How to Apply for a

U.S. Merchant Mariner Credential

The first step is to fill out an application (Form CG-719B). Depending on which credential you are applying for (e.g. License as a Deck, Engineering, or Radio Officer; Certificate of Registry as a Staff Officer; or Merchant Mariner Document for unlicensed personnel), the following general requirements may also apply:

1. Professional service or experience

2. Age

3. Citizenship

4. Social Security Number

5. Payment of user fees

6. Physical examination (Form CG-719K) for licensed officers or unlicensed Qualified Ratings (e.g. Able Seaman (AB), Qualified Member of the Engine Department (QMED), etc.)

7. Physical agility, flexibility, and strength standards for Unqualified (Entry Level) Ratings (e.g. Ordinary Seaman (OS), Wiper (WI), or Steward's Department) and Lifeboatman (LBMAN) of vessels greater than 200 Gross Register Tons (Domestic Tonnage) operating beyond the boundary line (These standards are outlined in Navigation and Inspection Circular (NVIC) No. 2-98)

8. Criminal record review

9. National Driver Record (NDR) check

10. Passing a written examination

11. Completion of Coast Guard approved training

When you have determined which credential to apply for and you are ready to submit your application package, send it to one of the 17 national Regional Examination Centers (RECs) for evaluation. The time to process an application varies greatly with the complexity and type of credential applied for, but you will be notified in writing whether you have been

approved or if additional information is required. You can contact the REC that is reviewing your application any time after submittal on the status of your evaluation.

The Coast Guard has a web site (http://www.uscg.mil/hq/g-m/ marpers/pers.htm) that has links to information concerning the licensing and documentation of merchant mariners as well as guides to the different credential types. In addition, the address and phone numbers of each REC are also listed in the site. The guides for applying for a Merchant Mariner's Document (MMD) and STCW certification for unlicensed personnel are included in this pullout section of this issue of Proceedings along with all of the necessary forms. Surf the web site above to get guides for the other credentials or for general merchant mariner license and document information. If you have questions that can not be answered from our web site or if you do not have access to the Internet, please contact your nearest REC.

How to Apply for

STCW-78   Certification

The process to apply for a STCW Endorsement form to meet the provisions of the 1978 STCW convention (STCW-78) is very similar to applying for a U.S. merchant mariner credential. Your first step starts with filling out the application (Form CG-719B). The STCW form is based on the U.S. License, Certificate of Registry (COR), or Merchant Mariner Document (MMD) for which you are applying. If you began service or training before August 1, 1998 and obtain the STCW form before February 1, 2002, then you must only meet the requirements of STCW-78, which is the same as the requirements to maintain your U.S. merchant mariner credential, and prove proficiency in Basic Safety Training. Until February 1, 2002, you may serve on a seagoing vessel with a STCW-78 form as long as you also provide proof to your employer of having proficiency in Basic Safety Training that meets the requirements of STCW-95. By that date, you must fully comply with STCW-95 and obtain a STCW-95 form because the STCW-78 forms become invalid on that date. If you do not already have a STCW-78 form and plan to embark on seagoing service, you may apply for one at any REC and at no cost. For additional information, look up our web site at www.uscg.mil/STCW or contact your local REC.

How to Apply for

STCW-95   Certification

The process to apply for a STCW Endorsement form to meet the provisions of the 1995 amendments to the STCW Convention (STCW-95) also starts with filling out the application (Form CG-719B). This can be done at the same time as applying for a new U.S. merchant mariner credential or renewing or raising the grade of an existing credential. You must meet all of the general requirements for the U.S. License, COR, or MMD as well as any additional requirements required by the STCW Code. Depending on what type of U.S. merchant mariner credential for which you are applying or already hold, the following additional STCW training requirements may apply in order to qualify for a STCW-95 form:

1. Basic Safety training

2. Bridge Resource Management training

3. Automatic Radar Plotting Aids (ARPA) training

4. Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS) training

5. Training and demonstrated proficiency in survival craft and rescue boats

6. Advanced Firefighting training

In general, to prove that you have completed the necessary additional training, you must have completed a training course approved by the Coast Guard or have the training documented in a Training Record Book (TRB) as part of a Coast Guard approved training program. In some cases, there are grandfather provisions in meeting the training requirements if you started your sea service before August 1, 1998. Just like for the STCW-78 form, you may apply for the STCW-95 form at any REC at no cost. For more information, seek out our web site (www.uscg.mil/STCW) or contact your local REC.

Guide to Applying and Qualifying for a U.S. Merchant Mariner's Document (MMD)

The requirements for a Merchant Mariner's Document (MMD) are formally contained in Title 46 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 12. This guide attempts to summarize the requirements and answer the most common questions on MMDs. You should find all of the information and forms you need here. Delays in processing your application due to incomplete information are easily avoided by following this guide closely. If you are viewing this guide on the Internet, click on a specific section or question below as a hyperlink to the information. To ensure that your application is complete and is reviewed as quickly as possible, use the interactive General Requirements listing as a checklist when you prepare your application package.

If you plan to work on a seagoing vessel that is greater than 200 Gross Register Tons (Domestic Tonnage) and goes beyond the boundary line, you may have to comply with the requirements of the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification, and Watchkeeping (STCW). For general information on the STCW Convention and Amendments, you may go to the Coast Guard's SCTW web page at http://www.uscg.mil/STCW.

GENERAL INFORMATION

- What is a Merchant Mariner's Document or MMD?

All mariners employed aboard U.S. merchant vessels greater than 100 Gross Register Tons (Domestic Tonnage) are required to have a valid U.S. Merchant Mariner's Document (MMD). A MMD is not a guarantee of finding work, but rather a certification allowing you to work in the shipboard merchant marine industry.

- What kind of work can I do with a MMD?

With a MMD, you may work in the Deck, Engineering, or Steward's department of a ship depending on the type of Rating that you qualify for. The Deck dept is concerned mainly with the navigation and operation of a ship. The Engineering dept is concerned mainly with the propulsion and maintenance of machinery on a ship. The Steward's dept is concerned mainly with the supplies and food services of a ship.

- Where can I get a MMD?

You may apply for a MMD at any of the 17 Coast Guard Regional Examination Centers (RECs). There are several requirements to satisfy including the completion of an application form and payment of user fees. All of these requirements are described in this guide.

- How do I find a job once I get a MMD?

You must seek a marine company or a maritime labor union to find work. These organizations are listed in the Yellow pages and marine industry related publications. Another source of employment information is the U.S. Maritime Administration (MARAD) and their website is http://marad.dot.gov.

- How does the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification, and Watchkeeping (STCW) apply to me if I have a MMD?

The requirements of the STCW Convention and Code may apply to you depending on the type of marine employment you will serve in. For more information on how the STCW may apply to unlicensed mariners, go to the Unlicensed Mariners' STCW Guide.

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR A MERCHANT MARINER'S DOCUMENT (MMD)

I. Professional Requirements

A. What are Ratings?

There are two Ratings levels for unlicensed merchant marine personnel: Qualified Ratings and Unqualified (Entry Level) Ratings. Each "Qualified Rating" as Able Seaman (AB), Lifeboatman (LBMAN), and Qualified Member of the Engineering Department (QMED) requires a minimum amount of qualifying sea service or experience. An "Unqualified or Entry Level Rating" as Ordinary Seaman (OS), Wiper (WI), or as a member of the Steward's Department, e.g. Food Handler (FH), does not require any previous sea service or experience.

B. What are the requirements for Qualified Ratings?

1. Sea Service Chart for Qualified Deck Ratings. The chart on the next page contains the total number of underway days required for each qualified deck rating. The term "service on deck" means service in the deck department in work related to the work usually performed on board vessels by able seaman and may include service on fishing, fish processing, fish tender vessels and on public vessels of the

RATING SOUGHT	SERVICE REQUIREMENTS
ABLE SEAMAN -Unlimited	3 years (1080 days) service on deck on vessels operating on the oceans or Great Lakes
ABLE SEAMAN -Limited	18 months (540 days) service on deck in vessels 100 Gross Register Tons (Domestic Tonnage) or over in a service not exclusively confined to rivers/smaller inland lakes of the U.S.
ABLE SEAMAN -Special	12 months (360 days) service on deck on vessels operating on oceans or navigable waters of the U.S. including the Great Lakes
ABLE SEAMAN -Mobile Offshore Unit (MOU)	12 months (360 days) service on deck in vessels of at least 65 feet in length operating on the oceans or navigable waters of the U.S.
ABLE SEAMAN -Offshore Supply Vessel (OSV)	6 months (180 days) service on deck on vessels operating on the oceans or navigable waters of the U.S. including the Great Lakes
ABLE SEAMAN -Fishing Industry (FISH IND)	6 months (180 days) service on deck on vessels operating on the oceans or navigable waters of the U.S. including the Great Lakes
ABLE SEAMAN -Sail	6 months (180 days) service on deck on sailing school vessels operating on the oceans or navigable waters of the U.S. including the Great Lakes
LIFEBOATMAN	1 year (360 days) service on deck, OR two years (720 days) in the other departments of vessels, operating on the navigable waters of the U.S.
LIFEBOATMAN -Mobile Offshore Unit (MOU)	1 year (360 days) service on deck in vessels of 15 Gross Register Tons (Domestic Tonnage) operating on the navigable waters of the U.S. Note: *Service other than on deck is given half credit (e.g. 1 day credit for every 2 days served) and an approved training program may substitute for all except 30 days of the service requirement*

United States.

2. Sea Service Chart for Qualified Member of the Engine Department (QMED) Ratings. The chart on the next page contains the total number of underway days serving in the Engine department required for each QMED rating. There are 10 different QMED ratings available and the service requirements are the same for each, except for QMED ratings as Deck Engine Mechanic and Engineman as noted below. In addition, each separate QMED rating requires passing a written examination, except for Deck Engine Mechanic and Engineman, which are based on service only.

C. How do I document my sea service for Qualified Ratings?

For Qualified Ratings, you must submit proof of required service based on days you worked at sea while underway. A day is defined as

RATING SOUGHT	SERVICE REQUIREMENTS
QMED - Refrigerating Engineer, Oiler, Deck Engineer, Fireman/ Watertender, Junior Engineer, Electrician, Machinist, or Pumpman	6 months (180 days) service in the engine room on vessels working in the capacity of at least equal to Wiper.
QMED - Deck Engine Mechanic	While holding rating of QMED-Junior Engineer: 1. 6 months (180 days) service as QMED-Junior Engineer on steam vessels of at least 4,000 horsepower, OR 2. Satisfactory completion of at least 4 weeks of indoctrination and training in the engine department of an automated steam vessel of at least 4,000 horsepower
QMED - Engineman	While holding rating of QMED-Fireman/Watertender and Oiler, or Junior Engineer: 1. 6 months (180 days) service in any one or combination of QMED-Junior Engineer, Fireman/Watertender, or Oiler on steam vessels of at least 4,000 horsepower, OR 2. Satisfactory completion of at least 2 weeks of indoctrination and training in the engine department of a partially automated steam vessel of at least 4,000 horsepower

eight hours of watchstanding or day work, not to include overtime. On commercial vessels where a twelve-hour workday is authorized and practiced, such as on a six-on, six-off watch schedule each workday may be considered for one and one-half days of service credit. Required sea service is specified in months or years, which is then converted to days, i.e., one year means 360 days and one month is 30 days. You may document required service in various forms, including original certificates of discharge and/or official documents from marine companies on original company letterhead signed by authorized officials. Your original proof of service MUST INCLUDE the following information about the amount and nature of your experience:

      1. Name and documentation/official number of each vessel on which the service was obtained.

      2. Vessel's gross tonnage, shaft horsepower and type of propulsion.

      3. Number of days underway on each vessel including the dates the service was obtained.

4. Number of days spent in each type of route (Ocean, Near Coastal, Inland, specific river or lake, etc.).

5. Average number of hours worked per day.

6. A brief description of duties or work performed.

NOTE: Title 18 U.S. Code (USC), Section 1001 states that intentionally making false or fraudulent statements or representations in any matter within the jurisdiction of any department or agency of the United States is a Federal crime punishable by a maximum fine of $10,000, 5 years imprisonment, or both. When signing the application and forms to apply for a MMD, you acknowledge awareness of the meaning of the statute in 18 USC 1001. If there is evidence that an application was submitted fraudulently, the application may be denied and the case will be forwarded to the local U.S. Attorney for appropriate action.

D. What are the service requirements for Unqualified (Entry Level) Ratings?

For Unqualified (Entry Level) Ratings, you do not have to have any prior experience or sea service.

II. Military or Foreign Sea Service

A. What is creditable?

Experience and service on military or foreign vessels is creditable towards eligibility for a U.S. Merchant Mariner's Document (MMD). Such service is subject to evaluation by the Coast Guard to determine that it is a fair and reasonable equivalent to service acquired on merchant vessels of the United States, with respect to grade, tonnage, horsepower, waters, and operating conditions.

B. How do I document military sea service?

Satisfactory evidence of U.S. military service means a Transcript of Military Sea Service or certified History of Assignments (a DD-214 is not sufficient evidence of sea service). If you do not already have proof of military sea service, you must fill out a Request Pertaining to Military Records (Form SF-180) to obtain your official Transcript of Military Sea Service. Send the request with your name and a return address, printed legibly, to the address of the record custodian for your branch of service noted on the back of the request form. In addition, if you are requesting records from before 1973 you should include your service number; after

1973 include your social security number.

      C. How do I document foreign sea service?

Satisfactory evidence of foreign sea service must meet the requirements for proof of service for Qualified Ratings noted in section I.C. above. If the documentation is not in English, then a certified translation should be included.

      III. Age/Citizenship/Social Security Number Requirements

      A. How old must I be?

You must be at least 16 years of age before obtaining a Merchant Mariner's Document (MMD). If you are between the age of 16 and 18, then you must present a notarized statement of consent from a parent or legal guardian providing written permission for you to go to sea.

      B. How do I provide proof of age and citizenship?

When submitting your application package for evaluation, you must include a copy of the proof of citizenship. You must present the original evidence of citizenship prior to issuance of a MMD. If your name on your proof of citizenship does not match the name you are now using, then proof of legal name change is required. Acceptable proof of name change may include original court documentation, original marriage/dissolution of marriage certificate, or original school records. Acceptable proof of citizenship and birth date is any one of the following:

      1. Birth Certificate or Birth Registration

      2. Certificate of Naturalization (If you are a naturalized citizen, then you must submit this certificate)

      3. Baptismal Certificate or Parish Record recorded within one year after birth

      4. Statement of a practicing physician certifying attendance at the birth and who possesses a record showing the date and location at which it occurred

      5. State Department Passport

      6. A Merchant Mariner's Document issued by the Coast Guard which shows the holder as a United States citizen

7. Delayed Certificate of Birth issued under a state seal

8. Certificate of Citizenship issued by the United States Immigration and Naturalization Service

C. What if I am not a U.S. citizen?

You may still be considered for a MMD, but you must provide documentation that you are a permanent resident in possession of an Alien Registration Card issued by the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) or an INS work authorization certificate. In addition, you must also submit proof of foreign citizenship and documentation that is not in English must include a notarized translation.

D. What is the Social Security Number (SSN) requirement?

If you are applying for an original MMD, then you must establish proof of having a Social Security Number (SSN). Acceptable proof is a Social Security Card issued by the Social Security Administration (SSA). When submitting your application package for evaluation, you must submit a copy of your card. You must present the original card prior to issuance of a MMD. Your card must bear the same name appearing on your proof of citizenship and your application. If you have lost your card, you must apply for a duplicate card from the SSA. If you present a duplicate card or letter from the SSA, it must have your SSN on it. Plastic, metal or laminated cards are not acceptable.

IV. User Fees

A. How much does the MMD cost?

B. How do I pay the user fees?

You may pay in person at a REC or through the mail by check or money order payable to "U.S. Coast Guard" or "U.S. Government." You must include your social security number on the check or money order. User fee payments will only be accepted in exact amounts. If making payment by mail, only a check or money order can be accepted. DO NOT SEND CASH FOR PAYMENTS BY MAIL. See table on next page.

V. Physical Requirements

A. When is a physical examination required?

If you are applying for a qualified rating other than Lifeboatman

Transaction Type	Evaluation	Examination	Issuance	TOTAL
Unqualified (Entry Level) Ratings (includes OS, WI, Steward's Dept.):				
Original:	$95	N/A	$45	$140
Subsequent to issuance of a licence or COR:	$0	N/A	$45	$45
Qualified Ratings (includes AB, QMED, LBMAN):				
Original:	$95	$140	$45	$280
Other than original:	$95	$140	$45	$280
Endorsement where no evaluation or exam required:	$0	$0	$45	$45
Subsequent to issuance of a license or COR:	$0	$0	$45	$45
Duplicate MMD:	$0	$0	$45	$45

(LBMAN), then you must submit an original physical examination report (Form CG-719K, pages 1 and 2) completed by a U.S. Licensed physician, physician's assistant, or nurse practitioner within one year of the application. This report must certify that you are in good health and have no physical impairment or medical condition which would render you incompetent to perform the ordinary duties allowed by the MMD. Please ensure this form has been completed entirely. Delays in approving applications are frequently the result of incomplete physical examination reports. For example, if you are taking any medications prescribed by your physician, then your physician must have all of the medications disclosed in block 15 of the form with a statement regarding whether or not you experience any side effects from them. If side effects are experienced, they must be listed. If no side effects are experienced, then a statement to that effect must be included.

  B. What are some examples of the physical examination standards for a Qualified Rating?

   1. Able Seaman (AB): If you are applying for a rating as AB, then you must have uncorrected vision of at least 20/200 in each eye, correctable to at least 20/40 in each eye. You must also possess normal color vision as determined by one of the methods listed on the CG-719K

Physical Examination Report.

        2. Qualified Member of the Engine Department (QMED): If you are applying for a QMED rating, then you must have uncorrected vision of at least 20/200 in each eye, correctable to at least 20/50 in each eye. However, you only need to possess the color sensing ability to distinguish between red, green, blue and yellow.

        3. If you are applying for a qualified rating, then you must not have blood pressure higher than 150/90 regardless of age, treatment or medication.

    C. What are the physical standards for Unqualified (Entry Level) Ratings or Lifeboatman?

    If you are applying for an unqualified (entry level) rating or Lifeboatman (LBMAN), the physical examination report (Form CG-719K) is not required. However, if you will be working on seagoing vessels greater than 200 Gross Register Tons (Domestic Tonnage), you will have to submit documentation from a U.S. licensed physician, physician's assistant, or nurse practitioner certifying that you have the agility, strength, and flexibility to:

        1. Climb steep or vertical ladders,

        2. Maintain balance on a moving deck,

        3. Pull heavy fire hoses up to 400 feet, and have the ability to lift fully charged fire hoses,

        4. Rapidly don an exposure suit,

        5. Step over door sills of 24 inches in height, and

        6. Open or close watertight doors, weighing up to 56

    D. What if I don't meet the physical requirements?

    Not meeting the vision, hearing, or general physical condition required for a MMD does not automatically cause you to be denied a MMD. The Commandant of the U.S. Coast Guard may consider you for a physical waiver if extenuating circumstances warrant special consideration. The REC reviewing your application may request that your physician provide additional information to support a waiver in such cases.

VI. Drug Testing Requirements.

   A. What are "dangerous drugs?"

"Dangerous drugs" under the Department of Transportation rules are: marijuana, cocaine, opiates, phencyclidine (PCP), and amphetamines. Proof that you are free of dangerous drugs is required with your MMD application. Only a screening that tests for the five dangerous drugs is accepted. All tests must be conducted in accordance with "Procedures for Transportation Workplace Drug Testing Programs" in Title 49 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Part 40 and done by laboratories certified by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), an agency of the Department of Health and Human Services. All qualifying random and periodic drug-testing programs must also meet these requirements. To obtain a phone number for the nearest approved laboratory or a collection site, you may contact the Drug Free Workplace Hotline at 1-800-843-4971.

   B. How do I prove that I am free of dangerous drugs?

Acceptable proof of meeting the drug testing requirements can be any one of the following:

      1. A completed drug test form (report or letter) signed by the Medical Review Officer (MRO) or authorized representative of a consortium showing that you passed a chemical test for dangerous drugs conducted in accordance with 49 CFR 40 within the previous six months with no subsequent positive drug tests during the remainder of the six-month period.

      2. A letter on company or consortium stationary signed by the authorized official that administers the drug testing program stating that you passed a pre-employment or periodic test for dangerous drugs within the previous six months with no subsequent positive drug tests during the remainder of the six month period.

      3. A letter on company or consortium stationary signed by the authorized official that administers the drug testing program stating that you have been subject to random drug testing required by 46 CFR 16.230 for at least 60 days during the previous 185 days and did not fail or refuse to participate in any required chemical test.

      4. If you are an active duty U.S. military member, a letter from your command stating that you have been subject to random drug

testing for the past six months and have not failed or refused to participate in any required test. Random testing letters are not accepted for reserve military members since they are only subject to testing during monthly drills. However, if you are a reserve or active duty member and passed a required chemical test for dangerous drugs within the previous six months, then you may submit a letter from your command stating this.

VII. Fingerprints and Criminal Record Review

A. When are fingerprints required?

If you are applying for an original Merchant Mariner's Document (MMD), then you must submit your fingerprints to the Coast Guard. Two completed fingerprint cards are required. A source for proper completion of the fingerprint cards is your local law enforcement office or REC. Contact your local REC to determine if they perform the fingerprinting service. Your fingerprints will be forwarded to the F.B.I. for verification of the information reported on your application. A record of all arrests and convictions will be returned. If you have a criminal record and fail to reveal it on your application, you may be subject to criminal penalty. In addition, your MMD may be rendered null and void and you will be required to surrender it to the Coast Guard or you may be charged to appear at a formal hearing before a Coast Guard Administrative Law Judge. A criminal record does not necessarily mean that you will be denied, but a falsified application is automatic grounds for denial.

B. What do I need to disclose for the criminal record review?

You must document all convictions including DUI/DWI infractions, regardless of how old, regardless of the court in which convicted and regardless of whether or not the conviction has been expunged. Please be ready to submit documentation of any offenses in the form of court records, copies of legal proceedings, or evidence of rehabilitation upon request.

VIII. National Driver Register (NDR) Check.

A. What is required for the NDR check?

You must agree to a check of the NDR for offenses in connection with your operation of a motor vehicle.

B. What is the NDR check used for?

Your application may be disapproved if information from the NDR check leads the Coast Guard to determine that you cannot be entrusted with the duties and responsibilities of the MMD.

IX. Examination and Reference Materials

A. When is a written examination required?

All qualified ratings (i.e. AB, QMED, LBMAN) require completing a written examination. These examinations are administered at your nearest REC. You can connect to the Examination questions link on the Information Center page for specific examination structure, questions, and passing scores. An examination is not required for unqualified (entry level) ratings (i.e. OS, WI, SD).

B. Where can I find study materials?

The Coast Guard does not provide study materials for your examination.

X. Forms and Application Information

A. How do I apply?

You must complete an Application (Form CG-719B) and all necessary forms to support meeting qualification requirements. Read all instructions thoroughly on the application and other forms prior to submitting an application package to your nearest REC. Please note that an application is ONLY VALID FOR ONE YEAR after approval by an REC.

B. How do I find out the status on my application?

The REC that reviews your application package will notify you in writing on the status of your application, including whether you have been approved or additional information is required. The time to complete the review of each application varies greatly depending on the complexity. Please feel free to contact your local REC any time after submitting your application.

Guide to Applying and Qualifying for STCW Certification for Unlicensed Personnel

The requirements from the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification, and Watchkeeping (STCW) on training and certification for unlicensed merchant marine personnel are formally contained in Title 46 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 12 and the STCW Code. This guide attempts to summarize the requirements and answer the most common questions on meeting STCW for certification. Delays in processing your application due to incomplete information are easily avoided by following this guide closely. If you are viewing this guide on the Internet, click on a specific section or question below as a hyperlink to the information. To ensure that your application is complete and is reviewed as quickly as possible, use the interactive General Requirements listing as a checklist when you prepare your application package.

GENERAL INFORMATION

- What is STCW?

STCW is the acronym for the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers, 1978, as amended. The U.S. regulations were designed to closely conform to the 1978 SCTW Convention (STCW-78). The 1995 amendments to STCW (STCW-95) added requirements for additional and more comprehensive training along with assessments of professional demonstrations of a mariner's practical skills. STCW-95 also significantly revised the process by which a mariner qualifies for STCW certification. The U.S. regulations were revised in 1997 in order to meet the requirements of the 1995 STCW amendments.

- Who must comply with the STCW?

With very few exceptions, the STCW only applies to mariners employed on vessels greater than 200 Gross Register Tons (Domestic Tonnage), or 500 Gross Tons (ITC Tonnage), operating seaward of the boundary lines specified in Title 46 CFR Part 7. For additional information on policy guidance in STCW implementation, go to www.uscg.mil/hq/g-m/marpers/page/policy.htm. You may also contact any of the 17 Coast Guard Regional Examination Centers (RECs).

- How do I prove that I comply with the STCW?

You must hold a currently valid U.S. merchant mariner credential and a STCW Endorsement form certifying that you have met the minimum requirements of STCW. However, the STCW form alone may not satisfy all of the STCW requirements and proof of additional training or proficiency may need to be presented to your employer depending on what duties you will be performing.

- Where can I get a SCTW form?

You may apply for a STCW form at no cost by mail or in person at any of the RECs.

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS ON STCW CERTIFICATION FOR UNLICENSED PERSONNEL

I. U.S. Merchant Mariner Credentials

    A. What U.S. credentials do I need?

For unlicensed personnel, you must meet all the requirements for and obtain a U.S. Merchant Mariner's Document (MMD). The STCW form is based on the ratings allowed by your MMD.

    B. Which Unlicensed Ratings apply to the STCW?

All unlicensed MMD ratings for service beyond the boundary line (seagoing service) are subject to the requirements of the STCW. However, ratings that form part of a watch or qualification as a Lifeboatman (LBMAN) have enhanced training requirements under STCW-95 beyond STCW-78 and U.S. domestic requirements.

II. Training and Demonstrated Proficiency.

    A. What do I need for the STCW-78 form?

If you began service or training before Aug. 1, 1998 and obtain the STCW-78 form before Feb. 1, 2002, then you must only meet the requirements of STCW-78. This is the same as the requirements to maintain your U.S. merchant mariner credential as laid out in Title 46 CFR Part 12 (See MMD Guide), with the addition of proving proficiency in Basic Safety Training.

Until Feb. 1, 2002, you may serve on a seagoing vessel with a STCW-78 form as long as you also provide proof to your employer of

proficiency in Basic Safety Training that meets STCW-95 requirements.

By Feb. 1, 2002, you must fully comply with STCW-95 and obtain a STCW-95 form because the STCW-78 forms become invalid on that date. If you started service or training on or after Aug. 1, 1998, then you must fully comply with all of the requirements of STCW-95.

B. What do I need for the STCW-95 form?

You must first meet the domestic requirements in Title 46 CFR Part 12 for each specific MMD rating (See MMD Guide on next page).

For STCW specific requirements, select the rating(s) in the left-hand column for which you are qualified and read across that row. The blocks with an 'X' in the vertical columns indicate the additional STCW training requirements needed to obtain the STCW-95 form. The last column indicates rating specific training required by STCW-95 as well as the regulatory cites from the STCW Code for the specified training.

C. What is Basic Safety Training (BST)?

The STCW BST requirements are contained in Reg. VI/1 of the STCW code. BST is required for those persons serving in a position that must be filled as part of the required crew complement or assigned a responsibility on the muster list. This training is comprised of four elements: personal survival techniques, fire prevention and fire fighting, elementary first aid, and personal safety and social responsibilities. See NMC Policy Letter No. 5-99 (www.uscg.mil/hq/g-m/marpers/pag/5-99.pdf) on what is considered acceptable evidence of BST.

D. What is Proficiency in Survival Craft (PSC)?

This means that you have obtained sufficient training in survival craft and, if applicable, fast rescue boats as per Reg. VI/2 of the STCW Code. See NMC Policy Letter No. 6-99 (www.usgc.mil/hq/g-m/marpers/pag/6-99.pdf) on what is considered acceptable evidence of PSC.

E. How do I provide proof of Rating Specific training?

The training requirements are specified in the STCW regulations cited in the STCW-95 Form requirements table above. See NMC Policy Letter No. 3-99 (www.usgc.mil/hq/g-m/marpers/pag/3-99.pdf) on what is considered acceptable evidence of certification as a "Rating forming part of a navigational watch." Currently, there are no "relaxed assessments" for certification as a "Rating forming part of an engineering watch" and proof consists of a course completion certificate from a Coast Guard approved or accepted course or under certain circumstances certification from a

Service or training started before Aug. 1, 1998 MMD Rating(s) Obtained	Basic Safety Training	Proficiency in Survival Craft	Rating Specific Training
Able Seaman (AB) - Unlimited, Limited, OR Special	X	X	N/A
Able Seaman (AB) - OSV, Fish Industry,MOU, OR Sail	X	N/A[2]	N/A
Lifeboatman (LBMAN)	X	X	N/A
Ordinary Seaman (OS)	X[1,3]	N/A[2]	N/A
QMED - Any Rating, Oiler, Fireman/Water-tender, Junior Engineer, Deck Engine Mechanic OR Engineman	X[1]	N/A[2]	N/A
Wiper (WI)	X[1,3]	N/A[2]	N/A
Steward's Dept., e.g. Food Handler (FH)	X[1,3]	N/A[2]	N/A
Service or training started after Aug. 1, 1998 MMD Rating(s) Obtained	Basic Safety Training	Proficiency in Survival Craft	Rating Specific Training
Able Seaman (AB) - Unlimited, Limited, OR Special	X	X	X (Reg. A-II/4 & A-VI/2)
Able Seaman (AB) - OSV, Fish Industry,MOU, OR Sail	X	N/A[2]	X (Reg. A-II/4 & A-VI/2)
Lifeboatman (LBMAN)	X	X	X (Reg. A-VI/2)
Ordinary Seaman (OS)	X[1,3]	N/A[2]	N/A[3]
QMED - Any Rating, Oiler, Fireman/Water-tender, Junior Engineer, Deck Engine Mechanic OR Engineman	X[1]	N/A[2]	X[4] (Reg. A-III/4)
Wiper (WI)	X[1,3]	N/A[2]	N/A[3]
Steward's Dept., e.g. Food Handler (FH)	X[1,3]	N/A[2]	N/A[3]

Notes.
1. Not required for the rating, but required to obtain the STCW-95 Form.
2. Not applicable for the rating, but required if you are also qualified for MMD rating as Lifeboatman (LBMAN).
3. May also be required if you are filling part of a ship's crew complement or assigned duties on the muster list.
4. Not required until 1 FEB 2002. However, "Rating forming part of an engineering watch" will not be endorsed on the STCW-95 form unless you meet this requirement.

designated examiner attesting to your proficiency.

F. What additional training is required for service on passenger vessels?

If you are going to work on a RO-RO passenger ship or a passenger ship other than a RO-RO vessel in a position where your duties are related to the safety of passengers, then you must obtain training to meet Reg. A-V/2 or A-V/3 of the STCW Code. The training covers assisting passengers, crowd control, passenger safety, and other training directed towards the safety of the passengers and the vessel. This training is not required to obtain the STCW form, but is a requirement of employment and proof of completion must be provided to your employer. Currently, there are no "relaxed assessments" and proof consists of a course completion certificate from a Coast Guard approved or accepted course or under certain circumstances certification from a designated examiner attesting to your proficiency.

III. Forms and Application Information

A. How do I apply?

You must submit a completed Application (Form CG-719b) and proof of all training or proficiency required for the rating sought. Read all instructions thoroughly on the application prior to submittal to your nearest REC. Connect here to the Forms and Application page.

B. How much does the STCW form cost?

There is currently no cost for the STCW form.

C. What is the photo requirement for STCW-95 forms?

If you are applying for a STCW-95 form, you must submit two passport type photos. Your photo will be adhered and sealed to the STCW-95 form.

D. How do I find out the status on my application?

The REC that reviews your application package will notify you in writing on the status of your application, including whether you have been approved or if additional information is required. The time to complete the review of each application varies greatly depending on the complexity. Some RECs may be able to provide same day service. Please feel free to contact your local REC any time after submitting your application.