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## **Revalidating a Certificate of Competency: New Procedure for Dispensation**

**Notice to all owners, operators, managers, Masters, and officers of merchant ships**

*This notice should be read with MGN 9 (M)  
This MIN will expire 31 March 2011*

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**PLEASE NOTE:-**

Where this document provides guidance on the law it should not be regarded as definitive. The way the law applies to any particular case can vary according to circumstances - for example, from vessel to vessel and you should consider seeking independent legal advice if you are unsure of your own legal position.

**Summary**

This note provides information on the new application procedure for dispensation to sail in a lower than certified capacity for revalidating Certificates of Competency and replaces paragraph 10.6 in MGN 9 (M).

Applications will be made to Seafarer Training and Certification Branch who will issue a Notice of Eligibility for an oral examination with a MCA Examiner. On successful completion the officer will be issued a temporary STCW 95 Certificate of Competency (CoC) to allow them to complete the required sea service to revalidate their expired CoC.

### **1. Introduction**

1.1 Marine Guidance Note (MGN) 9 (M) provides guidance regarding the revalidation of Certificates of Competency issued in accordance with the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping 1978, or as amended in 1995 (referred to in this document as STCW 95). Every Master and officer holding a Certificate of Competency (CoC) issued under STCW 78 or STCW 95 who wishes to serve at sea is required to revalidate their CoC at intervals not exceeding 5 years.

1.2 As per MGN 9 (M) paragraph 10.0, in order to revalidate their CoC, every Master and officer must:

.a have served as an officer in their relevant discipline (deck or engineering) for at least 12 months (which need not be continuous) during the preceding 5 years; **or**

.b have served as an officer in their relevant discipline for 3 months immediately prior to the expiry date of their CoC and apply for revalidation within 3 months after the expiry date of their CoC; **or**

.c have served on ships in a supernumerary capacity in duties relevant to their discipline for 3 months before applying for revalidation of their CoC; **or**

.d have been engaged in an occupation the MCA considers to be equivalent to the sea service required for revalidation for at least two and a half years of the preceding 5 years.

1.2 On occasions a Merchant Navy Master or an officer may have been away from the industry for a long time and may hold either a STCW 78 CoC or a STCW 95 CoC and does not meet the revalidation criteria above. Therefore they may not be familiar with the latest developments and requirements and the MCA must ensure that the officer has the appropriate knowledge and competence in order to revalidate their CoC.

1.3 MGN 9 (M) sets out options and conditions for revalidation. Paragraph 10.6 provides the option to update experience by sailing in a lower than certified capacity. Until now officers applied to a Marine Office for an oral examination for a Certificate of Dispensation. Officers will now apply to Seafarer Training and Certification Branch for a Notice of Eligibility (NOE) for a dispensation oral examination (conducted with a MCA Examiner of the relevant discipline) to sail in a lower than certified capacity. On passing the oral examination the officer will be issued with a temporary CoC under STCW 95 for service at a lower rank before completing the required 3 months sea service. Those who wish to restrict their service to a certain type of vessel may elect to be examined only on that type of vessel, in which case the temporary CoC will indicate any such limitation.

1.4 This procedure applies to officers above STCW Regulation II/1 and III/1 Officer of the Watch i.e. Masters, Chief Mates, Chief Engineers and Second Engineers. Holders of a STCW 78 Class IV (without a Second Engineer endorsement) or STCW 95 Officer of the Watch who have been away from the industry as per paragraph 1.2 (above) and wish to revalidate must complete one of the requirements below.

.a STCW 78 **Deck** Class IV or STCW 95 **Deck** Officer of the Watch:  
Holders of one of the above certificates must complete either 3 months sea service in a relevant supernumerary capacity or an approved shore-based updating course.

.b STCW 78 **Engineer** Class IV (without a Second Engineer endorsement) or STCW 95 **Engineer** Officer of the Watch:  
Holders of one of the above certificates must complete 3 months sea service in a relevant supernumerary capacity.

## 2. Application Procedure

2.1 Applications must be submitted to the Seafarer Training and Certification Branch with the full supporting documentation specified below. A flow diagram outlining the procedure can be found in Annex 1.

2.2 All Applicants for revalidation of a STCW 78 CoC must submit the following for a Notice of Eligibility:

- .a Completed and signed MSF 4258
- .b STCW 78 CoC
- .c Passport
- .d Lifeboatman certificate, **or** an MCA-approved onboard survival craft training programme **or** Proficiency in Survival Craft and Rescue Boats other than Fast Rescue Boats (PSC & RB) (STCW Code A-VI/2-1)
- .e Four-day MNTB Fire Fighting certificate **or** Advanced Fire Fighting (STCW Code A-VI/3)
- .f First Aid at Sea certificate **or** Proficiency in Medical First Aid (STCW Code A-VI/4-1)

- .g **Deck officers only:**
    - i. Proficiency in Medical Care (STCW'95 A-VI/4-2), **and**
    - ii. the documents described in MGN 9 (M) paragraph 10.8.1.
  - .h Valid ENG1 Medical Fitness certificate, or accepted equivalent
  - .i Two passport size photographs
  - .j Appropriate fee
- 2.3 All applicants for revalidation of a STCW 95 CoC must submit the following for a Notice of Eligibility:
- .a Completed and signed MSF 4258
  - .b STCW 95 CoC
  - .c Passport
  - .d **Deck officers only** – either:
    - iii. Proficiency in Medical Care (Refresher) (STCW'95 A-VI/4-2) **or**
    - iv. Proficiency in Medical First Aid (STCW Code A-VI/4-1) completed in the last five years **and** Proficiency in Medical Care (STCW'95 A-VI/4-2) completed in the last five years.
  - .e **Deck officers only** – GMDSS approved by the MCA
  - .f Valid ENG1 Medical Fitness certificate, or accepted equivalent
  - .g Two passport size photographs
  - .h Appropriate fee
- 2.4 Once the application has been received and approved the Seafarer Training and Certification Branch will issue a Notice of Eligibility (NOE) allowing the officer to sit the oral examination with a MCA Examiner.
- 2.5 On successful completion of the oral examination the officer must return their signed NOE to the Seafarer Training and Certification Branch who will issue a temporary STCW 95 CoC to sail in a lower than certified capacity.
- 2.6 On successful completion of the 3 months sea service the officer must submit the following documents to the Seafarer Training and Certification Branch:
- .a Temporary STCW 95 CoC
  - .b Discharge Book
  - .c Sea Service Testimonials
  - .d Covering letter
- 2.6 Once the documents in paragraph 2.5 have been received and provided the sea service is acceptable the MCA will issue a full STCW 95 CoC.

## More Information

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*An executive agency of the  
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**Merchant Navy  
Application Procedure for Dispensation to Sail in a Lower than Certified Capacity**



