

## STCW Frequently Asked Questions: STCW – Rating – Deck

- 1. RFPNW/able seafarer-deck endorsements. In order to qualify for an endorsement as able seafarer-deck (or engine), is it sufficient for an able seaman to hold an endorsement for rating forming part of a navigational watch (RFPNW) or (for engineer ratings) for a QMED to hold an endorsement for rating forming part of an engineering watch (RFPEW)?**

As stated in 12.603(b), until January 1, 2017, seafarers will be considered to have met the requirements for able seafarer-deck if they have served as a watchstanding A/B or as an RFPNW for a period of not less than 12 months within the 60 months prior to application. If you can't qualify above, than 12.603(c) states that seafarers holding a rating endorsement as able seaman before January 1, 2017, will be eligible for the A/S-deck endorsement upon showing evidence of ; (1) Holding an endorsement as an RFPNW; and (2) Having satisfactorily completed approved training in—(i) Proficiency in survival craft and rescue boats, other than fast rescue boats (PSC); or (ii) Proficiency in survival craft and rescue boats, other than lifeboats or fast rescue boats-limited (PSC-limited), as appropriate.

46 CFR 12.607(b) and (c) have similar language for able seafarer-engine endorsement applicants.

- 2. Do I need to currently hold RFPNW to get an AS-D?**

No.

- 3. Is there is a scenario where I do not need to qualify for RFPNW or RFPEW to get AS-D or AS-E?**

No. STCW requires Able Seafarers to qualify for RFPNW or RFPEW. Some mariners who are applying for Able Seafarer but do not currently hold RFPNW or RFPEW may be eligible to be grandfathered in. In such situations both the Able Seafarer and RFPNW or RFPEW will be endorsed on your MMC. See Coast Guard Policy Letter 12-07 for more details.

- 4. What does the Able Seafarer-Deck and Able Seafarer-Engine endorsements allow a mariner to do?**

Able Seafarer-Deck and Able Seafarer-Engine are the STCW counterparts to the U.S. ratings of Able Seaman and QMED. These STCW endorsements are required by mariners serving as Able Seaman or QMED on vessels that are on voyages to which the STCW applies.

## 5. I already have RFPNW. Am I qualified for an endorsement as AS-D?

Maybe. The AS-D is considered a higher endorsement than the RFPNW, however, by itself RFPNW will not qualify you for an AS-D endorsement.

- If you do not hold an endorsement as Able Seaman, you must show at least 12 months of service as RFPNW.
- If you hold an endorsement as Able Seaman-Unlimited or Able Seaman-Limited, you can qualify for AS-D without showing sea service.
- If you hold an endorsement as Able Seaman-Special, you must show evidence of at least 6 months of service
- If you hold Able Seaman-OSV, Able Seaman-Sail or Able Seaman-Fishing industry, you must show evidence of at least 12 months of service.

See [Coast Guard Policy Letter 12-07](#) for more details.

## 6. (\*\*ADDED 07/07/14\*\*) Proficiency in survival craft (PSC) endorsement renewals: I believe PSC NVIC 04-14 contains a typographical error. Specifically, the renewal requirements of enclosure (1), paragraph 2.c.2 appears to be in conflict with NVIC 02-14 and the new regulations. Can you please confirm what the PSC renewal requirements are?

NVIC 04-14 provides the method through which the Coast Guard will implement the regulations. The required assessments ashore are duplicative of those that must be done ashore for the personal survival component of basic training, and do not need to be done more than once. If a mariner has one year of service in the previous five years and meets the requirements for continued competency in basic training, then they will also satisfy the requirement for continued competency for PSC or PSC-limited.

7. (\*\*ADDED 05/27/15\*\*) Can I obtain an STCW endorsement as able seafarer-deck without holding a national endorsement as able seaman-limited?

46 CFR 12.601(a) states that an applicant for any STCW endorsement must hold the appropriate national endorsement, unless otherwise specified. Table 1 to 46 CFR 12.603 provides eligibility of national endorsements for an STCW endorsement as able seafarer-deck. Applicants for able seafarer-deck must hold one of the national endorsements as able seaman. Additionally, you need meet one of the transitional provisions listed in [NVIC 02-14 Encl \(2\) paragraph 4](#).

8. (\*\*ADDED 05/27/15\*\*) RFPNW-Lookout Duties Only: Enclosure (2) of Grandfathering NVIC-02-14 states in # 3: Rating Forming Part of a Navigational Watch. Beginning March 24, 2015, the Coast Guard will no longer issue the interim, non-renewable endorsement of Rating Forming Part of a Navigational Watch - Lookout Duties Only. Endorsements issued prior to this date, will remain valid until their specified expiration dates.” If a person applies prior to March 24, 2015, will they be granted the “Rating Forming Part of a Navigational Watch - Lookout Duties Only” rating for 1 year or do they expire March 24, 2015?

As long as the mariner applies for his or her RFPNW-Lookout Duties Only endorsement before March 24, 2015, the endorsement will be good for 1 year from the date the endorsement is issued.

9. (\*\*ADDED 05/27/15\*\*) A review of NVIC 06-14 RFPNW shows that Assessment 2.1.A, Performance Standard 1. States that “Reports the large vessel before it is within 5 miles of own ship”. Prior to NVIC 6-14, this assessment was required to done at 10 miles, much like the Assessment 2.1.B. as printed in NVIC 06-14. Is this an error in publication?

No. The assessment was intentionally revised but, as explained in paragraph 3.d of enclosure (1) to the NVIC, mariners may continue to qualify using the previous model assessments until December 31, 2016.