



Maritime &  
Coastguard  
Agency

MERCHANT SHIPPING NOTICE

**MSN 1863 (M+F)**

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## Training & Certification Guidance: UK Requirements for Engine Room Ratings

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

*This note replace MGN 97 (M) and MIN 303 (M)*

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### Summary

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

This MSN covers:

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



## 1. Introduction

1.1 The Merchant Shipping (Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping) Regulations 2015 implement the requirements of the International Convention and Code on Standards of Training, Certification and Watch-keeping (STCW) 1978, as amended (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 Certificates and Able Seafarer Engine Certificates of Proficiency.

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 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 MSN.**

1.4 Prior to joining your first Merchant Navy ship for your first sea voyage you must hold;

- A valid ENG1 (medical fitness certificate) or accepted equivalent;
- 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)<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> 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 A-VI/6- 4). If you are assigned designated security duties aboard a vessel you must obtain a Designated Security Duties certificate (STCW A-VI/6 - 6 to 8). Please refer to MSN 1865.



## 2. Mandatory Requirements for an Engine Room Watch Rating Certificate

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

- (a) Be at least 16 years old;
- (b) Have at least 6 months' seagoing service on vessels<sup>2</sup> with at least 350kW in propulsion power; this seagoing service can be reduced to 2 months with 'special training' i.e. when following an Merchant Navy Training Board (MNTB)/ Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) approved or accepted qualification;
- (c) Have completed the basic safety training;
  - Personal Survival Techniques (STCW Code A-VI/1-1);
  - Personal Safety and Social Responsibilities (STCW Code A-VI/1-4);
  - Elementary First Aid (STCW Code A-VI/1-3);
  - Fire Prevention and Fire Fighting (STCW Code A-VI/1-2);
- (d) Have completed the ERWR (Annex A) training record book or the relevant section of the MNTB 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 Seafarer Training and Certification branch of 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](mailto: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 Certificate STCW Code A-III/4.

2.4 You can obtain an ERWR Certificate from an MCA-approved company (see section 9) or you can apply directly to the MCA's Seafarer Training and Certification Branch.

2.5 To apply directly to the MCA for an ERWR Certificate, STCW A-III/4, you will need to complete application form MSF 4371 and submit it to the Seafarer Training and Certification Branch with all the evidence listed in section 2.1<sup>3</sup>. For further information please refer to the MCA website: go to [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) and search for "Engine room ratings" or "MSF 4371" for the application form.

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<sup>2</sup> "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.

<sup>3</sup> You must submit **original** documents. The applicable fee will be stated on the application form.



### **3. Mandatory Requirements for an Able Seafarer Engine Certificate**

3.1 To qualify for an Able Seafarer Engine Certificate 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:
  - 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 MNTB TRB while serving on board;
- (e) Hold a valid ENG1 (medical fitness certificate) or accepted equivalent.

3.2 Applications for an Able Seafarer Engine Certificate, Regulation III/5, will be administered from your local Marine Office. Please refer to the MCA website for contact details, search [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) for "marine office".

### **4. Seagoing Service Requirements**

- 4.1 Seagoing service may be performed on vessels of any flag.
- 4.2 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.
- 4.3 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.
- 4.4 A month is defined as a calendar month or 30 days if made up of periods less than 1 month.

### **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, you must meet the medical fitness and eyesight standards as required by the Merchant Shipping (Maritime Labour Convention) (Medical Certification) Regulations 2010 (S.I. 2010/737), or any subsequent amendment. Details on the application of those regulations are found in MSN 1839, or any subsequent amendment.
- 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 Health and Safety Branch: [seafarer.s&h@mcga.gov.uk](mailto:seafarer.s&h@mcga.gov.uk)
- 6.3 For any ERWR or Able Seafarer Engine Certificate 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 Safety Training

- 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 safety courses form part of mandatory training for; emergency, occupational safety, security, medical care and survival functions specified in chapter A-VI STCW Code.
- 7.2 You must successfully complete **all** the required ancillary safety training applicable to your certificate.

Certificate & Regulation					
Ancillary Certificate	Course	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	



- From 01 January 2017 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.

7.3 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 A-VI/6 - 4). If you are assigned designated security duties aboard vessel you must obtain a Designated Security Duties certificate (STCW Code A-VI/6 - 6 to 8).

## **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 The following conditions apply for the rating (ERWR and ASE) training. Each task of the training programme must be signed off by an engineer officer holding an appropriate UK Certificate of Competency (CoC) or UK 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 Certificates 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 Training and Certification 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 Certificates, you must apply to the MCA providing details of:

- (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 Seafarer Training and Certification Branch of 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 Certificate 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 Certificate.

Safety Training Description	STCW Code Reference	Trainee	Watch Rating Certificate
Shipboard Familiarisation Training	Chapter A-VI/1-1	Yes	Yes <sup>2</sup>
STCW Basic Training – Personal Survival Techniques	Table AVI/1-1	Yes <sup>1</sup>	Yes
STCW Basic Training – Personal Safety and Social Responsibilities	Table A-VI/1-4	Yes <sup>1</sup>	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

<sup>1</sup>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.

<sup>2</sup>You do not need to send any certificates for Shipboard Familiarisation Training when you apply for a Watch Rating Certificate.

## 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 Merchant Shipping (Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping Convention) 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 Training and Certification  
Maritime and Coastguard Agency  
Bay 2/11  
Spring Place  
105 Commercial Road  
Southampton  
SO15 1EG

Tel : +44 (0) 23 8032 9(see our website or application forms for number)  
Fax : +44 (0) 23 8032 9N/A  
e-mail: [engineering@mcga.gov.uk](mailto:engineering@mcga.gov.uk)

General Inquiries: [infoline@mcga.gov.uk](mailto:infoline@mcga.gov.uk)

MCA Website Address: [www.dft.gov.uk/mca](http://www.dft.gov.uk/mca)

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***Safer Lives, Safer Ships, Cleaner Seas***





Name of Issuing Company:

Address:

Contact Details:

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

Name of Seaman

Date of Birth

Discharge Book Number or other National I.D:

**To be completed by a Engineering Officer and Certified by the Chief Engineer**

	<b>Action or Task</b> (STCW Code Table A III/4)	Considered proficient by (name)	Rank	Date
<b>Section 1</b>	<b>i) Understands routines appropriate to the duties of a rating forming part of an engine-room watch.</b> <b>ii) Understand orders and be understood in matters relevant to watchkeeping.</b> <b>iii) Is able to converse in English language</b>			
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.			



<b>Action or Task</b> (ref Table A III/4)		Considered proficient by (name)	Rank	Date
<b>Section 2</b>	<b>Understands duties and procedures for boiler watchkeeping</b>			
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.			



<b>Section 3</b>	<b>Operate Emergency Equipment and apply emergency procedures</b>		
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.



Company Name

Engine Room Watch Rating - Testimonial

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**

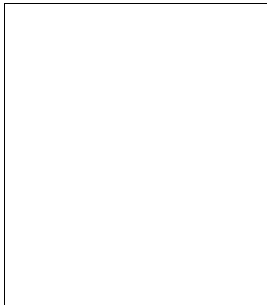
**Name (in BLOCK LETTERS) of the Chief Engineer Officer:**

.....

**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

This is to certify that .....

Date of Birth .....

Discharge Book Number  
(or other National ID) .....

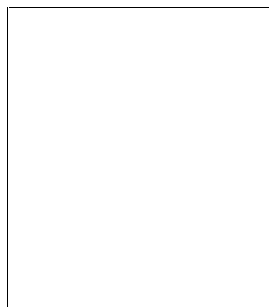
has met the requirements laid down in Regulation III/4 engine room of the STCW Convention 1978, as amended, and the standards of competence specified in section A-III/4 of the STCW Code 1978, as amended, and is competent to serve as a rating forming part of an engine room watch on a seagoing ship of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

