

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

1. **(\*\*ADDED 07/07/14\*\*) We are teaching an able seaman (A/B) course and need to clarify if applicants need an endorsement as Proficiency with Survival Craft (PSC). Is an applicant for an A/B endorsement required to meet the STCW endorsement requirements as PSC and must he or she also meet the basic training requirements?**

No. To qualify for a national endorsement as A/B, 46 CFR 12.401 requires the applicant to qualify for lifeboatman. Those qualification requirements are spelled out in 46 CFR 12.407. There is no requirement for a mariner to obtain an STCW endorsement in order to hold the national endorsement as A/B.

2. **(\*\*ADDED 07/07/14\*\*) Lifeboatman-limited endorsements:**

1. **The new regulations for an able-bodied seaman (A/B) endorsement imply that if you have an A/B endorsement, you will also receive an endorsement as lifeboatman-limited. This conflicts with the NMC checklist for lifeboatman-limited. The regulations also appear to state that an A/B can get an endorsement for lifeboatman-limited without taking the lifeboatman exam. Is this true?**

2. **Can an approved A/B course be modified to include the requirements for a lifeboatman endorsement?**

1. The new regulations require that in order to qualify for an endorsement as A/B, applicants must have qualified for an endorsement as either lifeboatman, or lifeboatman-limited. The requirements for lifeboatman are found in 46 CFR 12.407, and those for lifeboatman-limited are in 46 CFR 12.409. The regulations for both endorsements require an examination; thus it is not possible for an applicant to qualify for an endorsement as lifeboatman or lifeboatman-limited without taking an examination of the candidate's knowledge and ability to serve as lifeboatman or life-boatman-limited.

2. A/B courses may be modified to include the requirements for lifeboatman and/or lifeboatman-limited. However, the course would need to be increased in length and would need to be about the same length as the total hours in the separate courses. In addition, as specified in 46 CFR 12.407(b)(3) and 12.409(b)(3) any course for lifeboatman or lifeboatman-limited must include practical demonstrations of ability. This would necessitate that the school use actual equipment in its courses; for lifeboatman courses, this would include a full gravity-davit lifeboat arrangement; and for lifeboatman-limited courses, a survival craft fitted with an engine (inboard or outboard) and a launching apparatus, such as a davit or crane and sling.

3. (\*\*ADDED 05/27/15\*\*) Able Seamen (A/B) and lifeboatman endorsements. I would like to request clarification of 46 CFR 12.401 (d)(2), which states “After March 24, 2014, any MMC endorsed as A/B will also be endorsed as lifeboatman or lifeboatman-limited, as appropriate.” However, I have been told that the A/B would still have to take the lifeboatman course and examination. This is in conflict with the regulations, which state, very clearly, that if you have an A/B endorsement, you will also get the lifeboatman endorsement.

As described in the Table of Changes to the final rule, 46 CFR 12.401(c)(6) revises the general requirements to obtain an endorsement as able seaman (A/B) to include holding or being qualified to hold an endorsement as lifeboatman. In addition, 46 CFR 12.407(b)(3) requires that applicants for a lifeboatman endorsement must prove to the satisfaction of the Coast Guard, by oral or other means of examination, and by actual practical demonstration of abilities, knowledge of seamanship and the ability to carry out effectively all the duties that may be for handling required of a lifeboatman.