
Revalidating a Certificate of Competency: New Requirements for Masters and Officers

Notice to all owners, operators, managers, Masters and officers of merchant ships

*This notice should be read with MGN 9 and MIN 364
This MIN expires 16 January 2014*

PLEASE NOTE:-

Where this document provides guidance on the law it should not be regarded as definitive. The way the law applies to any particular case can vary according to circumstances - for example, from vessel to vessel and you should consider seeking independent legal advice if you are unsure of your own legal position.

Summary

The regulations for the revalidation of an STCW Certificate of Competency are currently being revised. Pending the revision, this note provides information on the new requirements for Masters and Officers of merchant ships to revalidate their STCW Certificates of Competency.

1 Introduction

1.1 The STCW Convention 1978 has been amended by the 2010 Manila Amendments and contains new requirements for all seafarers. Seafarers revalidating their Certificates of Competency (CoC) will be required to submit additional evidence to ensure their Certificate is valid for service on certain types of ships after 31 December 2016.

2. Training Requirements

2.1 Deck Certificate of Competency Revalidation, ECDIS requirements

The 2010 Manila Amendments to the STCW Code bring in the requirement for Deck Officers working onboard ships fitted with an Electronic Chart Display Information System (ECDIS) to undergo specific education and training.

As of 1 January 2012 seafarers requiring revalidation of UK CoCs issued in compliance with STCW Regulation II/1, II/2 and II/3 (maintain a safe navigational watch; use of ECDIS to maintain safety of navigation; and maintain the safety of navigation through the use of ECDIS and associated navigation systems to assist command decision making) need to comply with

the new STCW requirements to ensure their CoC remains valid on ships fitted with ECDIS after 31 December 2016.

For the revalidation of UK CoC valid after 31 December 2016, the seafarer must have completed one of the following:

- MCA approved Navigation Radar and ARPA Simulator (NARAS)/ Navigation Aids and Equipment and Simulator Training (NAEST) (Operational Level) course completed on or after 1 January 2005; or
- MCA approved NARAS/ NAEST (management level) course completed on or after 1 January 2005; or
- MCA approved ECDIS course completed on or after 1 January 2005; or
- ECDIS simulator training course in compliance with the current IMO Model Course 1.27, accepted by the MCA and approved by an Administration whose CoC we accept for the issue of a CEC.

The original course certificate must be submitted with the application. Deck Officers not meeting the above requirement will receive the following CoC limitation:

“From the 1 January 2017 this certificate is not valid for service on ships fitted with ECDIS”.

Deck Officers may subsequently request the removal of this limitation by providing documentary evidence of MCA approved ECDIS training.

2.2 Engineering Certificate of Competency Revalidation, High Voltage (HV) requirements

The 2010 Manila Amendments to the STCW Code bring in the requirement for engineers to undergo education and training in High Voltage systems, at both the operational and management levels. This requirement comes into force on the 1 January 2017 but will affect the revalidation of Engineering Certificates of Competency (CoC) from 1 January 2012. There is no requirement for additional training to be undertaken by all existing Engineer Officers, whether or not they intend to work on ships having High Voltage systems. However, High Voltage training requirements will be incorporated in the future training programmes of Engineer Officers at both the operational and management levels.

No additional action is required for Engineer Officers who do not work on and do not intend to work on ships with High Voltage systems. These Engineer Officers will receive the following CoC limitation:

“From the 1 January 2017 this certificate is not valid for service on ships fitted with High Voltage (over 1000V) systems”.

Engineer Officers who do not want this limitation placed on their CoC should read the following section applicable to their Certificate.

Note: A High Voltage (over 1000V) system is where voltage is generated and distributed at high voltage or transformed to and distributed at high voltage. It does not include systems where high voltage is utilised locally e.g. ignition systems, radio transmission, radar and other navigational equipment.

EOW CoC Reg. III/1 (Operational Level)

To avoid having the High Voltage limitation, Engineer Officers of the Watch will need to show compliance with the 2010 Manila Amendments. In addition to the current revalidation requirements, they will have to provide documentary evidence of:

- completion of High Voltage (HV) course^(*); or
- completion of the following sea service in the engine room on vessels fitted with HV systems;
 - six months in the preceding five years; or
 - three months sea service during the last twelve months.

Sea service evidence can be provided in the form of a company letter signed by an authorised official within the company.

Second/Chief Engineer Officer CoC Reg. III/2 and III/3 (Management Level)

To avoid having the High Voltage limitation, Senior Engineer Officers will need to show compliance with 2010 Manila Amendments. In addition to the current revalidation requirements, they will have to provide documentary evidence of completion of High Voltage (HV) course^(*).

*** High Voltage Courses**

Courses previously undertaken prior to 1 July 2013 do not need to be MCA approved but you must provide documentary evidence confirming the course covers at least the following topics:

at the operational level

- The hazards associated with High Voltage systems;
- The functional, operational and safety requirements for a marine high-voltage system;
- Basic arrangement of High Voltage systems and their protective devices;
- Safety procedures related to High Voltage systems; and
- Immediate actions to be taken under fault conditions.

at the management level

- The functional, operational and safety requirements for a marine high-voltage system;
- Assignment of suitably qualified personnel to carry out maintenance and repair of high-voltage switchgear of various types;
- Taking remedial action necessary during faults in a high-voltage system;
- Producing a switching strategy for isolating components of a high-voltage system;
- Selecting suitable apparatus for isolation and testing of high-voltage equipment;
- Carrying out a switching and isolation procedure on a marine high-voltage system, complete with safety documentation; and

- Performing tests of insulation resistance and polarization index on high-voltage equipment.

The original certificate and course syllabus must be submitted with the application.

Engineer Officers may subsequently request the removal of the High Voltage limitation by providing documentary evidence of a High Voltage training course that includes the required topics.

2.3 Updating-Refresher Training Requirements

The 2010 Manila Amendments to the STCW Code bring in new requirements for seafarers required to hold any of the following safety training courses:

- Personal Survival Techniques (STCW Table A-VI/1-1)
- Fire Prevention and Fire Fighting (STCW Table A-VI/1-2)
- Proficiency in Survival Craft and Rescue Boats Other Than Fast Rescue Boats (STCW Table A-VI/2-1)
- Proficiency in Fast Rescue Boats (STCW Table A-VI/2-2)
- Advanced Fire Fighting (STCW Table A-VI/3)

Seafarers required to hold any of certificates of proficiency listed above shall, every five years, provide evidence of having maintained the required standard of competence, to undertake the tasks, duties and responsibilities specified in the tables listed above.

Seafarers revalidating their Certificates of Competency (CoC) after 1 January 2017 will be required to submit documentary evidence of having completed MCA approved updating-refresher training. There is no requirement to provide documentary evidence for having completed updating-refresher training if a seafarer applies for CoC revalidation before 1 January 2017.

From 1 January 2017 Port State Control Officers may require seafarers to provide documentary evidence of having maintained the required standard of competence, to undertake the tasks, duties and responsibilities listed above. Presenting the documentary evidence obtained on completing an MCA approved updating-refresher course will meet this requirement.

Details of updating-refresher training will be published in a separate Marine Information Notice.

2.4 Leadership and Management Requirements

The 2010 Manila Amendment to the STCW Code brings in new requirements for leadership and management. Additional education and training in human element, leadership and management will be introduced into the UK Certification structure before 1 July 2013. Seafarers meeting the current Certificate of Competency revalidation requirements will not need to undertake the additional training in order to revalidate their existing Certificate of Competency. Candidates for new Certificates of Competency, and those upgrading to the next level will be required to undertake the new training in full.

3. Tanker Endorsement Requirements

3.1 The 2010 Manila Amendments define continued professional competence for seafarers revalidating tanker endorsements under Regulation I/11 as:

- Approved seagoing service, performing duties appropriate to the tanker certificate or endorsement held, for a period of at least 3 months in total in the proceeding 5 years; or
- Successfully completing an approved relevant training course or courses.

As of 1 January 2012 seafarers revalidating tanker endorsements, in addition to the current revalidation requirements, must provide evidence of approved tanker sea service appropriate to the endorsement(s) in their CoC. Evidence must be submitted in the form of original sea service testimonials or an original MCA approved course certificate as per MGN 9.

- For an Oil Tanker endorsement to be revalidated the seafarer must submit documentary evidence of 3 months of sea service on board an Oil Tanker.
- For a Chemical Tanker endorsement to be revalidated the seafarer must submit documentary evidence of 3 months of sea service on board a Chemical Tanker.
- For a Gas Tanker endorsement to be revalidated the seafarer must submit documentary evidence of 3 months of sea service on board a Gas Tanker.
- For a Vegetable Oil Tanker endorsement to be revalidated the seafarer must submit documentary evidence of 3 months of sea service on board a Vegetable Oil Tanker.

Seafarers unable to provide evidence appropriate to a tanker endorsement in their CoC, but able to demonstrate the current revalidation requirements for tanker endorsements, will have that tanker endorsement revalidated until 31 December 2016. Depending on the tanker endorsement(s) that cannot be revalidated past 31 December 2016 they will receive the appropriate limitation(s) in their CoC:

“From the 1 January 2017 this certificate is not valid for service on *Oil/Chemical/Gas/Vegetable Oil Tankers”

**** Include as appropriate***

Seafarers may subsequently request the removal of the tanker limitation by providing documentary evidence of approved training or appropriate sea service.

4. Sea Time Requirements

4.1 In addition to sea time requirements listed in MGN 9 the 2010 Manila Amendments allow Certificates of Competency to be revalidated if the seafarer has approved sea going service, performing functions appropriate to the certificate held for a period of at least:

- Three months in total during the preceding six months immediately prior to revalidating.

In addition to the current revalidation requirements, seafarers providing evidence of three months sea service within six months immediately prior to their application will be eligible for revalidation.

5. Validity Periods

5.1 The 2010 Manila Amendments allow an application for revalidation of a Certificate of Competency (CoC) made within six months of the certificate expiry date to be revalidated until the fifth anniversary of the certificate expiry date.

Providing the current revalidation requirements are met, Certificates of Competency received for revalidation within a period six months prior to expiring shall be revalidated until the fifth anniversary of the current CoC expiry date. Certificates received outside of this six months period will be revalidated for five years from the date of revalidation.

6. Removal of Limitations

6.1 Seafarers providing the appropriate documentary evidence with their application for a Certificate of Competency revalidation will have the limitation(s) removed with no additional fee. Alternatively, the limitation(s) can be removed by submitting the appropriate documentary evidence and the fee for an upgrade of Certificate of Competency.

More Information

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