



**DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATIONS, MARINE AND  
NATURAL RESOURCES**

**Marine Notice No. 44 of 2003**

**Training and Certification Requirements for Ratings**

**Notice to Owners, Operators, Masters, Deck and Engineering Officers and Ratings  
of Merchant Vessels and those concerned with maritime training**

This Marine Notice gives information and guidance regarding the grading and training requirements for ratings employed on different types of ships. The contents of this Marine Notice are listed to meet the requirements of STCW 78/95, The International Labour Organisation and the International Maritime Organization SOLAS Convention.

Director-General  
Maritime Safety Directorate,  
Department of Communications, Marine and Natural Resources,  
Leeson Lane,  
Dublin 2

9<sup>th</sup> December 2003

For any technical assistance in relation to this Marine Notice please contact  
the Marine Surveyors' Office, 26-27 Eden Quay, Dublin 1 at +353-1-8744900.  
For information in relation to technical specification/type approval of radio equipment contact the Radio  
Surveyors +353 1 678 2363/2364/2365/2367.  
For general enquiries please contact the Maritime Safety Division at +353-1-678 2360  
Any enquiries concerning Marine Notices should be addressed to:  
Maritime Safety Directorate, Leeson Lane, Dublin 2  
Email: [marine.notices@dcmnr.gov.ie](mailto:marine.notices@dcmnr.gov.ie)  
Or visit us at: [www.dcmnr.ie](http://www.dcmnr.ie)

## **1.0 Introduction**

### **1.1 The Merchant Shipping (Training and Certification) Regulations 1998 (the Regulations) as amended, implement some of the requirements of the International Convention on Standards and Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers 1978, as amended in 1995 (STCW 78/ 95), and its associated Code (STCW Code).**

1.2 The four international instruments which regulate the training and certification of ratings are:

- .1 The International Labour Organisation (ILO) – Able Seamen – Convention No. 74 of 1946;
- .2 The International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers 1978, as amended in 1995 (STCW 78/ 95) and its associated STCW Code; and
- .3 The International Convention for Safety of Life at Sea 1974, as subsequently amended (SOLAS).
- .4 The International Labour Organization (ILO) Medical Examination (Seafarers) Convention No. 73 of 1946.

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 Ireland 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 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 July 2002. By this date they must obtain a STCW 78/95 watch-rating certificate (see paragraph 4.5).

1.6 In the context of this Marine Notice the term “seafarer” does not include hairdressers, entertainers, shop assistants or other staff employed by concessionaries on ro-ro ferries or passenger vessels.

## **2.0 Mandatory Requirements**

2.1 ILO Convention No. 73 of 1946 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 current Merchant Shipping (Medical Examinations) Regulations, 1984, before they are employed for shipboard

duties. Further information about medical fitness requirements is provided in Marine Notice No.37 of 1984 that may be amended from time to time. Part B of the STCW Code which is recommendatory also refers.

- 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.
- 2.3 The shipowner or operator must ensure that all seafarers are able to communicate in the common working language.
- 2.4 All seafarers having undertaken less than 6 months sea-service on the 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 and 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 1998 as amended, 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 yrs. 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 who are not employed as part of the normal crew and do not accumulate more than 1 month service in total on board the vessel, are not required to take the training in Personal Survival Techniques.

### **3.3 Deck Department**

**3.3.1 Deck Rating Category 2.** To qualify for this grading, a seafarer must be at least 17 yrs 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 the seafarer must obtain a Watch Rating Certificate within one month of joining the vessel.

**3.3.2 Deck Rating Category 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*
- .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;
- .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 17m in registered length, 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 by The Department of Communication, Marine and Natural Resources on completion of 6 months sea service on merchant ships.
- 3.4.4 An AB Certificate may be obtained 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, Naval ships and fishing vessels of more than 17m 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 of EDH training and certification is given in Annex 1.
- 3.5.5 Training providers must obtain approval from the Department of Communications, Marine and Natural Resources both to conduct EDH courses and for individual examiners. There is no requirement for existing approved training providers to seek re-approval.
- 3.5.6 Approved training providers will issue certificates on behalf of the Department of Communications, Marine and Natural Resources 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.

### **3.6 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.

*Reference should be made to the "Directions as to the examination of engineer officers, engine operators and engine watch ratings under the Merchant Shipping Acts.*

### **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** A company operating an Irish registered ship may apply to the Maritime Safety Directorate (Marine Survey Office) in the Department of Communications, Marine and Natural Resources 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 Marine Survey Office, 26/27 Eden Quay, Dublin 1, Ireland. 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 Department of Communications, Marine and Natural Resources approval will be subject to periodic review and evaluation and may be withdrawn if the requirements are not met.

4.3 Once a company has been approved by the Department of Communications, Marine and Natural Resources, it may issue approved Watch Rating Certificates to any rating who meets the following STCW 78/95 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 the 1<sup>st</sup> August 1998, acceptable survival and fire-fighting training and more than 6 months sea-service; *or*
- .5 has an EDH Certificate; *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 The company must maintain full records of all certificates issued to enable questions on validity to be answered and checks to be made.

4.5 Irish Companies approved by the Department of Communications, Marine and Natural Resources for the issue of Watch Rating Certificates should ensure that ratings holding STCW 78 Watch Rating Certificates are issued with STCW 78/95 certificates, following the procedure outlined above.

## **5.0 Additional Training Requirements**

5.1 STCW 78/95 includes additional training requirements for ratings serving on certain types of ship. These requirements 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 (e.g. 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 Maritime Safety Directorate 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 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 the Mercantile Marine Office where holders of Irish Seaman's will have their Discharge Books appropriately endorsed.

## **5.3 Ro – Ro Passenger Ships**

- 5.3.1 Where relevant and applicable, 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 5 (Crowd management, Familiarisation and Safety training for direct services to passengers, Passenger Safety, Cargo Safety and hull integrity, Crisis management and human behaviour training).
- 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 Where relevant and applicable 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 5 (Crowd management, Familiarisation and Safety training for direct services to passengers, Passenger safety, Crisis management and Human behaviour training).
- 5.4.2 For continued service, appropriate refresher training in respect of crowd management is required at intervals not exceeding 5 years or evidence of having achieved the required standard of competence within the previous five years must be produced to the employer or official of an authorised 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, in addition to other training requirements specified in this marine notice, as applicable.
- 5.5.2 Ratings employed on MOUs may be required by the Health and Safety Authority 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 (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 78/95 (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 Marine Survey Office.

## Annex 1

### **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 Marine Survey Office 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

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, weathertight 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 wires 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 Practices for Merchant Seamen (COSWP)

*(Consolidated edition 2002)*

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



