



Maritime &
Coastguard
Agency

Remote Operator Certification Framework:

Remote Operator (Operational Level) Certification

Remote Operator (Management Level) Certification

June 2025

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The training and competence of Remote Operators is currently approved on a case-by-case assessment via an MGN 664 submission, or through a Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) Short Course Approvals process for the purpose of recognising a training course.
- 1.2 MGN 703 provides temporary information on Remote Operator training and certification for vessels certified under the Workboat Code Edition 3.
- 1.3 This Remote Operator certification framework is set out for the purpose of establishing a generic standard that may be considered for approval by the MCA.
- 1.4 This certification framework descriptor sets out the minimum requirements that a Remote Operator should meet, prior to undertaking training in remote operations, or watchkeeping duties from a Remote Operation Centre (ROC).
- 1.5 This certification framework sets out a pathway that candidates may follow in order obtain a generic Remote Operator Certificate of Proficiency (CoP), recognised by the MCA.
- 1.6 As technology and operations continue to develop, this certification framework may be reviewed by the MCA to ensure applicability to current remote operations and regulations.
- 1.7 The MCA has led the development of this certification framework in collaboration with the National Correspondence Group for MASS (NCG-MASS).
- 1.8 The following documents should be read in conjunction with this framework:
 - i) "RO_GLOSSARY"
 - ii) "RO_ROLE_DESCRIPTOR"
 - iii) "RO_TRAINING_DESCRIPTOR"
 - iv) "RO_COMPETENCY_TABLES_(O)"
 - v) "RO_COMPETENCY_TABLES_(M)"
 - vi) "RO_TRB_TABLES_PHASE_II"

2.0 Objectives of the Remote Operator Certification Framework

2.1 The objectives of this certification framework are as follows:

- i) To set out the minimum certification requirements for Remote Operators, applicable to the identified level of responsibility
- ii) To set out the mechanisms for initial certification, revalidation and re-certification, and
- iii) To align as closely as possible and appropriate to applicable national and international requirements and certification schemes.

3.0 Application of this Certification Framework

- 3.1 This certification scheme applies as a generic framework for Remote Operators expected to undertake duties for UK vessels capable of teleoperation, from a ROC.
- 3.2 The certification set out in this framework applies to Remote Operators comprising the crew that make up a UK vessel's safe manning.
- 3.3 This framework applies to Remote Operators expected to undertake watchkeeping duties for unmanned ships capable of remote operation, that are less than 24.00m in load line length and less than 500 GT.
- 3.4 This pilot framework does not currently apply to Remote Operators undertaking duties for vessels, to which MGN 702 or MGN 705 apply.
- 3.5 Notwithstanding the provision of 3.3, a Remote Operator Certificate of Proficiency (CoP) does not limit the individual as to what size of vessel they are able to undertake watchkeeping duties for. This shall be determined by the privileges set out by the required commercially endorsed Certificate of Competency (CoC).
- 3.6 This scheme does not currently consider the generic training and certification requirements for manned vessels capable of remote operation.
- 3.7 The MCA may develop regulations that set out requirements for Remote Operators to hold an MCA recognised Remote Operator CoP in the future, subject to piloting and reviewing this generic framework.
- 3.8 This certification framework represents a generic standard of competence and in-service experience that can be met by completing the relevant Training Phase set out in the "RO_TRAINING_DESCRIPTOR".

- 3.9 A Remote Operator must undertake Company, ROC and vessel-specific training, in addition to holding a Remote Operator CoP, prior to undertaking duties in a ROC.
- 3.10 Nothing in this certification scheme contravenes, nor should it be interpreted as contravening any requirements set out in applicable UK or international regulations.
- 3.11 This certification scheme may be used by a prospective Training Provider (TP) for the purpose of seeking MCA approval via the Short Course Approvals process set out in MIN 643 (M) and MSN 1865 (M), as amended.
- 3.12 This certification framework may be considered by the MCA during the assessment of specific roles and functions proposed in any Safe Manning Document applications for MASS projects.

4.0 Application of a Remote Operator's Certificate of Competency (CoC)

- 4.1 The provisions set out in a Remote Operator's CoC shall determine the role, vessel and area, for which they are permitted to undertake watchkeeping duties.
- 4.2 Restrictions on the area of operation and vessel set out on a CoC shall be extended for Remote Operators, when engaging in remote operations.

5.0 Remote Operator Certification Requirements

5.1 The following levels of responsibility are set out in the "RO_ROLE_DESCRIPTOR":

- i) Remote Operator - Operational level of responsibility.
- ii) Remote Operator - Management level of responsibility.

5.2 A Remote Operator undertaking duties at the operational level of responsibility (Remote Operator (O)) must at minimum, hold the following valid, commercially endorsed certification:

- i) Certification and training as set out in The Workboat Code Edition 3, Appendix 5, appropriate to the area of operation, including valid associated certification and training.

Or

Operational level certification as set out in STCW 1978, as amended, including valid associated certification and training.

(for example, STCW II/1 Unlimited, STCW II/3 Near Coastal)

Or

Deck Officer CoC (Fishing Vessel) Class 1 or Class 2, including valid associated certification and training.

Note:

- a) All associated certification for CoCs must be valid.
- b) MCA will consider the new fishing Skipper < 16.5m certification framework in future.

and

- ii) A Remote Operator (O) CoP

5.3 A Remote Operator undertaking duties at the management level of responsibility (Remote Operator (M)) must at minimum, hold the following valid, commercially endorsed certification:

- iii) Certification and training as set out in The Workboat Code Edition 3, Appendix 5, appropriate to the area of operation, including valid associated certification and training.

Or

Management level certification as set out in STCW 1978, as amended, including valid associated certification and training.

(for example, STCW II/2 Unlimited, STCW II/3 Near Coastal)

Or

Deck Officer CoC (Fishing Vessel) Class 1 or Class 2, including valid associated certification and training, provided a STCW Master Code <200GT conversion has been completed.

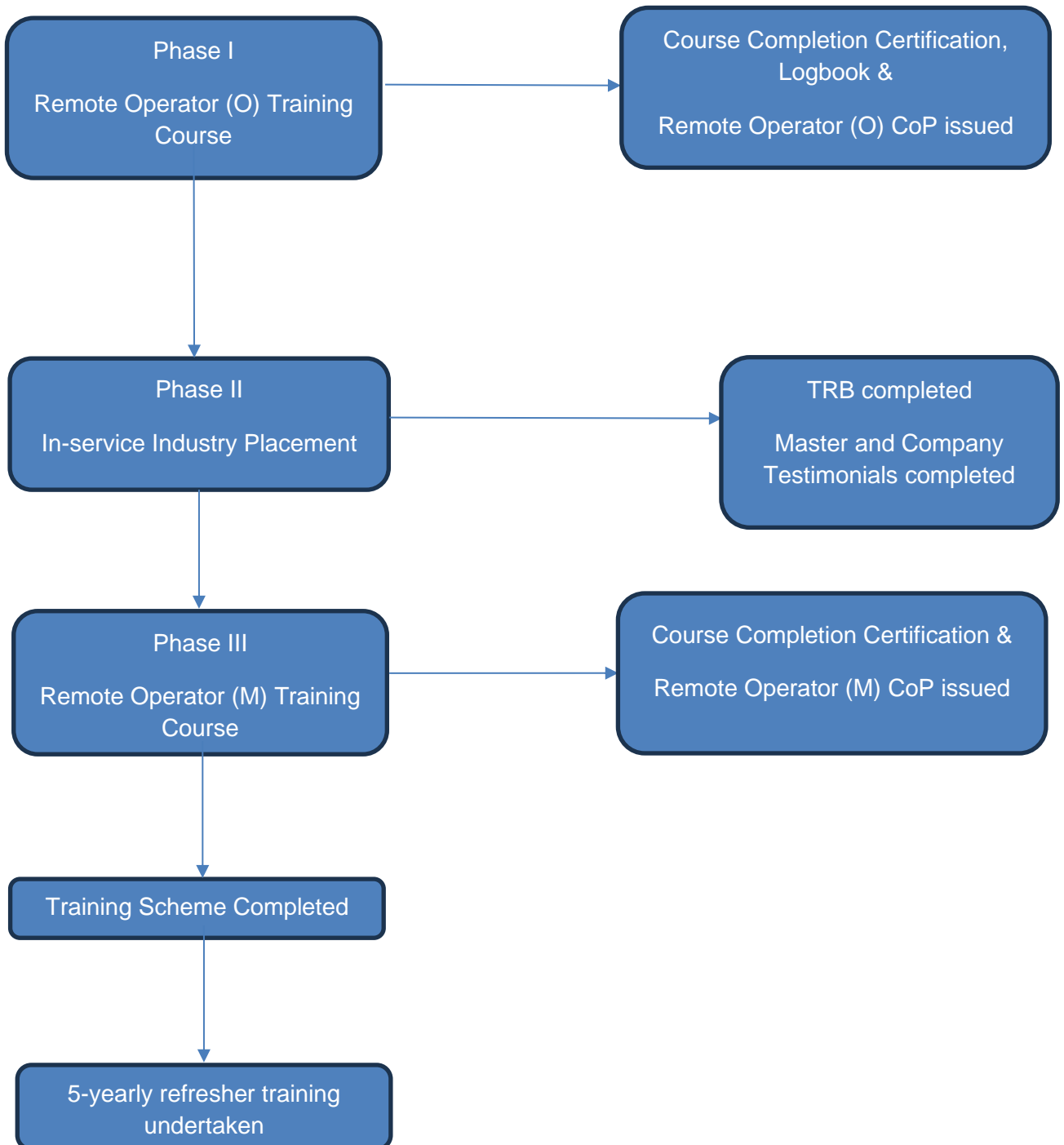
Note: All associated certification for CoCs must be valid.

and

- iv) A Remote Operator (M) CoP.

6.0 Remote Operator Certificate of Proficiency Pathway

6.1 The certification progression set out below is aligned with the “RO_TRAINING_DESCRIPTOR”.



7.0 Certification Phase breakdown

7.1 Phase I

- i) Candidate successfully completes a Remote Operator (O) training course.
- ii) Candidate issued with a Course Completion certificate.
- iii) Candidate issued with a Remote Operator (O) CoP.
- iv) Certified Remote Operator is issued with TRB.
- v) Remote Operator is issued with a “Remote Operator Logbook”¹.
- vi) Certified Remote Operator can undertake navigational watchkeeping duties at the operational level of responsibility.

7.2 Phase II

- i) Remote Operator gains in-service time as a Remote Operator.
- ii) Remote Operator completes the Training Record Book (TRB), including all tasks.
- iii) Remote Operator issued with Master and Company testimonials.

7.3 Phase III

- i) Remote Operator completes a Remote Operator (M) training course.
- ii) Candidate issued with a Course Completion certificate.
- iii) Remote Operator issued with a Remote Operator (M) CoP.
- iv) Certified Remote Operator can undertake duties at the management level of responsibility.

¹ Due to the nature of the information that may be contained in a logbook, this document shall be drafted during RO training course piloting in collaboration with TPs and companies.

8.0 Certificates of Proficiency

8.1 Certificates issued by MCA-approved Training Providers must include the following information:

- i) Certificate Number.
- ii) MCA Approval Certificate Number.
- iii) Training Provider details (Name, Address, Contact details)
- iv) Course title.
- v) Candidate full name.
- vi) Candidate Date of Birth.
- vii) Course programme objective/syllabus (reverse page option as standard).
- viii) Duration of course.
- ix) Date of issue.
- x) Signature of authorised representative of training centre.
- xi) Signature of candidate.

8.2 A Certificate of Proficiency template is provided in Annex A.

9.0 CoC Revalidation

9.1 The MCA will recognise in-service experience as a Remote Operator undertaking watchkeeping duties as an acceptable alternative occupation for the purpose of revalidating an MCA-issued CoC.

9.2 Revalidation of a CoC must be aligned with the established process in MSN 1861(M), as amended.

9.3 In the initial stages of this scheme, Remote Operators should maintain a record of:

- i) Remote Operator training, familiarisation and drills.

- ii) Company-specific and Safety Management Systems (SMS) training and familiarisation.
- iii) Remote Operator certification and qualifications.
- iv) Company letters issued in alignment with MSN 1861 (M), as amended.
- v) Master and company testimonials detailing the Remote Operator's record of service, including:
 - a. Personal details (Name, DOB, Nationality).
 - b. Vessel details.
 - c. Certificate of Competency details.
 - d. Details of service, including area of operation and hours engaged in remote operations.
 - e. Details of watchkeeping duties.
 - f. The Remote Operator's role and responsibilities during employment.
 - g. The Remote Operator's performance and conduct.
- vi) The Remote Operator should maintain a record of their in-service experience in alignment with the MCA's existing policies for recognising service.
- vii) The Remote Operator should maintain a record of their in-service experience in alignment with the minimum hour provisions set out in this framework.

10.0 Certificates of Updated Proficiency

10.1 Remote Operators shall maintain a record of their service in their Remote Operator logbook.

10.2 For a Certificate of Proficiency to remain valid, a Remote Operator must undertake duties as a Remote Operator for a minimum of 400 hours over a minimum of 50 days of in-service experience within 5 years, from the date of the CoP's initial issue and complete a refresher course.

10.3 Refresher training shall be completed every 5 years, where-upon successful completion, an Updated CoP shall be issued.²

10.4 Initial provisions of updated training are set out in “RO_TRAINING_DESCRIPTOR”.

11.0 Re-certification of a Remote Operator Certificate of Proficiency

11.1 A re-certification mechanism is provided within this certification framework.

11.2 Remote Operators that have left the industry and do not meet the revalidation requirements may pursue re-certification.

11.3 Re-certification shall take place at an MCA approved Training Provider.

11.4 Candidates for re-certification must provide evidence of 300 hours over a minimum of 40 days of in-service experience within the previous 5 years.

11.5 Re-certification shall include assessment of specific elements of training in the appropriate Training Phase.³

12.0 Review of Remote Operator Certification Framework

12.1 This certification framework is subject to review and revision, appropriate to the development of national and international regulations, technology and vessel operations.

12.2 This certification framework shall be reviewed as required, in consultation with stakeholder.

² Full provisions for updated training shall be set out and distributed for consultation following successful piloting of the Remote Operator training and certification framework. The requirement for refresher training may be reviewed following successful adoption of a generic Remote Operator training and certification framework.

³ Full provisions for re-certification training shall be set out and distributed following successful piloting of a generic Remote Operator training and certification framework.

Annex A – Certificate of Proficiency Template

Certificate Number: [Unique ID number allocated by Approved Training Provider]	
MCA Approval Number: [Issued by MCA]	
Issuing Authority: (approved Training Provider)	Approved Training Provider Address and contact details
This is to certify that [full name of candidate]	
DOB: [dd/mm/yyyy]	
Has successfully completed [insert hours] of [insert training course].	
This course is approved by the MCA	
Detail Learning Outcomes/competencies (option for reverse page provisions)	
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 of Transport.	
Names and Signature of Principal or Authorised Representative of the Approved Training Centre	
Names and Signature of instructor	
Signature of the person to whom this certificate is issued.	
Inquiries concerning this certificate should be addressed to the Issuing Authority at [insert address].	Issuing Authority Name Stamp
	Date



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