

STCW updating training: Don't get left behind in 2017

The 2010 Manila Amendments represent the most significant changes to the STCW Code since the introduction of STCW'95. A key requirement of the revised code is to regularly refresh and update the competencies gained in STCW safety courses. This guide explains the UK MCA interpretation of these new requirements.

When the STCW Convention was conceived in 1978 and finally came into force in 1984 there was no requirement for mandatory safety training. This only changed with the 1995 Amendments coming into force in 2002 and we have since grown accustomed to all seafarers having to complete the STCW Basic Safety Training before setting out to sea and officers having to complete advanced STCW safety training.

With the 2010 Manila Amendments to the STCW Code coming into force on 1 January 2017, there is something new to get accustomed to – updating training.

The good news first – it is relatively painless! Updating training consists of very short courses, which never exceed one day in duration. They will only have to be completed every five years. Also, they only affect the elements related to fire fighting and sea survival. PSSR, medical and security training is not affected by five-yearly updating requirements. Those who hold a Certificate of Competency (CoC) which predates the STCW 1995 Amendments and hence never had to do STCW safety training, don't have to go back to do the full courses, but are allowed access to the (much shorter) updating courses straight away.

You could ask why must we do all this? The reason given by the IMO is 'skills fade', a phenomenon which affects us all and which describes how we forget skills which we once learnt but rarely ever put into practice. It is estimated that we have forgotten 60 per cent of everything we learnt on a safety course after only six months. However, skills related to fire fighting and sea survival were deemed too important to simply ignore the possibility of 'skills fade'.

Many have done these courses a long time ago, and some never at all. Yet techniques and technologies, in particular for firefighting, have evolved tremendously over the years.

Key points

- From 1 January 2017, all yacht crew must update their Proficiency in Fire Prevention and Fire Fighting and their Personal Survival Techniques if the course was completed more than five years ago.
- In addition, deck and engineering officers will have to update Advanced Fire Fighting and Proficiency in Survival Craft and Rescue Boats (PSCRB).
- Failure to do so will result in the crew member not being able to sail.
- Do not delay. Action is required now as it is likely that course availability will be very sparse towards the end of 2016.

Whether you welcome these requirements or not, the success of the updating requirements will depend on the quality of the training courses and the attitude with which they are met. They should not be a tick box exercise – both trainers and crew are well advised to approach these courses with the seriousness they deserve. At the end of the day, there is simply too much at stake.

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STCW Updating Training



The updating courses

Who are they for?

All yacht crew who have completed their STCW safety certificates relating to fire fighting and sea survival more than five years ago.

What are the prerequisites?

The prerequisites are either the certificate of the full course or a valid UK CoC or CEC (see next page).

What does it cost?

For the current prices please see our website:

www.warsashsuperyachtacademy.com/courses/stcw/stcw-updating-training-dont-leave-it-too-late.aspx

Can I do all courses in one go?

Wherever possible we have scheduled the updating courses so they can be done adjacent to each other.

We run these courses several times each month. However, be aware that we expect availability on the courses to be extremely limited towards the end of 2016.

How do I book?

Contact the admissions and recruitment team to book your updating course(s):

Tel: +44 (0)23 8201 5004

Email: wma.training@solent.ac.uk

Normal office hours are (UK time):

Monday – Thursday 08.30 – 17.00

Friday 08.30 – 16.30

Course dates

Duration of updating courses	
Updated Proficiency in Personal Survival Techniques (STCW Code A-VI/1-1)	1/2 day
Updated Proficiency in Fire Prevention and Fire Fighting (STCW Code A-VI/1-2)	1 day
Updated Proficiency in Advanced Fire Fighting (STCW Code A-VI/3)	1 day
Updated Proficiency in Survival Craft and Rescue Boats (other than Fast Rescue Boats) (STCW Code A-VI/2-1)	1 day
Updated Proficiency in Fast Rescue Boats (STCW Code A-VI/2-2)	1 day

Relevant M-Notices

MSN 1865:

UK Requirements for Emergency, Occupational Safety, Security, Medical Care and Survival Functions

MSN 1861:

UK Procedure for the Revalidation of CoCs

MSN 1859:

UK Requirements for Engineer Officers on Large Yachts (over 24m)

MSN 1858:

UK Requirements for Deck Officers on Large Yachts (over 24m)

MIN 520:

Clarification on the Requirements for Updating Ancillary and Safety Training

Do I need to update?

The following will apply from 1 January 2017

Check the table below to see which courses you are expected to update if the original course was completed more than five years ago, and depending on your position and Certificate of Competency (CoC):

	No CoC (deckhands, ratings, assistant engineers, interior crew) MCA Master 200GT	OOW (Yachts Less Than 3,000GT)	Chief Mate (Yachts Less Than 3,000GT) Master (Yachts Less Than 500GT/3,000GT) MEOL Y4 to Y1 Engineering CoCs
Personal Survival Techniques (PST)	YES	YES	YES
Fire Prevention and Fire Fighting (FP&FF)	YES	YES	YES
Proficiency in Survival Craft and Rescue Boats (PSCRB) OR Advanced Sea Survival for Yachtsmen		YES	YES
Advanced Fire Fighting (AFF)			YES
Proficiency in Fast Rescue Boats (PFRB)		Only if the role on board requires the CoC holder to hold a Proficiency in Fast Rescue Boats	

Case studies

Case study 1

Joe completed his STCW Basic Safety Training week in 2015 and is now working as a deckhand. Joe does not have to update any courses before 2020.

Case study 2

Keith is working as a second officer on a busy charter yacht. He completed his STCW Basic Safety Training in 2008 when he started his yachting career. He completed the Advanced Fire Fighting and PSCRB when obtaining his OOW in 2014. Before 1 January 2017 Keith will have to update his Personal Survival Techniques and Fire Prevention & Fire Fighting. His Advanced Fire Fighting and PSCRB do not require updating before 2019.

Case study 3

Harry has been a chief engineer since 2001. He has never done any STCW safety courses in his life, nor has his captain, who has held his Master CoC since 1998. Before 1 January 2017 they both need to do the updating course (not the full course) for Personal Survival Techniques, Fire Prevention and Fire Fighting, Advanced Fire Fighting and PSCRB.



Important

Always have the original certificates (not copies) on board the yacht you are working on.

STCW Updating Training

FAQs

If I update my Advanced Fire Fighting, do I still need to update the basic one?

Yes, the MCA requires seafarers to update both courses. The updating for the (basic) Fire Prevention and Fire Fighting course consists of predominantly practical work in the fire ground, whereas the updating for the Advanced Fire Fighting is classroom based and focuses on new fire equipment and techniques.

Do I still need to update my STCW safety courses, even though my CoC is still in date?

Yes. From 1 January 2017 your safety courses relating to fire fighting and sea survival must always be five years or less old, regardless of your CoC still being in date. It is a similar principle to the ENG1: you must present an ENG1 for the issue or revalidation of a CoC, however it is the seafarer's obligation to ensure the ENG1 has not expired whenever proceeding to sea.

I have done Advanced Fire Fighting and PSCRB in 2015, do I need to update anything before 2017?

You will not have to update these two courses until their five year anniversary in 2020. However, if your Personal Survival Techniques and your (basic) Fire Prevention & Fire Fighting courses are older than five years on 1 January 2017, you will have to refresh these before.

What about Advanced Sea Survival for Yachtsmen?

The MCA allows the non-STCW Advanced Sea Survival for Yachtsmen to be updated with the PRSCB updating course. However, your CoC will be endorsed with the following limitation: 'Not for use on ships equipped with davit-launched lifeboats'.

Note also the official MCA guidance: non-STCW Advanced Sea Survival must be updated every five years in line with the Proficiency in Survival Craft and Rescue Boats Certificate (PSCRB).



The MCA recommends that all seafarers hold an STCW PRSCB (instead of Advanced Sea Survival). This is due to potential problems of Port State Control Officers outside of the UK not accepting non-STCW Advanced Sea Survival.

Can these courses be provided on board?

Updating in Advanced Fire Fighting is the only course which can be delivered on board. All other updating courses require MCA-approved facilities.

What about the medical courses?

Only the Proficiency in Medical Care ('Ship Captain's Medical') needs to be refreshed every five years. However, this is an EU requirement rather than an STCW requirement, so may not apply to you. First Aid courses do not need to be updated.

I never had to do the STCW safety training as my original CoC was issued before 2002. Do I now need to do the full courses?

No. As long as your CoC has been revalidated, you will be given access to the (much shorter) updating courses directly.

Disclaimer: regulations and the interpretation thereof change on a frequent basis. Whilst every effort is made to ensure the accuracy of information, we cannot accept liability for any reliance based on information contained in this guide. If in doubt, we advise you to contact the maritime authority relevant to you

Find out more
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