



Merchant Shipping Directorate



IMPLEMENTATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION ON STANDARDS OF TRAINING, CERTIFICATION AND WATCHKEEPING FOR SEAFARERS, AS AMENDED

Merchant Shipping Notice 109 Rev.1

Notice to Shipowners, Ship Operators, Managers, Masters, Owners' Representatives and Recognised Organisations

This notice revokes MS Notices No. 19, 30 and 84.

The Merchant Shipping Directorate is issuing the revised Merchant Shipping Notice to reflect the adoption of the Seafarer Portal as the sole direct link to apply for seafarer documentation: <https://seafarers.transport.gov.mt>

Furthermore, the revised notice updates certain requirements that were introduced through the 2010 amendments to the STCW Convention (Manila Amendments). The amendments were transposed into the Laws of Malta, through the Merchant Shipping (Training and Certification) Regulations, 2013 (L.N 153 of 2013).

The revised Regulations contain numerous requirements and it is not the intention of this Notice to describe in detail the provisions of the revised Convention or to list the obligations of companies. It is to be noted that all existing certificates of competency and certificates of proficiency issued in accordance with STCW 78, as amended, shall remain valid up to their expiry date but not later than **31 December 2016**.

Certificate of Competency (Deck)

The revised Convention introduced a new requirement for deck officers engaged onboard ECDIS equipped ships to be in possession of an ECDIS training certificate.

All deck officers requiring revalidation of Maltese certificates of competency need to present an approved Generic ECDIS Certificate to be able to sail on board ECDIS equipped ships after 31 December 2016. Officers who do not hold an ECDIS training certificate will be issued with a certificate of competency stating *“Not valid on vessels equipped with ECDIS from the 1 January 2017”*.

Officers may be re-issued with a re-validated certificate of competency without ECDIS limitations upon submitting an approved Generic ECDIS Training Certificate.

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Tanker Training

Seafarers engaged on tankers shall be in possession of a valid tanker certificate and/or endorsement. For revalidation of an existing tanker certificate, seafarers are to present approved seagoing service of at least 3 months in total in the preceding 5 years.

In order to be issued with a new tanker certificate including basic tanker training certificate and/or advanced tanker training certificate, seafarers shall present the course completion certificate issued by a maritime training institution approved by the Directorate.

Moreover, seafarers to be issued with an advanced tanker training certificate shall also submit evidence of 3 months approved seagoing service performed on relevant tankers, whilst holding a valid basic tanker training certificate.

Applications for the issue of any Tanker Certificate are to be submitted through the Seafarer Portal <https://seafarers.transport.gov.mt>

Online applications shall be accompanied by those documents prescribed in the Seafarer Portal and are to be uploaded in their respective areas.

Revalidation Requirements

For the purpose of revalidating a certificate of competency, continued professional competence as required in terms of STCW I/11 shall be established by:

1. approved seagoing service, performing functions appropriate to the certificate held, for a period of at least:
 - 1.1. twelve months in total during the preceding five years, or
 - 1.2. three months in total during the preceding six months immediately prior to revalidating; or
2. having performed functions considered to be equivalent in the seagoing service required in paragraph 1.1; or
3. passing an approved test; or
4. successfully completing an approved training course or courses; or
5. having completed approved seagoing service, performing functions appropriate to the certificate held, for a period of not less than three months in a supernumerary capacity, or in



a lower officer rank than that for which the certificate held is valid immediately prior to taking up the rank for which it is valid.

Applications for revalidating a certificate of competency, made within 6 months prior to the certificate's expiry date can be revalidated for 5 years from the original expiry date.

Security Related Training

The revised STCW Convention requires that as from 1 January 2014, all persons employed or engaged onboard ships to which the ISPS Code applies shall be in possession of security related training certification. The 2010 amendments introduce three tiers of security training:

Security Related Familiarization

All persons engaged in any capacity on ISPS compliant ships shall follow security related familiarisation training before being assigned any shipboard duty. The training may be delivered by the Ship Security Officer or by any other equally qualified person as part of the safety familiarisation training required in terms of the ISM Code.

Documentary evidence should be readily available onboard to show that such training has been undertaken.

Certificate of Proficiency in Security Awareness

All seafarers engaged in any capacity onboard an ISPS compliant ship shall be in possession of a Certificate of Proficiency in Security-Awareness.

Certificate of Proficiency in Designated Security Duties

Seafarers with designated security duties, including anti-piracy and anti-armed-robbery related activities, engaged in any capacity onboard an ISPS compliant ship, shall be in possession of a Certificate of Proficiency in Designated Security Duties.

In order to be issued with a Certificate of Proficiency in Security Awareness or Designated Security Duties an applicant shall meet the standard of competence for certification of proficiency in security awareness or designated security duties as set out in Section A-VI/6, paragraph 4 or Section A-VI/6, paragraphs 6 of the STCW Code.



Certificate of Proficiency as Ship Security Officer

The Directorate would like to remind all concerned that Ship Security Officers serving on board ships are required to be in possession of a Certificate of Proficiency issued in accordance with Regulation VI/5 of the STCW Convention.

In order to be issued with a Certificate of Proficiency as Ship Security Officer an applicant shall:

- have approved seagoing service of not less than 12 months or appropriate seagoing service and knowledge of ship operations; and
- meet the standard of competence for certification of proficiency as ship security officer as set out in Section A-VI/5, paragraphs 1 to 4 of the STCW Code.

Applications for the issue of a Certificate of Proficiency are to be submitted through the Seafarer Portal <https://seafarers.transport.gov.mt>

Online applications shall be accompanied by those documents prescribed in the Seafarer Portal and are to be uploaded in their respective areas.

Certificates of Proficiency

In addition to the certificates of proficiency issued in relation to security related duties, the following certificates of proficiency will be issued to seafarers in possession of valid training certificates issued by a training centre that is approved by the Directorate:

Certificate of Proficiency in Basic Safety Training (STCW Regulation VI/1)

All seafarers engaged in any capacity as part of the ship's complement with designated safety or pollution prevention duties shall, before being assigned to any shipboard duties, be in possession of a Certificate of Proficiency in Basic Safety Training.

In order to be issued with a Certificate of Proficiency in Basic Safety Training an applicant shall receive safety familiarization and basic training or instruction in accordance with Section A-VI/1 of the STCW Code and shall meet the appropriate standard of competence specified therein.

Applications for the issue of a Certificate of Proficiency are to be submitted through the Seafarer Portal <https://seafarers.transport.gov.mt>



Online applications shall be accompanied by those documents prescribed in the Seafarer Portal and are to be uploaded in their respective areas.

Certificate of Proficiency in Survival Craft and Rescue Boats other than Fast Rescue Boats (STCW Regulation VI/2-1)

Every candidate for a Certificate of Proficiency in Survival Craft and Rescue Boats other than Fast Rescue Boats shall be required to demonstrate competence to undertake the tasks, duties and responsibilities listed in column 1 of table A-VI/2-1 of the STCW Code.

In order to be issued with a Certificate of Proficiency in PSCRB an applicant must:

- be not less than 18 years of age;
- have approved seagoing service of not less than 12 months or have attended an approved training course and have approved seagoing service of not less than 6 months; and
- meet the standard of competence for certificates of proficiency in survival craft and rescue boats, set out in section A-VI/2 paragraph 1-4 of the STCW Code.

Applications for the issue of a Certificate of Proficiency are to be submitted through the Seafarer Portal <https://seafarers.transport.gov.mt>

Online applications shall be accompanied by those documents prescribed in the Seafarer Portal and are to be uploaded in their respective areas.

Certificate of Proficiency in Fast Rescue Boats (STCW Regulation VI/2-2)

Every candidate for a Certificate of Proficiency in Fast Rescue Boats shall be required to demonstrate competence to undertake the tasks, duties and responsibilities listed in column 1 of table A-VI/2-2 of the STCW Code.

In order to be issued with a Certificate of Proficiency in Fast Rescue Boats an applicant must:

- be the holder of a certificate of proficiency in survival craft and rescue boats other than fast rescue boats;
- have attended an approved training course; and



- meet the standard of competence for certificates of proficiency in fast rescue boats, set out in section A-VI/2 paragraph 7-10 of the STCW Code.

Applications for the issue of a Certificate of Proficiency are to be submitted through the Seafarer Portal <https://seafarers.transport.gov.mt>

Online applications shall be accompanied by those documents prescribed in the Seafarer Portal and are to be uploaded in their respective areas.

Certificate of Proficiency in Advanced Fire Fighting (STCW Regulation VI/3)

Seafarers designated with fire-fighting operations shall have successfully completed advanced training in fire fighting techniques with particular emphasis on organisation tactics and command, in accordance with the provisions of Section A-VI/3, paragraphs 1-4 of the STCW Code.

Applications for the issue of a Certificate of Proficiency are to be submitted through the Seafarer Portal <https://seafarers.transport.gov.mt>

Online applications shall be accompanied by those documents prescribed in the Seafarer Portal and are to be uploaded in their respective areas.

Certificate of Proficiency in Medical First Aid (STCW Regulation VI/4-1)

Seafarers designated with Medical First Aid duties shall meet the standard of competence in Medical First Aid specified in Section A-VI/4, paragraphs 1-3 of the STCW Code.

Applications for the issue of a Certificate of Proficiency are to be submitted through the Seafarer Portal <https://seafarers.transport.gov.mt>

Online applications shall be accompanied by those documents prescribed in the Seafarer Portal and are to be uploaded in their respective areas.



Certificate of Proficiency in Medical Care (STCW Regulation VI/4-2)

Seafarers designated with Medical Care duties shall meet the standard of competence in Medical Care on board ships specified in Section A-VI/4, paragraphs 4-6 of the STCW Code.

Applications for the issue of a Certificate of Proficiency are to be submitted through the Seafarer Portal <https://seafarers.transport.gov.mt>

Online applications shall be accompanied by those documents prescribed in the Seafarer Portal and are to be uploaded in their respective areas.

Recognition of Certificates of Proficiency

This Administration may recognise valid Certificates of Proficiency issued by either:

1. a Party to the STCW Convention; or
2. a Maritime Training Centre authorised by a Party to the STCW Convention.

Refresher Training Requirements

The 2010 Amendments to the STCW Convention introduced the requirement to undertake refresher training in respect of certain Certificates of Proficiency.

To this effect, seafarers in possession of any of the above mentioned certificates of proficiency that require refresher training shall provide documentary evidence every 5 years of having maintained the prescribed standard of competence to undertake the tasks duties and responsibilities specified in the above mentioned tables. The Administration may accept documentary evidence of approved on board training and experience, as proof of refresher training.

Seafarers submitting their certificate of competency for revalidation after 1 January 2017 will be required to submit documentary evidence of having completed approved refresher training.



Watch Rating Certification

All ratings forming part of a navigational or an engineering watch shall be duly certified as meeting the minimum standard of competence specified in the relative Sections A-II/4 and A-III/4 of the STCW Code.

In order to be issued with a Deck or Engine Watch Rating Certificate an applicant must:

- be 16 years of age;
- have completed:
 - approved seagoing service including not less than 6 months of training and experience, or
 - special training either pre-sea or on board ship including an approved period of seagoing service which shall not be less than 2 months; and
- meet the standard of competence specified in section A-II/4 or A-III/4 of the STCW Code.

This Administration may recognise valid Watch Rating Certificates issued by other administrations that are Party to the STCW Convention, for service onboard Maltese ships.

Applications for the issue of a Watch Rating Certificate are to be submitted through the Seafarer Portal <https://seafarers.transport.gov.mt>

Online applications shall be accompanied by those documents prescribed in the Seafarer Portal and are to be uploaded in their respective areas.

Electro-Technical Ratings

Regulation III/7 of the revised Convention requires that every Electro-Technical Rating serving on a seagoing ship powered by main propulsion machinery of 750 kW propulsion power or more, shall be duly certified as meeting the minimum standard of competence specified in the relative Section A-III/7 of the STCW Code.

In order to be issued with an Electro-Technical Rating Certificate an applicant must:

- be 18 years of age;
- have completed:



- (i) Approved seagoing service including not less than 12 months of training and experience, or
- (ii) Completed approved training pre-sea or on board ship including an approved period of seagoing service which shall not be less than 6 months; and
 - meet the standard of competence specified in section A-III/7 of the STCW Code.

This Administration may recognise Electro-Technical Rating Certificates issued by other administrations that are Party to the STCW Convention for service onboard Maltese ships.

Applications for the issue of an Electro-Technical Rating Certificate are to be submitted through the Seafarer Portal <https://seafarers.transport.gov.mt>

Online applications shall be accompanied by those documents prescribed in the Seafarer Portal and are to be uploaded in their respective areas.

Able Seafarer certification

The 2010 amendments to the STCW Convention have introduced minimum requirements for certification of ratings as Able Seafarer Deck and Able Seafarer Engine. These new competences were previously regulated by ILO Able Seamen Convention 1946. This Administration will continue to recognise A.B. Certificates issued prior to the entry into force of the 2010 amendments until the 31 December 2016.

Conversion of A.B. Certificates into Able Seafarer Certificates

A.B. Certificates may be converted into Able Seafarer certificates by submitting the following to the Directorate:

- A.B. Certificate issued prior to the 2010 Amendments
- Proof of Identification showing personal details of applicant as per those entered on the Seafarer Portal (passport, identity card or seaman's book)
- Passport size photograph in full colour
- Basic Courses as per Regulation VI/1
- PSCRB Certificate as per Regulation VI/2 (applicable for Able Seafarer Deck certificate)
- Documentary evidence of 12 months approved seagoing service in the previous 5 years



- Declaration by Master or Chief Engineer attesting where the seagoing service was performed (Deck or Engine)
- Medical Fitness Certificate (ILO/IMO)
- Relative fee

Requirements for the issue of an Able Seafarer Deck Certificate

In order to be issued with an Able Seafarer Deck Certificate an applicant must:

- be 18 years of age;
- meet the requirements for certification as a rating forming part of a navigational watch;
- while qualified to serve as a rating forming part of a navigational watch have approved seagoing service in the deck department of:
 - not less than 18 months, or
 - not less than 12 months and have completed approved training; and
- meet the standard of competence specified in section A-II/5 of the STCW Code

This Administration may recognise Able Seafarer Deck Certificates issued by other administrations that are Party to the STCW Convention.

Applications for the issue of an Able Seafarer Deck Certificate are to be submitted through the Seafarer Portal <https://seafarers.transport.gov.mt>

Online applications shall be accompanied by those documents prescribed in the Seafarer Portal and are to be uploaded in their respective areas.

Requirements for the issue of an Able Seafarer Engine Certificate

In order to be issued with an Able Seafarer Engine Certificate an applicant must:

- be 18 years of age;
- meet the requirements for certification as a rating forming part of an engineering watch;



- while qualified to serve as a rating forming part of an engineering watch have approved seagoing service in the engine department of:
 - not less than 12 months, or
 - not less than 6 months and have completed approved training; and
- meet the standard of competence specified in section A-III/5 of the STCW Code

This Administration may recognise Able Seafarer Engine Certificates issued by other administrations that are Party to the STCW Convention.

Applications for the issue of an Able Seafarer Engine Certificate are to be submitted through the Seafarer Portal <https://seafarers.transport.gov.mt>

Online applications shall be accompanied by those documents prescribed in the Seafarer Portal and are to be uploaded in their respective areas.

Efficient deck hand certification

The Merchant Shipping (Training and Certification) Regulations, 2013 have incorporated the Efficient Deck Hand certification, previously regulated by the Merchant Shipping (A.B. and EDH Certificates) Regulations, 2001.

Requirements for the issue of an Efficient Deck Hand Certificate

In order to be issued with an Efficient Deck Hand Certificate an applicant must:

- be 17 years of age;
- is in possession of valid Basic Courses as per Regulation VI/1;
- has obtained a navigational watch rating certificate or holds a steering certificate;
- has obtained a 12 month period of approved sea going service in the deck department; and
- meets the standard of competence as per the Third Schedule of the Merchant Shipping (Training and Certification) Regulations, 2013.



This Administration may recognise Efficient Deck Hand Certificates issued by other administrations that are Party to the STCW Convention.

Applications for the issue of an Efficient Deck Hand Certificate are to be submitted through the Seafarer Portal <https://seafarers.transport.gov.mt>

Online applications shall be accompanied by those documents prescribed in the Seafarer Portal and are to be uploaded in their respective areas.

Responsibilities of companies

Regulation I/14 requires companies (ship-owners, ship operators and managers and bareboat charterers) should ensure that:

1. each seafarer assigned to any of its ships holds an appropriate certificate in accordance with the provisions of the Convention and as established by the Administration;
2. its ships are manned in compliance with the applicable safe manning requirements of the Administration;
3. seafarers assigned to any of its ships have received refresher and updating training as required by the Convention;
4. documentation and data relevant to all seafarers employed on its ships are maintained and readily accessible, and include, without being limited to, documentation and data on their experience, training, medical fitness and competency in assigned duties;
5. seafarers, on being assigned to any of its ships, are familiarized with their specific duties and with all ship arrangements, installations, equipment, procedures and ship characteristics that are relevant to their routine or emergency duties;
6. seafarers, in a management capacity prior to being assigned duties on board their vessels, have appropriate knowledge and access to Maltese maritime legislation.
7. the ship's complement can effectively coordinate their activities in an emergency situation and in performing functions vital to safety, security and to the prevention or mitigation of pollution; and
8. at all times on board its ships there shall be effective oral communication in accordance with chapter V, regulation 14, paragraphs 3 and 4 of the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea, 1974 (SOLAS), as amended.



Drug and Alcohol Policy

Reg.VIII-1 of the revised STCW Convention sets a blood alcohol limit of 0.05% and a limit of 0.25 mg/l alcohol in the breath. These limits apply to masters, officers and other seafarers whilst on duty and for all seafarers who by the nature or terms of their engagement or employment might be required to take action in cases of emergency. The abuse of drugs is strictly prohibited. Prescription and non-prescription medicines should always be used with caution.

Additional Information

It is essential to ensure that the detailed requirements of the revised STCW Convention are met at all times to avoid unnecessary delays to ships. Since the 2010 Amendments to the STCW Convention have introduced a substantial number of new requirements for the shipping industry, companies are encouraged to keep abreast of developments connected to the implementation of the revised Convention.

Finally, this Directorate welcomes any response, particularly from companies and ship managers, regarding experiences in relation to the implementation of this Convention.

All enquiries related to the matter and the application of the STCW Convention, should be addressed to this Directorate on stcw.tm@transport.gov.mt

Merchant Shipping Directorate

10 April 2023