

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (CONT.)

Who is covered by this rule?

Mariners serving on U.S.-flag vessels covered by the STCW Convention.

Schools teaching STCW Convention courses.

Owners/Operators employing those mariners on U.S.-flag vessels covered by the STCW Convention.

Are there new requirements for current mariners?

Yes. Complete additional STCW courses (e.g. ECDIS, Management Level-Leadership & Managerial Skills and Engine Room Resource Management) and have a medical examination every 2 years instead of every 5 years. Per current industry practices, most mariners will not be impacted by these additional courses and more frequent medical examination.

What are the new requirements for Schools?

The STCW final rule requires STCW schools to establish a Quality Standards System (QSS) process, write and maintain a QSS manual, provide an annual report to National Maritime Center on all courses and student records and conduct two audits every 5 years.

Are there any new requirements for vessel owners and operators?

No. There are no new requirements to owners and operators. However, the Coast Guard anticipates that will bear the costs for additional mariner training and more frequent medical examination of their employees.

STCW

Small Entity Compliance Guide



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THE BASICS

The Coast Guard has published a final rule to amend its regulations found in 46 CFR parts 1, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14 and 15, that implement the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers, 1978, as amended (STCW).

While this final rule implements all amendments to the STCW, it also simplifies domestic licensing requirements and separate them from STCW requirements, provides alternative means for demonstrating competence, clarifies oversight requirements for approved courses, amends lifeboatmen requirements, allows for acceptance of sea service on vessels serving the Great Lakes and inland waters, permits partial acceptance of maritime academies' documentation in compliance with national accreditation bodies to meet STCW requirements. It will also allow for the preservation of the "hawsepiper" program and fostering career paths that were not previously available.

The STCW final rule becomes effective on **January 1, 2014**. This Compliance Guide, issued under the Small Business Regulatory Enforcement Act of 1996, offers a plain-language overview of the final rule, but **you should refer to the final rule directly for details**.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Will the Coast Guard issue additional guidance to assist in the implementation of this rule?

Yes, the Coast Guard is publishing approximately 30 Navigation and Vessel Inspection Circulars (NVICS) that offer detailed information and guidance on a variety of rule-related endorsements and actions. These include Basic Training, Officer in Charge of a Navigational or Engineering Watch, Advanced Firefighting, High Speed Craft Type Rating, Master/Chief Mate, Chief Engineer Officer/Second Engineer Officer, Qualified Assessor/Qualified Instructor, Proficiency in Survival Craft, various Tanker Endorsements, and Recognition of Foreign Certificates.

Will the medical standards change?

There are new requirements for the issuance of Medical Certificates to all seafarers: Every 2 years for mariners serving on vessels to which STCW applies and for Pilots. Requirements for mariners sailing inside the boundary line will not change and these mariners will be issued Medical Certificates every 5 years. Mariners who do sail internationally should seek a Medical Certificate before their next renewal/raise of grade transaction.

There are also several small changes; required documentation for medical examinations, revision of vision and hearing standards, and clarification regarding demonstration of physical ability.

Are there alternatives to this rule for small businesses?

The STCW final rule allows alternative methods of proving competence that would be potentially less costly to the mariners and their employers.

HOW TO FIND THIS RULE

The official results of the STCW rule appear as part of the Code of Federal Regulations in Title 46 (46CFR) in parts 10 through 15. The CFR is available through the U.S. Government Printing Office at <http://bookstore.gpo.gov> or Phone (866) 512-1800; or online at <http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?c=ecfr&tpl=%2Findex.tpl>



A copy of the rule may be viewed on the internet at <http://www.regulations.gov>. Insert "USCG-2004-17914" in the "Keyword" box and then click "Search." For more information, go to the National Maritime Center website www.uscg.mil/nmc/stcw and click on "STCW FAQ."