

STCW Frequently Asked Questions: STCW – Officer – Deck

1. Will there be any limitations or restrictions placed on my credential as a result of policy letter 12-07 or the new regulations?

All limitations currently on your STCW endorsements will be retained, such as “Not valid for vessels equipped with ARPA,” unless you meet the current requirement. There is also a new limitation with regard to Electronic Chart Display Information Systems (ECDIS). Any application that is in process for an endorsement as Chief Mate, Master, or OICNW will have a limitation added to their endorsement stating they are not qualified to work on a vessels equipped with ECDIS after December 31, 2016, unless they can show successful completion of a Coast Guard approved or accepted ECDIS course.

2. Why isn't ECDIS endorsed?

ECDIS is a part of the STCW required competencies for master, chief mate, and OICNW, it is not itself an endorsement. If you do not have approved ECDIS training, your STCW endorsement(s) for master chief mate, and/or OICNW will have a limitation indicating that it is not valid for vessels with ECDIS after December 31, 2016.

3. If I had the ECDIS limitation placed on my MMC and I apply to have it removed, does this result in a new MMC book? Or will they reprint an endorsement with my highest officer capacity showing no ECDIS limitation?

In most cases, NMC will issue you the endorsement without the ECDIS limitation to add to your existing MMC book.

4. I am a 2nd Mate and qualify for unlimited OICNW and have a Master 1,600 Oceans. Why do I have the 1,600 tonnage limitation?

This limitation will only apply to your endorsement as Master. Your endorsement for OICNW, which corresponds to your 2nd Mate endorsement, will not have a tonnage limitation.

5. **(**ADDED 07/07/14**) Electronic Chart Display & Information System (ECDIS): If a master or mate is on a vessel that does not have ECDIS, and they have not received ECDIS training, will their MMC contain an endorsement limiting them to service on vessels without installed ECDIS?**

Yes. 46 CFR 11.301(e) states that training and assessment in the use of ECDIS is not required for those who serve exclusively on ships not fitted with ECDIS. However, if the mariner cannot provide evidence of ECDIS training, a limitation will be placed on his or her STCW endorsement limiting service to vessels that are not equipped with ECDIS.

6. **(**ADDED 07/07/14**) Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS): Does 11.315(a)(3)(vi) refer to a vessel that is carrying GMDSS equipment due to a regulatory requirement or does it include a vessel that only has a DSC VHS radio onboard?**

46 CFR 11.315(a)(3)(vi) refers to a vessel that is carrying GMDSS equipment due to regulatory requirement. The VHF (or HF) Digital Selective Call (DSC) radio would be only one of the pieces of equipment in a GMDSS suite. Having only a DSC radio on a vessel that is not required to carry GMDSS does not require officers serving onboard this vessel to undergo GMDSS training. Please refer to the following link as it provides useful GMDSS carriage information: <http://rtcm.org/gmdssguide.php>.

7. **(**ADDED 07/07/14**) Once a mariner has completed all the training that is required for an STCW endorsement as chief mate, is there any additional training requirements in order to obtain a master's endorsement, or is only additional sea time required?**

As discussed in 46 CFR 11.305, if a mariner has already completed all of the training requirements to obtain an STCW endorsement as chief mate on vessels of 3,000 GT or more (management level), he or she only needs to provide evidence of the appropriate sea service and the gap closing requirements, if not already completed, in order to obtain an STCW endorsement as master on vessels of 3,000 GT or more (management level).

8. (**ADDED 07/07/14**) According to the Final Rule, 11.307, Requirements to qualify for an STCW endorsement as chief mate on vessels of 3,000 GT or more, “Provide evidence of having satisfactorily completed approved training in the following subject areas; (I-IX).” Can a mariner complete training by having all of the required assessments listed in Policy Letter No. 04-02 signed off during onboard training or must he or she complete an approved chief mate/ masters programs?

The transitional provisions for chief mate 3,000 GT or more are found in NVIC 02-14 enclosure 2 table 2 on page 14.

9. (**ADDED 07/07/14**) Renewal: I understand that I need to take basic training and leadership classes by 1 January 2017. My question is, do they have to be the full class, or can they be a refresher class, if I have already taken these classes in the past and I have been working at sea for about 7 years?

Mariners who apply for an STCW officer endorsement with service before 24 March 2014 need to meet the gap closing training identified in NVIC 02-14 which for deck officers requires the appropriate leadership skills training and ECDIS. (If serving on a vessel so equipped, a limitation will be applied if not completed.) For engine officers, this training would include engine room management and the appropriate leadership skills, and for engine management endorsements, management of electrical and electronic control equipment.

10. (**ADDED 07/07/14**) Officer in Charge of a Navigational Watch (OICNW): 46 CFR11.309 requires “approved training” in emergency procedures for OICNW. But Column 3 of Table A-II-1 allows a KUP to be demonstrated in four different ways. Will any of those four ways be accepted as satisfying the requirement imposed by STCW or will only one way be permitted? This is just one example of the flexibility of STCW (as described in 46 CFR11.301) perhaps being limited by the rules.

The new regulations specify those areas where “approved training” is required. The regulations do not specify the type of approved training: classroom, training ship, e-learning, etc. It is up to the industry, including training institutions, to submit their training for approval.

11. (ADDED 07/07/14**) STCW endorsement as master 500 GT or more and less than 3,000 GT: I hold a national endorsement as master of steam and motor vessels of not more than 1,600 GRT/3,000 GT (ITC) upon oceans. For vessels less than 200 GRT/500 GT (ITC) on domestic voyages only, the holder of this credential meets the STCW 1995 regulations without further endorsements.” What are the minimum requirements I would have to meet to obtain an STCW endorsement?**

In order to qualify for an STCW endorsement as master on vessels of 500 GT or more and less than 3,000 GT, you must meet the minimum requirements found in 46 CFR 11.311. However, mariners with service and training before 24 March 2014 are eligible for the grandfathering provisions found in 46 CFR 11.301(g)(3) and explained in NVIC 02-14.

12. (ADDED 07/07/14**) Master unlimited: 46 CFR 11.305 seems to say that a mariner can move directly from a 1,600 GRT/3,000 GT oceans master’s endorsement to an unlimited master’s endorsement by taking classes in: advanced shiphandling; advanced stability; advanced meteorology; leadership and managerial skills; search and rescue; ARPA; and ECDIS. This section does not require testing for the unlimited master’s endorsement. Is this correct?**

Yes. The United States has not made examination a requirement to obtain an STCW endorsement; however, an examination is required in order to obtain the associated national endorsement. 46 CFR 11.305 (d) states that seafarers holding an STCW endorsement as master of vessels of 500 GT or more and less than 3,000 GT, in accordance with 46 CFR 11.311, are eligible to apply for the STCW endorsement as master on vessels of 3,000 GT or more upon completion of six months of sea service, under the authority of the endorsement. Applicants for this endorsement must also complete any items in 46 CFR 11.305(a)(2) (assessments) and (a)(3) (training) not previously completed. Additionally, applicants for this endorsement would also have to meet the requirements for an appropriate national endorsement as required by 46 CFR 11.201(a) which may have different service requirements from those STCW endorsement requirements found in 46 CFR Part 11 Subpart C.

- 13. (**ADDED 07/07/14**) I am trying to get my STCW OICNW 500 GT endorsement. The NMC check list, under sea service, requires “360 days as part of an approved training program, which includes onboard training that meets the requirements of section A-II/1 of the STCW code.” Where can I find information on section A- II/1 of the STCW Code or what training it requires?**

If a mariner has service before 24 March 2014 he or she may qualify under the requirements existing before that date. This includes the policy and assessments published in policy letter 11-07, which is located on the NMC website. Candidates who apply for a credential based on approved or accepted training or approved seagoing service that was started on or after 24 March 2014, or who apply for the MMC endorsement on or after 1 January 2017 must meet the requirements of 46 CFR 11.309. Further guidance applicable to those mariners is found in NVIC 12-14 which is also located on the NMC website.

- 14. (**ADDED 07/07/14**) Can a mariner obtain an STCW endorsement as master on vessels of 3,000 GT or more without first obtaining a national endorsement or is there a route to get the national endorsement that is not currently listed in the regulations?**

No, 46 CFR 11.201(a) specifies that an applicant for any STCW endorsement must hold the appropriate national endorsement unless otherwise specified.

Applicants for this STCW endorsement (authorizing service on vessels of 3,000 GT or more) must hold a national officer endorsement authorizing service on vessels of 1,600 GRT/3,000 GT or more in order to qualify for the STCW endorsement as master on vessels of 3,000 GT or more.

- 15. (**ADDED 07/07/14**) If a mariner is applying for an endorsement as master on vessels of 3,000 GT or more under 46 CFR 11.305(d), from master 500 to 3,000 GT, the NMC checklists for the national endorsement do not list this as an option, while the NMC checklists for the STCW do list this as an option.**

The regulations in 46 CFR Part 11, Subpart D do not provide a path from master of self-propelled vessels of less than 1,600 GRT to master of self-propelled vessels of unlimited tonnage, so that path is not on the checklist for the national endorsement. See 46 CFR 11.404 for the service requirements for master of ocean or near-coastal self-propelled vessels of unlimited tonnage. The STCW checklist for master on vessels of 3,000 GT or more does provide the path from master on vessels of 500 to 3,000 GT, since it would be applicable to master of OSV who are authorized to operate on vessels of 3,000 or more. (See 46 CFR 11.493.)

16. (ADDED 07/07/14**) If a mariner holds an STCW endorsement as OICNW on vessels of less than 500 GT (46 CFR 11.319), is there a minimum tonnage for the vessels served on as master while holding that endorsement and applying for an upgrade to master on vessels of 3,000 GT or more?**

There is no tonnage requirement for the OICNW service specified in 46 CFR 11.305(a)(1). However, as stated in 46 CFR 11.201(a), mariners must also hold the appropriate national officer endorsement authorizing service as master on vessels of 3,000 GT (1,600 GRT) or more or 500 GRT or more, and must meet any service requirements applicable to the national endorsement, before they can apply for an STCW endorsement as master on vessels of 3,000 GT or more.

17. (ADDED 07/07/14**) Chief mate (unlimited): According to the final rule, 46 CFR 11.307 requires that, in order for an applicant to qualify for an STCW endorsement as chief mate on vessels of 3,000 GT or more, he or she must provide evidence of 12 months of service as OINCW on vessels operating in Oceans. Will 12-hour days be counted as day and a half service for each 12 hours worked in a 24-hour period?**

Not in all instances. On vessels authorized to operate a two-watch system by 46 U.S.C. 8104 and 46 CFR 15.705, a 12-hour working day may be creditable as 1 1/2 days of service.

18. (ADDED 05/27/15**) Master 100 GRT endorsement: With regard to the requirements for an STCW endorsement as Master 100 GRT, I found the following in the MMC checklist (mcp_fm_nmc5_66_web.pdf) but could find no similar language in the regulations. Is this correct? Master 100 GRT needs only BT and the STCW endorsement will be limited to 100 GRT, 50, or 25 GRT based upon submitted service experience.**

The checklist on the NMC website reflects the policy and practice in place and is applicable to those mariners who began service or training before March 24, 2014. Those mariners who began service or training on or after that date and for all mariners after January 1, 2017, will be required to meet the requirements found in the regulations in 46 CFR 11.315 for oceans waters and 11.317 for near coastal waters.

19. (ADDED 07/22/15**) I have a 100 GRT domestic master's endorsement. When I renewed it, the STCW '95 endorsement was not included, as it had been on my old credential. Is there a reason why this STCW endorsement was not included and, if so, what do I need to do to obtain the STCW endorsement?**

The recent STCW rulemaking added requirements for STCW endorsements, including endorsements for mariners on vessels less than 500 GT (200 GRT) on near-coastal voyages.

Your previous endorsement most likely specified that it was limited to near-coastal, domestic voyages. Mariners serving on small vessels engaged exclusively in near-coastal, domestic voyages do not require an STCW endorsement [see 46 CFR 11.301(h)]. As an STCW endorsement is not required on near-coastal domestic voyages, it is no longer necessary to add such an endorsement to your credential. If a mariner intends to serve on a vessel that is subject to STCW, he or she must meet the requirements for an endorsement as master of vessels of less than 500 GT limited to near-coastal waters [see 46 CFR 11.317].

20. (ADDED 09/15/15**) NVIC 10-14 and NVIC 11-14 Record of Assessment: The performance condition for task 11.1.B, "Prepare a loading and discharge plan", does not require it to be done in a course. It is required to be performed "on board a ship, or in a laboratory, when given information concerning a future cargo operation and given ship stability data for a vessel of at least 1,600 GRT or 3,000 GT and/or use of vessel specific software." The NVIC 10-14 and 11-14, Record of Assessment (enclosure 3) does not have a box for the assessor to initial (it incorrectly says course). Again the performance condition (enclosure 2) gives individuals the option to get it signed off onboard (or in a laboratory) as part of a class. This is a clear mistake in the record of assessment. Please confirm that the NMC will accept this task signed off outside of a course if an individual has 11.1.B in the record of assessment initialed where it says course.**

You are correct; task 11.1.B does not have to be performed in a course. The assessment MAY be done in a course. If it is performed in a course, the approval of the course will either note that completing the course is evidence of successful completion of the assessment (if assessment is mandatory to complete the course), or the approval will note that an assessor may sign a student's Record of Assessment for a successful demonstration (when the assessment is not a mandatory part of the course).

Also, you are correct, the shading of the box and addition of "course" in NVIC 10-14 and 11-14 Enclosure (3) (Record of Assessment) was an error. It will be corrected when the NVIC is revised.