



16720/4

NMC 4 Policy Ltr No. 14-98

August 28, 1998

From: Commanding Officer, National Maritime Center

To: Distribution

Subj: STANDARDS FOR APPROVAL OF BASIC SAFETY TRAINING COURSES

1. Regulation VI/1 of the Annex to the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers, 1978, as amended (STCW), and Section A-VI/1 of the Seafarers' Training, Certification and Watchkeeping Code, require all seafarers with safety or pollution prevention duties on vessels to receive approved training or education in basic safety, or, if training has been completed, to maintain the minimum standards of competence in four areas of Basic Safety Training (BST). The four areas are:
 - a. Fire Prevention and Fire Fighting;
 - b. Elementary First Aid;
 - c. Personal Survival Techniques; and,
 - d. Personal Safety and Social Responsibility.
2. Title 46, Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), 10.205(l) requires that all applicants for licenses, STCW certificates, and endorsements complete BST and be assessed through a practical demonstration of skills and ability. 46 CFR 10.202(k) exempts the following personnel from this requirement:
 - a. Masters and officers on seagoing vessels of less than 200 gross registered tons, other than passenger vessels subject to 46 CFR Subchapter H;
 - b. Masters of uninspected passenger vessels;
 - c. Masters and officers of fishing vessels or fish tender vessels;
 - d. Those serving on barges as defined in 46 U.S.C. 2101(2);
 - e. Those serving on Mobile Offshore Drilling Units (MODU) other than those required by the Certificate of Inspection on a self-propelled MODU; and,
 - f. Officers serving on vessels operating on the Great Lakes or the inland waters of the U.S. in the Puget Sound inside passage between Seattle and Vancouver.
3. After January 31, 1997, to receive an STCW endorsement valid after February 1, 2002, all seafarers must receive training or instruction and demonstrate proficiency in BST. If the seafarer has already achieved competence, or completed BST training, they must maintain the minimum standards of competence within the previous five years by assessment of a practical demonstration of their skills and abilities. This training and/or assessment must be documented.

4. The National Maritime Center (NMC) will approve two types of BST courses, one designed for students who have no prior BST, and a different course for those who have received this training and are maintaining minimum standards of competence through a demonstration of the proficiencies listed in STCW Code Tables A-VI/1-1 through 1-4.
5. To receive Coast Guard approval for courses that satisfy the requirements of the STCW Code Section A-VI/1 and Tables A-VI/1-1 through 1-4 for students with no prior BST, schools should follow the recommendations of the International Maritime Organization's (IMO) model courses as to course content and length. Where a school or training organization asserts subject matter included in the IMO model course is inappropriate for a class of vessels, they shall explain why the subject should not be included in the course.
6. The IMO model courses, with some small adjustments, are as follows:
 - a. Elementary First Aid, IMO Model Course No.1.13 (8 Hours):
 - b. Personal Survival, IMO Model Course No. 1.19 (12 Hours); and,
 - c. Basic Fire Fighting, IMO Model Course No. 1.20 (16 Hours). (Advanced fire fighting is required for those individuals designated to control fire fighting operations.)
7. No model course exists for Personal Safety and Social Responsibility. Schools submitting a Personal Safety and Social Responsibility course should include the subjects listed in Column 2 of Table A-VI/1-4. The competencies listed in Column 1 are listed in order of importance with the most important listed at the top of the column. The knowledge, understanding and proficiencies listed in Column 2 can be achieved in a course of 4 hours in length.
8. Small reductions in the time allotted to teach the IMO model courses referenced in paragraph 6 resulted from deletion of non-essential or duplicated topics from the model courses.
9. Until January 1, 1999, masters of vessels of over 200 gross registered tons can provide documentary evidence that crew members have maintained minimum standards of competence as listed in the STCW Code Tables A-VI/1-1 through 1-4, in accordance with NMC Policy Letter No. 12-98.
10. From January 1, 1999, seafarers who began training or sea service prior to August 1, 1998, and who presently hold a license or document, must maintain minimum standards of competence and demonstrate competence every five years through an assessment of practical skills and abilities. To satisfy this requirement, the NMC will approve training courses or programs shorter than recommended by the IMO as long as the courses include the required refresher training and the assessment of the practical demonstration of skills and abilities. Such programs must include individual assessments of all required competencies listed in STCW Code Tables A-VI/1-1 through 1-4.

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11. The Coast Guard estimates the following minimum course lengths will allow for all required training and competency assessments in small classes with high student to teacher ratios:
 - a. First Aid – 6 hours;
 - b. Personal Survival – 8 hours;
 - c. Personal Safety & Social Responsibilities – 2 hours; and
 - d. Fire prevention and Fire Fighting – 8 hours.

12. The following proficiencies from the relevant IMO model course have been changed.
 - a. The IMO model Personal Survival Course includes a requirement to jump into the water from a height of 4.5 meters. The NMC will only require that the student demonstrate the proper technique for entering the water from a height of not less than one meter.

 - b. The IMO model Basic Fire Fighting course includes a requirement to walk through a foam filled room without a self contained breathing apparatus. The NMC will accept an alternative exercise to demonstrate a similar competence, such as following a lifeline through a room or compartment in zero visibility conditions.

13. Anyone having questions may contact Mr. John Bobb of my staff at (703) 235-8457.

W. C. BENNETT
By direction

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