



Training & Certification Guidance: UK Requirements for Engine Room Ratings

Notice to all Owners, Masters, Officers, Ratings and those concerned with maritime training.

This notice replaces MSN 1863 (M+F)

This Notice includes guidance for seafarers. It also contains requirements that training providers must meet for the purposes of approval by the Secretary of State under the Merchant Shipping (Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping) Regulations 2022.

Summary

This Merchant Shipping Notice (MSN) sets out and explains regulatory requirements regarding the implementation of training elements applicable under Chapter III/4 and III/5 of the Standards of Training Certification and Watchkeeping (STCW) Convention and Code, leading to Certificates of Proficiency (CoP) under regulations 18 and 20 in the Merchant Shipping (Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping) Regulations 2022. It outlines the qualifying conditions for obtaining an Engine Room Watch Rating (ERWR) and an Able Seafarer Engine Certificate of Proficiency (CoP).

This MSN covers:

1. Introduction
2. Mandatory Requirements for an Engine Room Watch Rating Certificate of Proficiency
3. Mandatory Requirements for an Able Seafarer Engine Certificate of Proficiency
4. Seagoing Service Requirements
5. Seagoing Service Required Documentary Evidence
6. Medical Fitness and Eyesight Standards
7. Ancillary and Safety Course Certification
8. Mandatory Minimum Requirements for Ratings
9. MCA-Approved Companies issuing Engine Room Watch Rating
10. General Purpose (GP) Ratings

The Annexes of this MSN cover:

- A. Record of Training for the issue of Engine Room Watch Rating Certificates of Proficiency under STCW Convention
- B. List of Competent Officers
- C. Maritime Coastguard Agency (MCA) Certificate of Discharge
- D. Engine Room Watch Rating - Testimonial
- E. Engine Room Watch Rating Certificate of Proficiency



1. Introduction

1.1 The Merchant Shipping (Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping) Regulations 2022 (“the 2022 Regulations”), implement the requirements of the International Convention and Code on Standards of Training, Certification and Watch-keeping (STCW) 1978¹ (referred to in this MSN as the ‘STCW Convention’ and ‘STCW Code’ respectively), including the provisions prescribing the mandatory minimum requirements for Engine Room Watch Rating and Able Seafarer Engine Certificates of Proficiency (CoP). This Notice explains the training requirements in order to comply with chapters III/4 and III/5 of the STCW Convention (regulations 18 and 20 of the 2022 Regulations), and a reference in this Notice to the 2022 Regulations is a reference to the Regulations as amended.

1.2 Every Rating forming part of an engine room watch, or with designated duties to perform in a periodically unmanned engine room, on a seagoing ship powered by main propulsion machinery of 750kW propulsion power or more, must be certificated to perform such duties.

1.3 To obtain a United Kingdom (UK) Rating Certificate of Proficiency (CoP) you must:

- Meet the minimum age requirements;
- Complete the minimum period of seagoing service;
- Undertake ancillary technical and safety training;
- Complete the appropriate programme(s) of education and training;
- Meet medical standards (including eyesight).

If you are considering a seagoing career it is strongly advised that you undergo a medical and sight test, which includes testing of colour and visual acuity, before starting training. Please refer to section 6 of this Notice.

1.4 Prior to joining your first Merchant Navy ship for your first sea voyage you will need to hold the following certificates²;

- A valid ENG1 (medical fitness certificate) or accepted equivalent³;
- Personal Survival Techniques (STCW Code – Table A-VI/1-1);
- Fire Prevention and Fire Fighting (STCW Code – Table A-VI/1-2);
- Elementary First Aid (STCW Code – Table A-VI/1-3);
- Personal Safety and Social Responsibilities (STCW Code – Table A-VI/1-4);
- Security Awareness (STCW Code Table A-VI/6-1)⁴.

2. Mandatory Requirements for an Engine Room Watch Rating Certificate of Proficiency

¹ The 2022 Regulations revoked and replaced the previous regulations, the Merchant Shipping (Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping) Regulations 2015 (SI 2015/782).

² As required by Section A-VI/1 of the STCW Code, if you are employed or engaged in any capacity onboard a ship with designated safety or pollution-prevention duties, before being assigned to any shipboard tasks you will be required to successfully complete those elements of STCW basic training which are appropriate to your duties and functions.

³ Details of MCA Approved Medical Certificates are available from www.gov.uk/seafarer-medical-certificates.

⁴ If you are to serve on ships to which the International Ship and Port Facility (ISPS) Code applies you must hold a Security Awareness certificate (STCW Code Table A-VI/6-1, and Section A-VI/6, paragraph 4). If you are assigned designated security duties aboard a vessel you must obtain a Designated Security Duties certificate (STCW Code Table A-VI/6-2 and Section A-VI/6, paragraph 6 to 8). Please refer to MSN 1865 (Amendment 1): www.gov.uk/government/publications/msn-1865-m-amendment-1-uk-requirements-for-emergency-occupational-safety-security-medical-care-and-survival-functions.



2.1 To qualify for an Engine Room Watch Rating (ERWR) CoP, STCW A-III/4, you must:

- (a) Be at least 16 years old;
- (b) Have at least 6 months' seagoing service on vessels⁵ with at least 350kW in propulsion power; this seagoing service can be reduced to 2 months with 'special training' i.e. when following an Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) approved or accepted education and training programme;
- (c) Have completed the basic safety training;
 - Personal Survival Techniques (STCW Code – Table A-VI/1-1);
 - Fire Prevention and Fire Fighting (STCW Code – Table A-VI/1-2);
 - Elementary First Aid (STCW Code – Table A-VI/1-3);
 - Personal Safety and Social Responsibilities (STCW Code – Table A-VI/1-4);
- (d) Have completed the ERWR (**Annex A**) training record book or the relevant section of the MCA Training Record Book (TRB);
- (e) Hold a valid ENG1 (medical fitness certificate) or accepted equivalent.

2.2 If you think your previously gained engineering qualifications and training (Engineering apprenticeships, Royal Navy engineering qualifications and service or engineering qualifications and training) meets the MCA standard and requirements, you can apply to the MCA for assessment. This may lead to a reduction of your required sea service to 2 months. If this applies to you, then you should email the MCA with documentary evidence: engineering@mcga.gov.uk.

2.3 If you hold a Motorman or non-STCW ERWR Certificate and have appropriate seagoing service in the engineering department, of either:

- 6 months' seagoing service within the last 5 years; **or**
- 3 months' seagoing service within the last year.

You can complete the basic safety training to upgrade to an ERWR CoP, STCW Code A-III/4.

2.4 You can obtain an ERWR CoP from an MCA approved company (see section 9) or you can apply directly to the MCA.

2.5 To apply directly to the MCA for an ERWR CoP, STCW A-III/4, you will need to complete application form MSF 4371 and submit it to the MCA with all the evidence listed in section 2.1.⁶ For further information please refer to the MCA website: go to www.gov.uk and search for "Engine room ratings" or "MSF 4371" for the application form.⁷

3. Mandatory Requirements for an Able Seafarer Engine Certificate of Proficiency

3.1 To qualify for an Able Seafarer Engine CoP, STCW A-III/5, you must:

- (a) Be at least 18 years old;
- (b) Meet the requirements for certification as a UK Engine Room Watch Rating under the STCW Convention regulations III/4;
- (c) While qualified to serve as a UK Engine Room Watch Rating, complete either:

⁵ "Vessels" include yachts, fishing vessels, tugs, workboats and Royal Navy vessels which have suitable engine room spaces in which the duties of an ERWR can be performed and the ERWR TRB can be completed.

⁶ The applicable fee will be stated on the application form.

⁷ MSF 4371: www.gov.uk/government/publications/watch-rating-certificates-msf-4371



- At least 6 months' seagoing service on vessels with at least 350kW in propulsion power and approved training. The approved training can be the attainment of a Diploma in Maritime Studies Able Seafarer Engine Room (MSQ/MSA); **or**
- 12 months' seagoing service as a rating on vessels with at least 350kW in propulsion power and pass an MCA approved Engine Course;

- (d) Complete the relevant sections of the MCA approved TRB while serving on board;
 (e) Hold a valid ENG1 (medical fitness certificate) or accepted equivalent.

3.2 Applications for an Able Seafarer Engine CoP, Regulation III/5, will be administered from your local Marine Office. Please refer to the MCA website for contact details, search www.gov.uk for "Marine Office".⁸

4. Seagoing Service Requirements

4.1 Seagoing service may be performed on vessels of any flag.

4.2 Approved 'seagoing service' is the time that you are signed on a vessel of more than 15m in registered length operating in category C and D waters or beyond. Seagoing service will be reckoned from the date of engagement to the date of discharge. A month is defined as a calendar month or 30 days if made up of periods of less than 1 month.

4.3 Seagoing service must be in the engine department on vessels with at least 350kW in propulsion power and will be reckoned from the date of engagement to the date of discharge. Your qualifying seagoing service must have been performed within the 5 years immediately preceding the date your application is received by the MCA. Seagoing service in category C and D waters will be accepted at full rate.

4.4 At least 75% of the required seagoing service must be performed while the vessel is underway on sea passage, the remaining 25% can be in lay-up, dry-dock, at anchorage and in port. The 75% seagoing service (steaming time) will be calculated from the sea service testimonials.

5. Seagoing Service Required Documentary Evidence

5.1 You are required to prove the full amount of qualifying seagoing service for the relevant certificate.

5.2 Documentary proof of seagoing service for each certificate must be in either a Merchant Navy discharge book or certificates of discharge (**Annex C**). Entries must be supported by testimonials (**Annex D**) from the Master or Chief Engineer. In exceptional circumstances your testimonial may be signed by a responsible superintendent at your company.

6. Medical Fitness and Eyesight Standards

6.1 For any Certificate of Competency (CoC) or CoP, you must meet the medical fitness and eyesight standards as required by the Merchant Shipping (Maritime Labour Convention)

⁸ MCA UK Marine Office Contact Details: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/maritime-and-coastguard-agency/about/access-and-opening



(Medical Certification) Regulations 2010 (S.I. 2010/737)⁹. Details on the application of those regulations are found in MSN 1886.¹⁰

6.2 The seafarer medical examination includes a sight test for both colour vision and visual acuity. Failure to meet the statutory requirements will mean that an unrestricted medical certificate cannot be issued. **If you are considering a seagoing career it is strongly advised that you undergo a medical or sight test, which includes testing of both colour and visual acuity, before you start the training.** You can arrange a separate sight test with a local optometrist by taking along an Application for Seafarer Vision Test Form (MSF 4100). The form can be obtained by contacting an MCA Marine Office or the MCA Seafarer Medical Team: medical@mca.gov.uk.

6.3 For any ERWR or Able Seafarer Engine CoP application you must produce a valid medical fitness certificate, either:

- (a) The UK medical fitness certificate, currently known as an ENG1, issued by a MCA approved medical practitioner; **or**
- (b) A certificate issued by the administration of any country whose medical fitness certificate is recognised as equivalent to the UK ENG1.

Updated lists are available from the MCA website.

6.4 The medical fitness certificate must specify the date of examination, the period of validity and any restriction placed on the use of the certificate.

7. Ancillary and Safety Course Certification

7.1 The ancillary training courses that are required by the STCW Convention for the issue of each certificate are contained in the table below. The ancillary technical courses form part of the education and training specified in sections; A-II/1, A-II/2 or A-II/3 of the STCW Code. The safety courses form part of mandatory training for; emergency, occupational safety, security, medical care and survival functions specified in chapter A-VI of the STCW Code.

7.2 You must successfully complete all the required ancillary safety training applicable to your certificate.

Certificate & Regulation				
Ancillary Course Certificate	Rating III/4	Able Seafarer III/5	STCW Code Reference	Updating required
Personal Survival Techniques	Yes	Yes	A-V1/1-1	•
Fire Prevention and Fire Fighting	Yes	Yes	A-VI/1-2	•
Elementary First Aid	Yes	Yes	A-V1/1-3	
Personal Safety and Social Responsibility	Yes	Yes	A-V1/1-4	

⁹ These Regulations are amended by the Merchant Shipping (Maritime Labour Convention) (Medical Certification) Regulations 2018 (S.I. 2018/242). Further details on the required Medical Fitness Standards and Certification are available from: www.legislation.gov.uk and search "Maritime Labour Convention".

¹⁰ Details of MCA Approved Medical Certificates are available from: www.gov.uk/seafarer-medical-certificates.



- You will be required to provide documentary evidence of either completing the training course or updating your training within the preceding 5 years for all Engine Room Watch Rating and Able Seafarer Engine applications. To satisfy Port State Control requirements you will need to hold evidence onboard your vessel of completing or updating your training within the last 5 years. For further information relating to STCW course certificates, including their validity, please refer to MSN 1865 (Amendment 1)¹¹.

7.3 If you are to serve on ships to which the International Ship and Port Facility (ISPS) Code applies, you must undertake approved security awareness training. Training and instructions must meet the requirements of Section A-VI/6, paragraph 4 of the STCW Code, and STCW Code Table A-VI/6-1 and lead to a CoP in Security Awareness. If you have designated security duties under the Ship Security Plan, you must undertake approved training in designated security duties. This training must meet the requirements of Section A-VI/6, paragraphs 6-8 of the STCW Code, and STCW Code Table A-VI/6-2 and lead to issue of a CoP in Designated Security Duties.

8. Mandatory Minimum Requirements for Ratings

8.1 Trainee ratings must be at least 16 years of age. All ratings, including trainee ratings, must successfully complete approved familiarisation training in Personal Survival Techniques before being assigned to shipboard duties. Ship owners and operators must ensure that all those employed on their ships are, on joining, given familiarisation training in emergency duties, routine duties and functions for the safe operation of the ship and the protection of the marine environment.

8.2 Each task of the training programme must be signed off by an engineer officer holding an appropriate UK CoC or UK Flag State Endorsement (FSE)/Certificate of Equivalent Competency (CEC). Any officer signing off a task must record their details in the 'List of Competent Officers' (please see **Annex B**). A task will only be considered complete if the signing off signature matches with the name on the list.

9. MCA Approved Companies

9.1 UK shipping companies can issue ERWR CoP on behalf of the MCA if they hold a UK Document of Compliance. The ERWR trainee must be working onboard one of the shipping companies UK-registered vessels.

9.2 UK companies must apply to the MCA for approval to issue ERWR Certificates. Companies to which the International Safety Management Code applies must be in full compliance before issuing ERWR Certificates; these must be in the approved format shown in **Annex E**. Applications should be addressed to the MCA, Seafarer Services Branch, at the address given in the 'More Information' section on page 8.

9.3 In their application, companies must demonstrate they have adequate arrangements for training and assessing watchkeeping ratings and they employ an acceptable quality control system. Companies will also be required to provide details of any special training they may propose to give in the case of the requirements at paragraph 9.4 below. Any approved special training may be undertaken either ashore or onboard and may form part of a pre-sea training programme.

9.4 To become an approved shipping company for the issue of Engine Room Watch Rating CoP, you must apply to the MCA providing details of:

¹¹ For further information please refer to MSN 1865 (Amendment 1): www.gov.uk/government/publications/msn-1865-m-amendment-1-uk-requirements-for-emergency-occupational-safety-security-medical-care-and-survival-functions.



- (a) Adequate arrangements for training and assessing watchkeeping ratings;
- (b) An acceptable quality control system;
- (c) Any special training proposals. Special training may be undertaken either ashore or on board and may form part of a pre-sea training programme. MCA approval will be subject to periodic review and evaluation and may be withdrawn if the MCA's requirements are not met;
- (d) Certificates issued which must be in the approved format shown at **Annex E**.

9.5 MCA approval will be subject to periodic review and evaluation.

9.6 A copy of each certificate issued must be forwarded for registration to the MCA as soon as possible after the issue of the original to the rating. The company must also maintain full records of all certificates issued to enable questions on validity to be answered and checks to be made.

9.7 An approved company may issue an ERWR CoP to you if you are at least 16 years old and have met the requirements listed in section 2.1.

9.8 All STCW short course ancillary training must be approved by the MCA or an administration recognised by the MCA.

9.9 The table below summarises the safety training which must be completed by:

- Trainee Ratings before they start training; **and**
- Experienced Ratings who need an ERWR CoP.

Safety Training Description	STCW Code Reference	Trainee	Watch Rating Certificate of Proficiency
Shipboard Familiarisation Training	Chapter A-VI/1-1	Yes	Yes ²
STCW Basic Training – Personal Survival Techniques	Table AVI/1-1	Yes ¹	Yes
STCW Basic Training – Personal Safety and Social Responsibilities	Table A-VI/1-4	Yes ¹	Yes
STCW Basic Training – Elementary First Aid	Table AVI/1-3	No	Yes
STCW Basic Training – Fire Prevention and Fire Fighting	Table AVI/1-2	No	Yes

Notes

¹ If you are a young person sponsored by the Job Centre UK, are not employed as part of the vessel's normal crew and do not accumulate more than 1 month service in total on board the vessel, you are not required to take STCW basic training in Personal Survival Techniques or Personal Safety and Social Responsibility.

² You do not need to submit any certificates for Shipboard Familiarisation Training when you apply for a Watch Rating CoP.

10. General Purpose (GP) ratings

10.1 For the purpose of issuing of a safe manning document, ratings are graded as either an Engineering Watch Rating or General Purpose (GP) rating.



- 10.2 GP ratings are trained in both deck and engine room duties. As a GP rating you may be employed in either department.
- 10.3 The 2022 Regulations also require ship owners to ensure that their manning arrangements provide a good balance of experience and skill within the crew as a whole.

More Information

Seafarer Services
Maritime and Coastguard Agency
Bay 2/11
Spring Place
105 Commercial Road
Southampton
SO15 1EG

Tel: +44 (0) 203 8174318
e-mail: engineering@mcga.gov.uk

Website Address: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/maritime-and-coastguard-agency

General Enquiries: infoline@mcga.gov.uk

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RECORD OF TRAINING FOR THE ISSUE OF ENGINE ROOM WATCH RATING CERTIFICATES of Proficiency UNDER STCW CONVENTION

Name of Issuing Company:

Address:

Contact Details:

Name of Seaman:

Date of Birth:

Discharge Book Number or other National I.D:

To be completed by an Engineering Officer and Certified by the Chief Engineer

Action or Task (STCW Code – Table A III/4)		Considered proficient by (name)	Rank	Date
Section 1	i) Understands routines appropriate to the duties of a rating forming part of an engine-room watch. ii) Understand orders and be understood in matters relevant to watchkeeping. iii) Is able to converse in English language			
a)	Understand terms used in the machinery spaces and the names of the various machinery and equipment.			
b)	Demonstrates knowledge of Engine Room Watchkeeping procedures.			
c)	Demonstrates knowledge of safe working practices relating to Engine Room operations and use of equipment provided.			
d)	Understands basic environmental protection procedures.			
e)	Demonstrates the use of appropriate internal communication systems and procedures.			
f)	Understands Engine Room alarm systems and is able to distinguish between the various alarms, especially with regard to fire extinguishing gas alarms.			
g)	Demonstrates maintenance, handover and relief of a watch in			



	accordance with accepted principles and procedures.			
h)	Demonstrates clear and concise communications and acknowledgement of orders.			
Action or Task (STCW Code – Table A III/4)		Considered proficient by (name)	Rank	Date
Section 2	Understands duties and procedures for boiler watchkeeping			
a)	Understands the importance of maintaining normal water level while a boiler is in operation and demonstrates the knowledge of reading local water level gauge glasses and remote water level indicators.			
b)	Demonstrates knowledge of reading local and remote pressure gauges, understand the normal working pressure and maximum allowable steam pressure marked on the gauges.			
c)	Knows the names of boiler mountings and equipment used in the steam system.			
d)	Understands how the desired boiler pressure is maintained automatically.			
e)	Understands how the water level is maintained automatically and demonstrates knowledge of running boiler feed pump to fill up the boiler manually.			
f)	Has knowledge of the procedures for the opening of a steam valve and the procedures for warming up the system before opening full steam.			
g)	Understands the purpose of the observation tank for the return steam from oil tanks.			
h)	Has knowledge of desired burner flame and exhaust smoke colours.			
i)	Has knowledge of Safety valves and their manual operation.			
j)	Has knowledge of fire risk, safe housekeeping around the burner and fire extinguishing types and their uses.			
k)	Has knowledge of putting off boiler burner in case of malfunction or emergency from local and remote positions.			



Section 3	Operate Emergency Equipment and apply emergency procedures			
a)	Demonstrates knowledge of emergency duties.			
b)	Demonstrates knowledge of emergency systems.			
c)	Demonstrates knowledge of machinery spaces escape routes.			
d)	Demonstrates familiarity with location and use of firefighting appliances in the machinery spaces			

Testimonial by Chief Engineer (ability and conduct)

.....
.....

.....Chief Engineer

Ships Stamp



List of Competent Officers

Name of the Vessel:

Official No.

Date of Entry	Full Name (please print)	Rank	Certificate Grade, Number, Expiry Date, and Issuing Country	Specimen Signature	Specimen Initials

Name of the Vessel:

Official No.:

Date of Entry	Full Name (please print)	Rank	Certificate Grade, Number, Expiry Date, and Issuing Country	Specimen Signature	Specimen Initials



MARITIME COASTGUARD AGENCY (MCA)
Certificate of Discharge

To be completed in block letters

Surname	Other Names (in full)
Passport Number /Discharge book No.	Date and place of birth
Name of vessel	Port of Registry/Choice
Official or IMO Number.	Gross Tonnage
Propulsion power (kW)	Description of voyage
Capacity in which employed	Grade and No. of any Certificate of Competency
Date and place of joining	Date and place of leaving
Total Time Onboard	Total Days at Sea

Signature of Master or other authorised person:

Name (Print):

CoC Number:

Date of issue:

Vessel/Company Stamp

Note: Any person, other than the person to whom this Certificate of Discharge was issued, who comes into possession of it should deliver it to an MCA Marine Office or send it to the Maritime Coastguard Agency, Spring place, 105 Commercial Road, Southampton SO15 1EG.



Engine Room Watch Rating - Testimonial

Company Name:

Address:
.....

Phone:

Fax:

E-mail:

Part 1 – Watchkeeping Service

This is to certify that:

Full name of rating:

Date of birth:

Discharge book number:

has served on:

Name of vessel:

Official number:

Type or make of the main propelling machinery:
.....

Power (kW):

Shaft power (kW):

Type or make of the auxiliary machinery:

Type of boilers:

from:/...../.....

to:/...../.....

During this period, the rating named above carried out the following engine room watchkeeping or Unattended Machinery Spaces (UMS) vessel duty service (under the supervision of a certificated engineer officer) for at least eight hours out of every 24 hours while the vessel was on **seagoing voyages**.

.....weeks.....days



The named rating carried out the following duties and tasks.

.....
.....
.....
.....

Leave of absence was granted as follows:

.....
.....

Part 2 – Testimonial

My report on the service of the rating is as follows.

Conduct:

.....
.....
.....

Experience and ability:

.....
.....

Part 3 – Official Endorsement

Name (in BLOCK LETTERS) of the Chief Engineer Officer:

.....

Signature of the Chief Engineer Officer:

.....

Ship's or company's stamp and date:



In exceptional circumstances, this testimonial may be signed by a responsible engineer superintendent.



MCA Approval Number: ****

Engine Room Watch Rating Certificate of Proficiency

This is to certify that:

Date of Birth:

Discharge Book Number:
(or other National ID)

Nationality:

has met the requirements laid down in Regulation III/4 engine room of the STCW Convention 1978, as amended, and the standards of competence specified in section A-III/4 of the STCW Code, and is competent to serve as a rating forming part of an engine room watch on a seagoing ship of 750kW or more.

This certificate is issued under the Authority of the Maritime and Coastguard Agency of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, an executive agency of the Department for Transport.

Signature and name of Company
Authorised Representative

Date:

Company Stamp:



Signature of Rating:

Name of Issuing Company:

Address:
.....
.....

Contact Details:

