

DISCUSSION OF QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS FOR STCW SECURITY ENDORSEMENTS

1. **GENERAL.** This enclosure provides guidance for mariners to qualify for International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers, 1978, as amended (STCW) endorsements for Vessel Security Officer (VSO), Vessel Personnel with Designated Security Duties (VPDSD), and Security Awareness (SA).
2. **QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS FOR VSO ENDORSEMENTS.**
 - a. As specified in 33 CFR 104.215, to qualify for a VSO endorsement, a mariner must:
 - 1) Be at least 18 years of age;
 - 2) Be able to speak and understand the English language as would be relevant to the duties of a VSO;
 - 3) Hold any valid Coast Guard-issued credential;
 - 4) Complete a Coast Guard accepted or Coast Guard approved VSO course; and
 - 5) Meet one of the following sea service requirements:
 - i) Not less than 12 months; or,
 - ii) Not less than 6 months and have knowledge of vessel operations;
 - 6) Acceptable service for paragraphs (5)(i) and (ii), above, is service in any capacity on the following types of vessels, which are subject to 33 CFR 104.105:
 - i) Mobile Offshore Drilling Unit (MODU), cargo, or passenger vessel subject to the International Convention for Safety of Life at Sea, 1974, (SOLAS), Chapter XI-1 or Chapter XI-2;
 - ii) Foreign cargo vessel greater than 100 gross register tons (GRT);
 - iii) Self-propelled U.S. cargo vessel greater than 100 GRT subject to 46 CFR Chapter I, Subchapter I, except commercial fishing vessels inspected under 46 CFR Part 105;
 - iv) Vessel subject to 46 CFR Chapter I, Subchapter L;
 - v) Passenger vessel subject to 46 CFR Chapter I, Subchapter H;
 - vi) Passenger vessel certificated to carry more than 150 passengers;
 - vii) Other passenger vessel carrying more than 12 passengers, including at least one passenger-for-hire, that is engaged on an international voyage;

- viii) Barge subject to 46 CFR Chapter I, Subchapters D or O;
 - ix) Barge carrying certain dangerous cargo in bulk or barge that is subject to 46 CFR Chapter I, Subchapter I that is engaged on an international voyage.
 - x) Tankship subject to 46 CFR Chapter I, Subchapters D or O; and
 - xi) Towing vessel greater than 8 meters in registered length that is engaged in towing a barge or barges subject to 33 CFR Part 104, except a towing vessel that temporarily assists another vessel engaged in towing a barge or barges subject to 33 CFR Part 104; shifts a barge or barges subject to this part at a facility or within a fleeting facility; assists sections of a tow through a lock; or provides emergency assistance.
- 7) Mariners who hold any officer endorsement under 46 CFR Part 11, Subpart B for service on vessels of more than 100 GRT will be considered to meet the requirement for knowledge of vessel operations in paragraphs (5)(ii), above. Other mariners must provide evidence through training or equivalent job experience, in the following areas specified in 33 CFR 104.215(d)(3):
- i) Basic vessel layout and construction:
 - Understanding layout, including decks, rooms, and space numbering; and
 - Understanding of various vessel types; and working knowledge of nautical terms and definitions, especially those used to describe areas and parts of a vessel.
 - ii) Shipboard organization:
 - Familiarity with the various departments and related functions; and
 - Familiarity with the titles used for personnel, the roles and responsibilities of these persons, and the chain of command.
 - iii) Shipboard safety:
 - Understanding of the importance of creating and maintaining safe working and living conditions for passengers and crew alike;
 - Understanding general shipboard safety rules, emergency alarms and signals, and responses to and reporting of accidents;
 - Proper usage of lifesaving equipment and where such equipment is normally stowed aboard various vessel types;
 - Understanding of the operating principles of and proper use of watertight and fire screen doors; and
 - Understanding where it is safe to smoke and not safe to smoke on board and in port.

- iv) Protection of the marine environment:
 - Understanding of vessel personnel's responsibility to preserve the marine environment; and
 - Basic working knowledge of pollution prevention regulations and techniques.
- v) Familiarity with key definitions, terminology, and operational practices employed in the maritime industry.

3. QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS FOR VPDS D ENDORSEMENTS.

- a. To qualify for an STCW endorsement as VPDS D, a mariner must present satisfactory documentary evidence, such as a certificate or letter signed by a company official, or a certificate of completion from a Coast Guard-accepted or Coast Guard-approved course, of meeting the requirements in 33 CFR 104.220:
 - 1) Knowledge of current security threats and patterns;
 - 2) Recognition and detection of dangerous substances and devices;
 - 3) Recognition of characteristics and behavioral patterns of persons who are likely to threaten security;
 - 4) Techniques used to circumvent security measures;
 - 5) Crowd management and control techniques;
 - 6) Security related communications;
 - 7) Knowledge of emergency procedures and contingency plans;
 - 8) Operation of security equipment and systems;
 - 9) Testing and calibration of security equipment and systems, and their maintenance while at sea;
 - 10) Inspection, control, and monitoring techniques;
 - 11) Relevant provisions of the Vessel Security Plan (VSP);
 - 12) Methods of physical screening of persons, personal effects, baggage, cargo, and vessel stores;
 - 13) The meaning and the consequential requirements of the different Maritime Security (MARSEC) Levels; and
 - 14) Relevant aspects of the TWIC program and how to carry them out.

- b. In accordance with 46 CFR 15.1113(c) and (d), persons who hold a VSO endorsement will qualify for a VPDS and SA endorsement.

4. QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS FOR SA ENDORSEMENTS.

- a. To qualify for an STCW SA endorsement a mariner must present satisfactory documentary evidence, such as a certificate or letter signed by a company official, or a certificate of completion from a Coast Guard-accepted or Coast Guard-approved course, of meeting the requirements in 33 CFR 104.225:
 - 1) Relevant provisions of the VSP;
 - 2) The meaning and the consequential requirements of the different MARSEC Levels, including emergency procedures and contingency plans;
 - 3) Recognition and detection of dangerous substances and devices;
 - 4) Recognition of characteristics and behavioral patterns of persons who are likely to threaten security;
 - 5) Techniques used to circumvent security measures; and
 - 6) Relevant aspects of the TWIC program and how to carry them out
- b. In accordance with 46 CFR 15.1113(c) and (d), persons who hold a VSO endorsement or a VPDS endorsement will qualify for a SA endorsement.