

U.S. Department
of Transportation

**United States
Coast Guard**



Commanding Officer
United States Coast Guard
National Maritime Center

4200 Wilson Blvd. Suite 510
Arlington, VA 22203-1804
Staff Symbol: NMC-4
Phone: (703) 235-0018
FAX: (703) 235-1062

16721
NMC Policy Ltr No. 12-98
July 31, 1998

From: Commanding Officer, National Maritime Center
To: Distribution

Subj: BASIC SAFETY TRAINING (BST)

1. The International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (STCW), 1978, as amended, requires all seafarers with safety or pollution prevention duties to receive approved training or education in four areas of basic safety. The four areas of basic safety training (BST) are:
 - a. Fire prevention and fire fighting;
 - b. Elementary first aid;
 - c. Personal survival techniques; and,
 - d. Personal safety and social responsibility.
2. Title 46, Code of Federal Regulations (46 CFR), Sections 10.205(l) and 12.03-1 implement the STCW's requirements. Until 1 August 1998, these requirements could be met by the relaxed methods of assessment noted on page 34521 of the preamble to the STCW implementing regulations published in the Federal Register dated June 26, 1997. Many mariners may be unable to complete the assessments before August 1, 1998; therefore, the Coast Guard is extending the period for acceptance of relaxed assessment until 1 January 1999 for mariners who were licensed or documented before 1 August 1998.
3. Mariners who meet the BST requirements during this extension period must be issued a signed copy of the completed in-service training record form found in Navigation and Vessel Inspection Circular No. 4-97, or an equivalent form. The training record form must be signed by an officer who holds both an ocean or near-coastal license for service on vessels of 200 or more gross registered tons (GRT) and the appropriate STCW form. The trainer(s)/assessor(s) must sign each applicable qualification, indicate the date the competency was demonstrated, and provide their Coast Guard license number on the bottom of the form. Other uniquely qualified personnel, such as Coast Guard licensed staff members of training institutions offering Coast Guard approved courses, may be approved to serve as BST trainers or assessors. This approval should be requested from the National Maritime Center (NMC-4B) and include a short resume of their qualifications.

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4. The Coast Guard will not issue an STCW-95 endorsement to unlicensed individuals for service on seagoing vessels of 200 or more GRT unless they hold evidence of having achieved or maintained proficiency in the four elements of BST. The relaxed assessment permitted by this policy letter meets this requirement.
5. Certificated seamen who serve on seagoing vessels prior to February 1, 2002, may be required to have evidence of having achieved or maintained proficiency in BST in accordance with 46 CFR 15.1105 even if they are not required to hold an STCW endorsement. The relaxed assessment for BST being extended by this policy letter meets this requirement.
6. The relaxed assessment method for BST being extended by this policy letter is not sufficient to meet the requirements of 46 CFR 10.205(g) and 10.205(h) which require completion of Coast Guard approved training programs in fire fighting and first aid in order to receive certain licenses.
7. Mariners who are issued an original (not a renewal) license or merchant mariners document after August 1, 1998, no matter when they started their sea service or training, must have formal training and/or assessment by a designated examiner approved by the Coast Guard. In other words, they must meet the full intent of the STCW and the regulations. The relaxed method addressed in this policy letter will not be available to them.
8. A letter signed by an appropriate officer or company official that states that the bearer has completed BST, as detailed in enclosure 1 to Navigation and Vessel Inspection Circular (NVIC) 8-97, will not be accepted if it is dated after 31 July 1998.
9. Anyone having questions may contact Mr. Stewart A. Walker of my staff at (703) 235-8451.

W. C. BENNETT
By direction

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