



Maritime and Coastguard Agency

---

---

## TRAINING AND CERTIFICATION GUIDANCE – PART 10

### Ratings

Notice to Owners, Masters, Deck and Engineer Officers and Ratings of Merchant Vessels and those concerned with Maritime Training.

*This Note supersedes Marine Guidance Note MGN 10(M) and should be read in conjunction with Merchant Shipping Notices Nos MSN 1692(M) and MSN 1740(M) (or subsequent amendments).*

---

---

#### *Summary*

This Marine Guidance Note (MGN) is part of a series which gives guidance regarding the application of the Merchant Shipping (Training and Certification) Regulations 1997<sup>1</sup>.

In order for the guidance to be easy to use and to keep up-to-date, the individual Parts will retain the same Part number but the MGN number may change if and when revisions are necessary. The front sheet of any revised Part will list the latest MGN numbers. Any reference to “Part” in this Note relates to this series of Guidance Notes as listed below.

#### *Key Point*

This Part gives information and guidance regarding the grading and training requirements for ratings employed on different types of ship. The requirements are framed to meet those of STCW 95, the International Labour Organisation – Able Seamen Convention 1946 and the IMO Safety of Life at Sea Convention.

#### LATEST INDEX TO PARTS

<u>Part No.</u>	<u>Subject</u>	<u>Latest MGN Number</u>	<u>Issue Date</u>
1	General requirements for certification and medical fitness	MGN 91(M)	April 2000
2	Certificates of competency – deck department	MGN 92(M)	April 2000
3	Certificates of competency – engine department	MGN 93(M)	April 2000
4	Certificates of competency – radio personnel	MGN 94 (M)	July 1999
5	Special training requirements for personnel on certain types of ship	MGN 95(M)	April 2000
6	Emergency, occupational safety, medical care and survival functions	MGN 96(M)	April 2000

---

<sup>1</sup> SI 1997/348 as amended by SI 1997/1911

7	Alternative certification – dual certification	MGN 7(M)	April 2000
8	Education and training schemes	MGN 8(M)	April 2000
9	Procedure for the issue and revalidation of certificates of competency, marine engine operator licences and tanker endorsements.	MGN 9(M)	April 2000
10	Ratings	This Note	
11	Conduct of MCA oral examinations	MGN 69(M)	April 2000
12	Safety training for concessionaires working on passenger ships	MGN 120(M)	April 2000
13	Use of fishing vessel certificates of competency in standby, seismic survey and oceanographic research vessels – revised arrangements	MGN 121(M)	April 2000
14	STCW 95 application to certificates of service	MGN 116(M)	April 2000
15	Certification of inshore tug personnel	MGN 117(M)	April 2000
16	Certification of inshore craft personnel (other than tugs)	MGN 126(M)	Not yet issued

Seafarer Standards Branch  
Maritime and Coastguard Agency  
Spring Place  
105 Commercial Road  
Southampton SO15 1EG

Tel: 02380 329231  
Fax: 02380 329252  
E-mail: [exams\\_section@mcga.gov.uk](mailto:exams_section@mcga.gov.uk)

April 2000

MC124/1/029

© Crown copyright 2000



*An executive agency of the Department of the  
Environment, Transport and the Regions*

*All references to "Parts" in this document are to other Parts of this series of Training and Certification Guidance Notes*

## **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 The Merchant Shipping (Training and Certification) Regulations 1997 (the Regulations) implement in the United Kingdom some of the requirements of the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers, 1978, as amended in 1995 (STCW 95)<sup>2</sup>, and its associated Code (STCW Code).
- 1.2 The three international instruments which regulate the training and certification of ratings are:
- .1 The International Labour Organisation (ILO) – Able Seaman -Convention 1946;
  - .2 The International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers, 1978, as amended in 1995 (STCW 95) and its associated STCW Code; and
  - .3 The International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea, 1974, and its Protocol of 1978, as subsequently amended (SOLAS)<sup>2</sup>.
- 1.3 These Conventions specify certain training and experience requirements for all seafarers and further requirements for those who have designated safety and pollution prevention duties on board. All ratings must be properly trained, with appropriate certification, in accordance with the requirements of the relevant Conventions.
- 1.4 The United Kingdom is a party to all three Conventions. The intention of this guidance note is to summarise and explain the requirements of the Conventions, and the UK regulations which implement them, insofar as they relate to ratings.
- 1.5 Those seafarers who were serving as Category 1 or 2 seamen on or before 1 August 1998 may continue in this capacity until 31 January 2002. By this date they must obtain a STCW 95 watch rating certificate (see also paragraph 4.5).
- 1.6 In the context of this Part the term "seafarer" does not include hairdressers, entertainers, shop assistants or other staff employed by concessionaires on ro-ro ferries or passenger vessels. These are dealt with separately in part 12.

## **2.0 Mandatory Requirements**

- 2.1 STCW 95 requires all seafarers to be medically fit with special emphasis on sight and hearing: the sight requirement being especially relevant to deck personnel. In order to meet this requirement all seafarers should meet the appropriate requirements of the Merchant Shipping (Medical Examinations) Regulations 1983,<sup>3</sup> as amended, before they are employed for shipboard duties. Further information about medical fitness requirements is provided in Part 1 and Merchant Shipping Notices MSN 1745(M&F) and MSN 1746(M).
- 2.2 All seafarers having undertaken less than 6 months sea-service on 1 August 1998 must, to meet the requirements of STCW Code A-VI/1.1, successfully complete approved **familiarisation training** in Personal Survival Techniques before they are assigned to shipboard duties. Ship owners and operators must also ensure that all those employed on the ship, are, on joining, given Familiarisation training in respect of emergency duties as well as routine duties and functions for the safe operation of the ship and the protection of the marine environment.

---

<sup>2</sup> Available from the Publications Section, The International Maritime Organization, 4, Albert Embankment, London SE1 7SR.

<sup>3</sup> SIs 1983/808, 1985/512, 1990/1985

- 2.3 The shipowner or operator must ensure that all seafarers are able to communicate in the common working language determined for the ship.
- 2.4 All seafarers having undertaken less than 6 months sea-service on 1 August 1998 who have been assigned designated safety or pollution prevention duties must also successfully complete those elements of approved **basic training**, as appropriate to their duties and functions. The four elements of basic training are:
- .1 personal survival techniques (STCW Code-Table A-VI/1-1);
  - .2 fire prevention and fire-fighting (STCW Code-Table A-VI/1-2);
  - .3 elementary first aid (STCW Code-Table A-VI/1-3);
  - .4 personal safety & social responsibilities (STCW Code-Table A-VI/1-4).

### 3.0 Grading of Seafarers

3.1 Seafarers are graded according to their training, qualifications and experience. The Merchant Shipping (Safe Manning, Hours of Work and Watchkeeping) Regulations 1997<sup>4</sup> require shipowners to ensure that their manning arrangements provide a good balance of experience and skill within the crew as a whole. The grading of seafarers described below should assist in achieving this aim.

### 3.2 Trainee Rating (Deck or Engine Departments)

3.2.1 Trainee ratings must be at least 16 years of age, medically fit and have undertaken Personal Survival Techniques training and the Familiarisation training referred to in paragraph 2.2 above before being assigned to duties. However, young persons sponsored by Job Centres in the UK, who are not employed as part of the normal crew and do not accumulate more than one month service in total on board the vessel, are not required to undertake the training in Personal Survival Techniques.

### 3.3 Deck Department

3.3.1 **Deck Rating Grade 2.** To qualify for this grading, a seafarer must be at least 17 years old and should have either successfully completed the four elements of basic training described in paragraph 2.4.1–4 above; *or*

- .1 have completed, prior to 1 August 1998, acceptable survival and fire-fighting training and more than 6 months sea-service; *and*
- .2 have obtained a Navigational Watch Rating Certificate (known as a Watch Rating Certificate) after meeting the requirements of STCW Code A-II/4, as described in paragraphs 4.1 to 4.5 below; *or*
- .3 be the holder of an Efficient Deck Hand (EDH) certificate, (for which qualification and application details appear in paragraph 3.5 below and Annex 1 ), in which case the seafarer must obtain a Watch Rating Certificate within one month of joining the vessel; *or*
- .4 be the holder of a VQ2 in Marine Vessel Operation, in which case the seafarer must obtain a Watch Rating Certificate within one month of joining the vessel.

3.3.2 **Deck Rating Grade 1.** To qualify for this grading, a seafarer must hold an AB certificate; *or*

- .1 have completed 36 months sea service in total, of which at least 12 months must have been served in the deck compartment; *and*

---

<sup>4</sup> SI 1997/1320 as amended by SI 1997/1911

.2 have met the requirements for Deck Rating Grade 2.

### **3.4 AB Certificate**

3.4.1 To qualify for the issue of an AB certificate, a seafarer must have:

- .1 attained the age of 18;
- .2 obtained a Watch Rating Certificate;
- .3 obtained an EDH certificate or a VQ2 in Marine Vessel Operation;
- .4 obtained a Certificate of Proficiency in Survival Craft and Rescue Boats (CPSC&RB) *or* a Certificate of Proficiency in Survival Craft (CPSC) *or* a Lifeboatman certificate;
- .5 produced proof of medical fitness; *and*
- .6 completed at least 24 months sea-service in the deck department or 36 months as a General Purpose (GP) rating, of which at least 12 months was on deck duties.

3.4.2 Sea-service performed in a deck capacity on sea-going fishing vessels of more than 16.5m in registered length, Royal Naval ships or Mobile Offshore Units (MOU) will be counted in full but at least 6 months sea-service on merchant ships will be required for certification as an AB seaman.

3.4.3 Seafarers with MOU sea service unable to complete the required 6 months on merchant ships will be issued with an AB certificate suitably endorsed with a limitation for use on MOUs. This limitation will be removed at a Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) Marine Office on completion of 6 months sea service on merchant ships.

3.4.4 An AB certificate may be obtained from any MCA Marine Office listed at Annex 4 on completion of an application form and on production of supporting evidence to confirm that all the conditions listed in paragraph 3.4.1 above have been met. A prescribed fee will be charged for this service.

### **3.5 Efficient Deck Hand (EDH) Certificate**

3.5.1 EDH is the qualifying examination for AB and deck rating certification. This can be taken after a seafarer has:

- .1 attained the age of 17;
- .2 served at least 12 months in the deck department of sea-going merchant ships; *and*
- .3 obtained a Navigational Watch Rating Certificate or a Steering Certificate

3.5.2 Service in the deck department in High Speed Craft (HSC), tugs, dredgers, standby vessels, survey vessels, RN ships and fishing vessels of more than 16.5m registered length is also acceptable. Service in MOUs will be counted if serving as part of the deck crew.

3.5.3 Six months service in the deck department in HSC will be accepted in place of the 12 months service specified in paragraph 3.5.1.2 above, towards the issue of an EDH limited to HSC. This limitation may be removed on completion of 12 months sea service.

3.5.4 The syllabus for EDH training and certification is given in Annex 1.

3.5.5 Training providers must obtain approval from the MCA both to conduct EDH courses and for individual examiners. With effect from the date of issue of this MGN, there is no requirement for existing training providers to seek re-approval.

3.5.6 Approved training providers will issue certificates on behalf of the MCA and are required to maintain full records of all certificates issued. These certificates must be in the approved format as shown in Annex 2 of this note.

3.5.7 Holders of a level 2 VQ in Marine Vessel Operations may obtain an EDH certificate without further examination.

### 3.6 Engine Department

3.6.1 **Engine-Room Rating.** To qualify for this grading, a seafarer must be at least 17 years old and have:

- .1 obtained an Engine-Room Watch Rating Certificate after meeting the requirements of STCW Code A-III/4, as described in paragraphs 4.1 to 4.5 below; *and have either*
- .2 successfully completed the four elements of the basic training described in paragraph 2.4.1–4 above; *or*
- .3 completed prior to 1 August 1998 acceptable survival and fire-fighting training and more than 6 months sea service.

### 3.7 General Purpose (GP) Ratings

3.7.1 **GP ratings** are those who have been trained in both deck and engine-room duties. Such ratings may be employed in either department according to the needs and requirements of the company.

3.7.2 **GP Ratings Grade 2** are those who hold a navigational Watch Rating Certificate as well as an engine-room Watch Rating Certificate. They can be employed where the Safe Manning Document (SMD) stipulates the requirements for Deck or GP Rating Grade 2 or Engine-Room Rating.

3.7.3 **GP Ratings Grade 1** are those who meet the requirements for Deck Rating Grade 1 and hold an engine-room watch rating certificate. They can be employed where the SMD stipulates the requirements for Deck Rating Grade 1 or 2, Engine-Room or GP Rating.

### 4.0 Watch Rating Certificates

4.1 UK companies may apply to the MCA for approval to issue Watch Rating Certificates on its behalf. Companies to which the International Safety Management Code applies, must be in full compliance before issuing Watch Rating Certificates which must be in the approved format shown at Annex 3 of this Part. Applications for authorisation to issue Watch Rating Certificates should be addressed to the MCA, Seafarer Standards Branch, at the address given at the front of this Part. In their application, companies must demonstrate that they have adequate arrangements for training and assessing watchkeeping ratings and an acceptable quality control system. They will also be required to provide details of any *special* training they may propose to give in the case of the requirements at paragraph 4.3.2 below. Any approved *special* training may be undertaken either ashore or on board and may form part of a pre-sea training programme.

4.2 MCA approval will be subject to periodic review and evaluation and may be withdrawn if the MCA's requirements are not met.

4.3 Once a company has been approved by MCA, it may issue approved Watch Rating Certificates to any rating who meets the following STCW 95 requirements:

- .1 is not less than 17 years old;
- .2 has completed, either at least 6 months approved sea-going service in the relevant department or has completed *special training* and at least 2 months approved sea going service; and has either

- .3 successfully completed all 4 elements of the basic training specified in paragraph 2.4.1–4 above; *or*
  - .4 has completed, prior to 1 August 1998, acceptable survival and fire-fighting training and more than 6 months sea-service; *or*
  - .5 has an EDH certificate; *or* a level 2 VQ in Marine Vessel Operations (deck); *and*
  - .6 has been assessed by a responsible officer of the ship appointed by the company, and has been found to have met the requirements and performance standards specified in STCW Code A-II/4 or A-III/4 in the case of deck and engine-room ratings respectively.
- 4.4 A copy of each certificate issued must be forwarded for registration to the Seafarer Standards Branch of the MCA, at the address given at the front of this Part, as soon as possible after 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.
- 4.5 Companies approved by the MCA for the issue of Watch Rating Certificates should ensure that ratings holding STCW 78 Watch Rating Certificates (EXN 87 and 88) are issued with STCW 95 certificates, following the procedure outlined above, **by 1 February 2002.**
- 5.0 Additional Training Requirements**
- 5.1 STCW 95 includes additional training requirements for ratings serving on certain types of ship. These requirements are detailed in Part 5 but are summarised as follows.
- 5.2 Tankers**
- 5.2.1 Any rating who is assigned specific duties and responsibilities related to cargo or cargo equipment (eg pumpman) must have successfully completed:
- .1 an advanced fire fighting training programme as specified in section A-VI/3 of the STCW Code; *and*
  - .2 at least 3 months approved sea-going service on tankers in order to acquire adequate knowledge of safe operational practices; *or*
  - .3 a tanker familiarisation training programme approved by the MCA covering at least the syllabus given in paragraphs 2 to 7 of section A-V/1 of the STCW Code; *or*
  - .4 at least 30 days service under the supervision of qualified officers on a tanker of not less than 3000gt engaged on voyages not exceeding 72 hours.
- 5.2.2 Ratings or trainees meeting the above requirements should present the evidence to a MCA Marine Office where their discharge books will be appropriately endorsed. Those meeting the above requirements but not holding a UK discharge book will be issued with a paper certificate.
- 5.3 Ro – Ro Passenger ships**
- 5.3.1 Ratings and other personnel on ro-ro passenger ships are required to undertake the training specified in STCW Code A-V/2 paragraphs 1 to 3 (crowd management, familiarisation and safety training for direct services to passengers).
- 5.3.2 For continued service, appropriate refresher training in respect of crowd management is required to be undertaken at intervals not exceeding five years, or evidence, must be produced to the employer or official of an authorised body of having achieved the required standard of competence within the previous five years. This may be achieved by 12 months sea service in the relevant type of ship within the previous 5 years.

#### **5.4 Passenger Ships other than Ro-Ro Passenger Ships**

5.4.1 Ratings and other personnel on passenger ships designated on muster lists to assist passengers in emergency situations are required to undertake training specified in STCW Code A-V/3 paragraphs 1 to 3 (crowd management, familiarisation and safety training for direct services to passengers).

5.4.2 For continued service, appropriate refresher training in respect of crowd management is required at intervals not exceeding five years or evidence of having achieved the required standard of competence within the previous five years must be produced to the employer or an official of an authorized body. This may be achieved by 12 months sea-service in the relevant type of ship within the previous 5 years.

#### **5.5 Deck ratings on High Speed Craft (HSC) and Mobile Offshore Units (MOUs)**

5.5.1 Ratings employed on HSC must receive instructions and training, as specified in section 18.3.6 of the IMO's HSC Code<sup>2</sup> in addition to other training requirements specified in this Note, as applicable.

5.5.2 Ratings employed on MOUs may be required by the Health and Safety Executive, to undertake additional training.

5.5.3 The grading structure for ratings described in paragraph 3 above also applies to ratings on HSC and MOUs.

#### **5.6 Marine Evacuation System Training**

5.6.1 Owners/operators are required to ensure that ratings with designated duties on the deployment of Marine Evacuation Systems (MES) are trained in accordance with the requirements of Regulation III/19.3.3.8 of SOLAS 74<sup>2</sup> (as amended). Appropriate documents should be issued to those trained in the deployment of MES.

#### **6.0 Maintenance of Records**

6.1 Companies, in line with the responsibilities given to them by STCW 95 (Regulation I/14), should maintain records and provide documentary evidence in respect of any person meeting the appropriate standard for all certificates and training requirements described above.

#### **7.0 Further Advice**

7.1 Further information if required, is available from the MCA at any MCA Marine Office or at the address given at the beginning of this MGN.



**EFFICIENT DECK HAND (EDH) CERTIFICATES****1.0 Entry Requirements**

## 1.1 Candidates must:-

- .1 be at least 17 years of age;
- .2 have successfully completed the basic training required by STCW Code A-VI/1;
- .3 hold a Navigational Watch Rating Certificate ; *or*  
a steering certificate; *or*  
proof of having obtained sufficient experience;
- .4 meet the medical fitness requirements; *and*
- .5 have completed 12 months sea service in the deck department; or hold a deck officer certificate of competency (Fishing).

1.2 Candidates with other types of sea service or training may be considered by the MCA for entry to the examination on an individual basis.

**2.0 Examination Syllabus**

2.1 Meaning of common nautical terms.

2.2 Navigational watchkeeping duties as follows:

- .1 duties of a bridge lookout and the reporting of lights and objects;
- .2 knowledge of the compass card in 360° notation;\*
- .3 understand helm orders.\*\*

**Note:** \* holders of Watch Rating and Steering Certificates will not be examined on this section; and

\*\* holders of steering certificates will not be examined on this section.

2.3 Life saving appliances and fire fighting appliances as follows:

- .1 understand the importance of musters and drills and know what action to take on hearing alarm signals;
- .2 understand the general arrangement and the dangers of fixed smothering systems;
- .3 understand correct operation, precautions and dangers of lifeboat release gear;
- .4 understand the procedures for boat preparation and launching;
- .5 understand the precautions to be observed when maintaining lifeboats and davits;
- .6 understand the importance of fire and watertight doors.

2.4 Practical work as follows:

- .1 Common knots, bends and hitches including:  
reef knot, timber hitch, clove hitch, bowline, bowline on the bight, sheet bend, double sheet bend, sheepshank, rolling hitch, round turn and two half hitches, figure of eight knot, fisherman's bend, monkey's fist, wall and crown knot;
- .2 Common splices including:  
eye splice in eight strand plaited rope; eye, back and short splice in three strand rope; eye splice with locking tuck in wire rope.

- .3 parcel and serve a splice;
- .4 whippings and seizings;
- .5 care, use and storage of ropes and wire;
- .6 the correct fitting of wire grips (e.g. 'Bulldog' grips);
- .7 use and selection of stoppers for wires and ropes;
- .8 slinging of stages and bosun's chair;
- .9 rigging of pilot ladders, gangways and accommodation ladders;
- .10 rigging of a hydrostatic release unit;
- .11 rigging a derrick;
- .12 securing the deck for severe weather;
- .13 opening and closing of hatches and watertight doors including bow, stern and other shell doors;
- .14 marking of anchor cables.

## 2.5 Code of Safe Working Practice for Merchant Seamen (COSWP) 1998

2.5.1 In each of the sections below, the candidate will be expected to have a good working knowledge of the COSWP relevant to a seaman's duties and responsibilities as follows:

<b>Duty and Responsibility</b>	<b>Relevant section of COSWP</b>
.1 Protective clothing and equipment	Ch.4
.2 Safety signs and to include standard signs and colours for dangerous goods, pipe lines, fire extinguishers and gas cylinders	Ch.5
.3 Safety induction	Ch.8
.4 Fire precautions	Ch.9
.5 Emergency procedure	Ch.10, sections 1-6
.6 Safe movement on board ship	Ch.13
.7 Working aloft and outboard	Ch.15, sections 1-6
.8 Work in machinery spaces	Ch.15, sections 7-10
.9 Permit to Work	Ch.16, sections 1-2
.10 Enclosed spaces	Ch.17, sections 1-5 and 8-11
.11 Boarding arrangements	Ch.18
.12 Manual lifting and carrying	Ch.19
.13 Use of work equipment	Ch.20, sections 1-4 and 7-10
.14 Lifting plant	Ch.21, sections 1-7 and Annex 21.1
.15 Hydraulic and pneumatic equipment	Ch.22, section 10
.16 Batteries	Ch.22, section 16
.17 Anchoring and mooring	Ch.25
.18 Hatches	Ch.26





**MCA MARINE OFFICES ISSUING AB CERTIFICATES**

1. **Aberdeen Marine Office**  
Blaikies Quay  
Aberdeen AB11 5EZ  
Tel: 01224 574 122  
Fax: 01224 571 920
2. **Beverley Marine Office**  
Crosskill House  
Mill Lane  
Beverley  
North Humberside HU19 9JB  
Tel: 01482 866 606  
Fax: 01482 869 989
3. **Cardiff Marine Office**  
2nd Floor  
Oxford House  
Hills Street  
Cardiff CF1 2TD  
Tel: 02920 229 556  
Fax: 02920 229 017
4. **Glasgow Marine Office**  
6000 Academy Park  
Gower Street  
Glasgow G51 1TR  
Tel: 0141 427 9400  
Fax: 0141 427 9401
5. **Liverpool Marine Office**  
Graeme House  
2nd Floor  
Derby Square  
Liverpool L2 7SQ  
Tel: 0151 471 1142  
Fax: 0151 471 1143
6. **London Marine Office**  
Central Court  
1B Knoll Rise  
Orpington  
Kent BR6 OJA  
Tel: 01689 890 400  
Fax: 01689 890 446
7. **Newcastle Marine Office**  
Government Buildings  
Broadway West  
Gosforth  
Newcastle upon Tyne NE3 2JL  
Tel: 0191 285 7171  
Fax: 0191 284 7464
8. **Southampton Marine Office**  
Spring Place  
105 Commercial Road  
Southampton SO15 1EG  
Tel: 02380 329 329  
Fax: 02380 329 351