

STCW Frequently Asked Questions: Towing Endorsements

1. **(**ADDED 02/14/14**) How does a limited tonnage master of towing vessels, 200 GRT tons or less, remove the tonnage limitation?**

To remove a tonnage limitation from a master of towing vessel endorsement, an applicant must submit 24 months of service as master or mate (pilot) of towing vessels, 90 days recent service within the last 3 years, and either successfully complete an approved steersman course within the last year or pass the following exams for the route(s) requested: Rules of the Road, Navigation and Chart Navigation, Deck and Navigation General, and Deck Safety. This does not apply to any applicant with an original license or endorsement issued after 21 May 2001 who now wishes to obtain an original endorsement as Master of Towing Vessels.

2. **(**ADDED 07/07/14**) I hold an endorsement as master of towing vessels upon near-coastal waters and western rivers for domestic voyages only, 500 GT (ITC). My MMC meets the STCW 1995 regulations without further endorsement. I also have a radar observer (unlimited) certificate. I am due for renewal in July 2014. Am I eligible to apply for a 200 GRT oceans endorsement and get grandfathered into the program without returning to school and also STCW?**

Because you began your service and training before 24 March 2014, you may obtain an STCW endorsement under the previous regulations. This requires you to provide evidence of completing approved training in basic training, ARPA (if installed), GMDSS (if installed), and procedures for bridge team work.

3. **(**ADDED 07/07/14**)** The checklists that the NMC uses for both national master of towing vessels on western rivers and national mate (pilot) of towing vessels on western rivers state: “If service or training commenced after March 24, 2014 approved basic firefighting course within 5 years of application date (unless previously met)”. What this seems to state is that, after 24 March 2014 if a steersman applies for an endorsement as mate (pilot), he or she must complete a basic firefighting course and, likewise, if a mate (pilot) applies for a raise in grade to master, he or she must also complete a basic firefighting course (unless they have previously met the requirement). However, a master or mate (pilot) who started work before 24 March 2014 doesn't have to complete a basic firefighting course; he or she would be grandfathered. Also, applicants for MMC renewals would not need to complete a basic firefighting course. Is this correct?

46 CFR 11.201(h)(3) adds a basic firefighting course requirement for national endorsements as master or mate (pilot) of towing vessels on all routes except oceans. Applicants for oceans endorsements must complete basic and advanced firefighting courses; this is not a change in the regulations. Until 24 March 2019, mariners who began service or training for mate or master of towing vessels before 24 March 2014 will not have to meet the requirement for the basic firefighting course. For a mate endorsement, this would mean they were issued the apprentice mate endorsement and have at least one day of service before 24 March 2014 after issuance of the apprentice mate endorsement. As long as the endorsement is issued before 24 March 2019 the mariner will not need to take a basic firefighting course in order to renew.

4. **(**ADDED 07/07/14**)** Does NVIC 13-14 (for Master/OICNW Less Than 500GT Near Coastal) apply to mariners holding an Operator of Uninspected Towing Vessels endorsement?

NVIC 13-14 could be applicable to mariners holding an endorsement as Master of Towing Vessels (formerly Operator of Uninspected Towing Vessels) if the mariner intends to operate on international voyages.