8 OCT 1991	MADAGASCAR	7 JUN 1996	SWITZERLAND	15 MAR 1988
CUBA	5 MAR 1990	MALAWI	9 JUN 1993	THAILAND	19 SEPT 1997
CYPRUS	28 JUN 1985	MALAYSIA	28 APR 1984	TOGO	19 OCT 1989
CZECH REPUBLIC	1 JAN 1993	MALDIVES	22 APR 1987	TONGA	7 MAY 1995
DEM. PEOPLES REP. OF KOREA	1 AUG 1985	MALTA	21 SEPT 1991	TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO	3 MAY 1989
DEM. REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO ⁽²⁾	4 JUL 1995	MARSHALL ISL.	25 JUL 1989	TUNISIA	8 MAY 1995
DENMARK	28 APR 1984	MAURITANIA	17 FEB 1996	TURKEY	28 OCT 1992
ECUADOR	17 AUG 1988	MAURITIUS	4 OCT 1991	TUVALU	22 NOV 1985
EGYPT	28 APR 1984	MEXICO	28 APR 1984	UKRAINE	7 APR 1997
EQUATORIAL GUINEA	24 JUL 1996	MICRONESIA	14 OCT 1998	UNITED ARAB EMIRATES	28 APR 1984
ERITREA	22 JUL 1996	MOROCCO	22 OCT 1997	UNITED KINGDOM ⁽⁷⁾	28 APR 1984
ESTONIA	29 NOV 1995	MOZAMBIQUE	15 FEB 1986	UNITED REP. OF TANZANIA	28 APR 1984
ETHIOPIA	18 OCT 1985	MYANMAR	4 AUG 1988	UNITED STATES	1 OCT 1991
FIJI	27 JUN 1991	NETHERLANDS ⁽⁴⁾	26 OCT 1985	URUGUAY	3 NOV 1993
FINLAND	28 APR 1984	NEW ZEALAND ⁽⁵⁾	30 OCT 1986	VANUATU	22 JUL 1991
FRANCE	28 APR 1984	NIGERIA	13 FEB 1985	VENEZUELA	13 JAN 1988
GABON	28 APR 1984	NORWAY	28 APR 1984	VIET NAM	18 MAR 1991
GAMBIA	1 FEB 1992	OMAN	24 DEC 1990	YUGOSLAVIA	5 FEB 1985
GEORGIA	19 JUL 1994	PAKISTAN	10 JUL 1985		

Footnotes to Annex A

- (1) Applies only to Hong Kong Special Administrative Region
- (2) Formerly Zaire
- (3) October 1990 the German Democratic Republic acceded to the Federal Republic of Germany. The German Democratic Republic has acceded to the Convention on 5 November 1979
- (4) Accession by the Netherlands was declared to be effective in respect of the Netherlands Antilles and, with effect from 1 January 1986, in respect of Aruba
- (5) Accession by New Zealand was declared to apply to the Cook Islands and Niue but not to extend to Tokelau
- (6) As from 26 December 1991 the USSR membership in the Convention was continued by the Russian Federation
- (7) Ratification by the United Kingdom was declared to be also effective in respect of: Hong Kong (ceased to apply to HK with effect from 1 July 1997); Isle of Man (1 July 1985); Bermuda (1 Jan 1989); Cayman Islands (1 Apr 1991); Gibraltar (27 Nov 1995).



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MSC/Circ.1018
29th November 2001

**INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION ON STANDARDS OF TRAINING,
CERTIFICATION AND WATCHKEEPING FOR
SEAFARERS (STCW), 1978,
AS AMENDED**

Parties to the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (STCW), 1978, as amended, confirmed by the Maritime Safety Committee to have communicated information which demonstrates that full and complete effect is given to the relevant provisions of the Convention

1. The Maritime Safety Committee (MSC), as its first extraordinary session (27 and 28 November 2001), received reports by the Secretary-General pursuant to regulation I/7, paragraph 2 of the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers, 1978, as amended, (STCW Convention). The reports were in respect of those STCW Parties whose information had not been fully evaluated in time for the seventy-fourth session of the Committee (30 May to 8 June 2001). A list of those STCW Parties confirmed at that session of the Committee and those confirmed by MSC 73 (27 November to 6 December 2000) to have communicated information which had demonstrated that full and complete effect was given to the relevant provisions of the Convention had been promulgated in MSC/Circ.996.

2. MSC, at first its extraordinary session (ES.1), noted that, in preparing the reports required by STCW regulation I/7, paragraph 2, the Secretary-General had solicited and taken into account the views of competent persons selected from the list established pursuant to paragraph 5 of section A-I/7 of the STCW Code and circulated as MSC/Circ.797, as revised from time to time.

3 In accordance with STCW regulation I/7, paragraph 3, MSC/ES.1 confirmed further STCW Parties, additional to those listed to MSC/Circ.996, which had communicated information demonstrating that they were giving full and complete effect to the relevant provisions of the STCW Convention, as amended. **The list at annex contains those STCW Parties confirmed by the Committee at its seventy-third, seventy-fourth and first extraordinary sessions.** The Committee noted that, as the process of communicating and evaluating information is continuing, further Parties may be added to the list at annex at subsequent meetings.

4 The Committee also noted that the Kingdom of the Netherlands had approved the necessary legislation for the implementation of the STCW Convention, as amended, in respect of the Netherlands Antilles and Aruba and that a suitable footnote had been added to the annex to this circular to include them in the list.

5. The Committee draws the attention of maritime administrations, shipowners, ship operators and managers, ship masters and other parties concerned to the following:

- .1 not all of the STCW Parties listed at annex provide seafarer training, and some of those Parties listed may only provide a limited range of training; and
- .2 the fact that a Party is listed in the annex does not relieve those concerned of their obligations under the STCW Convention

6. Notwithstanding the Committee's identification of the Parties listed at annex, Member Governments are invited to draw the attention of their port State control offices to the guidance contained in MSC/Circ.918 including the fact that valid certificates of competency and endorsements issued or recognized by a Party in accordance with the relevant provisions of the STCW Convention, which were in force immediately prior to 1 February 1997, remain valid until 1 February 2002, subject to STCW regulation I/15.

7. As Parties are entitled to accept, in principle, certificates issued by or on behalf of Parties identified in the list at annex, and a position on that list is one of the necessary measures used by many Administrations for the issue of endorsements in compliance with STCW regulation I/10, the attention of port State control officers is drawn to the fact that this circular was issued on 28 November 2001 and, therefore, for practical reasons, seafarers should not be expected to hold certificates with such endorsements until 1 February 2002.

ANNEX

Parties to the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (STCW), 1978, as amended, confirmed by the Maritime Safety Committee to have communicated information which demonstrates that full and complete effect is given to the relevant provisions of the Convention

Algeria	Greece	Philippines
Antigua and Barbuda	Honduras	Poland
Argentina	Hungary	Portugal
Australia	Iceland	Republic of Korea
Azerbaijan	India	Romania
Bahamas	Indonesia	Russian Federation
Bangladesh	Ireland	Saint Vincent and the Grenadines
Barbados	Islamic Republic of Iran	Samoa
Belgium	Italy	Senegal
Belize	Israel	Singapore
Brazil	Jamaica	Slovak Republic
Bulgaria	Japan	Slovenia
Canada	Kiribati	Solomon Islands
Chile	Latvia	South Africa
China	Liberia	Spain
Colombia	Lithuania	Sri Lanka
Comoros	Luxembourg	Sweden
Côte d'Ivoire	Madagascar	Switzerland
Croatia	Malaysia	Thailand
Cuba	Maldives	Tonga
Cyprus	Malta	Trinidad & Tobago
Czech Republic	Marshall Islands	Tunisia
Democratic People's Republic of Korea	Mauritius	Turkey
Denmark*	México	Tuvalu
Dominica	Micronesia (Federated States of)	Ukraine
Ecuador	Morocco	United Kingdom***
Egypt	Myanmar	United States
Estonia	Netherlands**	Uruguay
Ethiopia	New Zealand	Vanuatu
Fiji	Nigeria	Venezuela
Finland	Norway	Viet Nam
France	Pakistan	Yugoslavia
Georgia	Panama	China (Hong Kong SAR)****
Germany	Papua New Guinea	
Ghana	Peru	

* Includes: Faeroe Islands

** Includes: Netherlands Antilles & Aruba

*** Includes: Isle of Man
Bermuda
Cayman Islands
Gibraltar

**** Associate Member

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**GUIDANCE FOR PORT STATE CONTROL OFFICERS IN RESPECT OF
CERTIFICATES OF COMPETENCY ISSUED UNDER THE
PROVISIONS OF THE STCW CONVENTION**

1. The Maritime Safety Committee, as its seventy-first session (19 May–28 May 1999), noted that certain clarifications were necessary for the guidance of port State control officers concerning the transitional provisions of the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (STCW), 1978.
2. Member Governments are invited to inform their port State control officers that:
 - .1 until 1 Feb 2002, valid certificates of competency and endorsements issued or recognised by a Party in accordance with the relevant provisions of the STCW Convention which were in force immediately prior to 1 Feb 1997 remain valid, subject to STCW regulation 1/15;
 - .2 until 1 Feb 2002, seafarers holding valid certificates issued in accordance with the relevant provisions of the STCW Convention which were in force immediately prior to 1 Feb 1977 by the Party which found them qualified are not required by the STCW Convention to hold, in addition, certificates or endorsements issued by the Government of the flag which the ship on which they are serving is entitled to fly;
 - .3 on or after 1 Feb 2002, all certificates of competency and endorsements issued to seafarers are required to comply with the provisions of the STCW Convention, as amended; and
 - .4 seafarers are not required to hold certificates as evidence of basic training in order to comply with regulation VI/1 because the evidence required by section A-VI/1 is not considered to be a certificate.
3. Member Governments are reminded of the guidance issued under STCW.7/Circ.1 and invited to bring the contents of this circular to the attention of all concerned, especially port State control officers.

Table B-1/9-2

LIST OF CERTIFICATES OR DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE REQUIRED UNDER THE STCW CONVENTION

The list below identifies all certificates or documentary evidence in the Convention which authorize the holder to serve in certain functions on board ships. The certificates are subject to the requirements of regulation 1/2 regarding language and their availability in original form. The list also references the relevant regulations and the requirements for endorsement and registration (regulation 1/9).

Regulations	Certificate or documentary evidence (brief description)	Endorsement required	Registration required*
II/1, II/2 II/3 III/1, III/2, III/3, IV/2, V/1, VII/2	appropriate certificates for Master, officers and radio personnel	yes	yes
II/4, III/4	ratings duly certificated to be a part of a navigational or engine room watch	no	yes** as appropriate
V/1	“ratings assigned to specific duties...on tankers	no	yes** as appropriate
V/2	“training requirements for personnel serving on ro-ro passenger ships”	no	no
VI/2	“a certificate of proficiency in survival craft, rescue boats... and fast rescue boats”	no	no
VI/3	“training in advanced fire fighting”	no	no
VI/4	“training relating to medical first aid and medical care”	no	no

* Records of all certificates should be maintained in accordance with regulation 1/9, paragraph 4.

** The Party issuing or endorsing the certificate is responsible for maintaining a register or registers in accordance with regulation 1/9.4.1. However, records may be maintained by an agency or entity acting under its authority.

Summary of requirements

Note: The certificate(s) a seafarer needs to hold depends on the function(s) and level of responsibility held on board. The table below is just a guide indicating what are the likely certificates required by rank according to common shipboard work practices. To find out the exact requirements that apply, readers are strongly advised to refer to section 2 in this guide, to the STCW Convention and to the maritime Administrations of both the country issuing the certificate(s) and, if different, of the flag State of the ship where the seafarer intends to work.

			Officers								Ratings								Others							
			deck				engine				deck				engine				catering		others					
category	STCW-95 title	STCW-78 title	Master	Chief officer	Officer of the watch	Radio Operator	Chief engineer	Second engineer	Officer of the watch	Electrical engineer	Cadet (deck/engine)	Bosun	AB	OS/GP/welder	Deckboy/trainee	Electrician	Pumpman	Fitter/Mechanic	Oiler/motorman	Wiper	D/E utility/ trainee	Chief steward / purser	Cook/2nd cook	Steward/messboy	All personnel providing direct service to passengers	
main certificate	Certificate of competency	Same title	*	*	*	A	*	*	*																	
	Endorsement	Same title	*	*	*		*	*	*																	
	Watchkeeping certificate for ratings	New requirement											*						*							
	Endorsement of recognition (if on foreign flag)	New requirement	*	*	*	*	*	*	*																	
	Medical fitness certificate	Medical certificate	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	
catering	Certificate of qualification as cook	Same title																				*				
basic safety training evidence	Personal survival techniques	Basic sea survival	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	
	Fire fighting	2 days fire fighting	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	
	Elementary first aid	Basic first aid	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	
	Personal safety and social responsibility	New requirement	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	
familiarisation	Ship-specific familiarisation	New requirement	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*		
personnel assigned with other safety functions	Proficiency in survival craft and rescue boat	CPSC lifeboat	*	*	*	D	*	*	*		D	*	*													
	Fast rescue boat	Fast rescue boat	D	D	D		D	D	D			D	D													
	Advanced fire fighting	4 day firefighting	D	D	D		D	D	D																	
	Medical first aid	First aid at sea			*		*	*	*																	
	Medical care	Ship captain's medical	*	*																						
ARPA, RADAR, GMDSS	ARPA (if fitted)	New (simulator training)	*	*	*																					
	Radar	New (simulator training)	*	*	*																					
	GMDSS-ROC or GOC - (see note)	New requirement	*	*	*	*																				
personnel on tankers	Shore-based fire-fighting course	New requirement		*	*		*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*					
	Tanker familiarisation (or 3 months approved service on tankers)	Same title		*	*		*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*					
	Tanker specialised	Same title	*	*	*		*	*																		
	COW (if fitted)	Same title	*	*	*		*	*	*			*					*	*								
	Chemical tanker	Same title	*	*	*		*	*																		
	Liquefied gas tanker	Same title	*	*	*		*	*																		
personnel on ro-ro passenger ships	Crowd management	New requirement	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D		D						D	D	D	D	
	Familiarisation training ro-ro	New requirement	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*														D	
	Safety training	New requirement																						*	*	
	Passenger safety, cargo safety, hull integrity	New requirement	*	*			*	*				*														D
	Crisis management and human behaviour	New requirement	*	*			*	*																		D
personnel on passenger ships other than ro-ro	Crowd management	New requirement	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D		D						D	D	D	D	
	Familiarisation training	New requirement	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*														D	
	Safety training	New requirement																						*	*	
	Passenger safety	New requirement	*	*			*	*																		D
	Crisis management and human behaviour	New requirement	*	*			*	*																		D
training	Training record book	New requirement								*																

Key: * = compulsory requirement ; **D** = if designated with specific function; **A** (radio operator): radio personnel on non-GMDSS ships need to hold certificates as per the Radio Regulations.

GMDSS: compulsory if serving on a ship required to participate in GMDSS.