



# SHIP SAFETY BULLETIN

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**Subject:** CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE AS WATCHKEEPING MATE OF A FISHING VESSEL OF LESS THAN 100 GROSS TONNAGE

**Purpose**

The purpose of this bulletin is to inform the stakeholders of the introduction of a new certificate of competency, the *Certificate of Service as Watchkeeping Mate of a Fishing Vessel of Less than 100 Gross Tonnage*, that will allow its holder to be the person in charge of a navigational watch on a fishing vessel of less than 100 gross tonnage.

**Scope**

This bulletin applies only to officers who wish to obtain this new certificate and who have acquired at least twelve months of sea service as officer in charge of a navigational watch prior to July 1, 2007 on board one or more fishing vessels of at least 15 gross tonnage or at least 12 m in overall length.

**Background**

Under the previous *Crewing Regulations* masters of fishing vessels of less than 60 gross tonnage were not required to hold a Certificate of Competency (CoC).

With the entry into force of the *Marine Personnel Regulations (MPR)*, these masters are required to hold a certificate but only in accordance with the implementation schedule specified in the Regulations.

With the entry into force of the *MPR*, the master of a fishing vessel of at least 15 gross tonnage or at least 12 m in overall length and of less than 60 gross tonnage is required to hold, as a minimum, either a:

- a) *Certificate of Service as Master of a Fishing Vessel of Less Than 60 Gross Tonnage*; or
- b) *Fishing Master, Fourth Class/CoC*.

Even if the hours of rest requirements do not apply to fishing vessels of less than 100 gross tonnage, because of lengthy voyages and not returning to port each night for rest, the master of such vessels cannot be on watch at all times. Such a vessel would then require a second certificated person to perform watchkeeping duties and radio watch duties, in addition to the master.

**Keywords:**

- 1. Certificate of Service
- 2. Watchkeeping Mate
- 3. Fishing Vessel

**Questions concerning this Bulletin should be addressed to:**

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 Owners of commercial vessels automatically receive Bulletins.

Under section 216 of the *MPR*, the person in charge of the deck watch must in all cases hold a certificate of competency and a radio operator certificate.

Existing officers who have been performing this task for years as officer in charge of the watch, but were not required by the previous regulations to hold a CoC, might not be able to obtain a *Certificate of Service as Master of a Fishing Vessel of Less Than 60 Gross Tonnage* because they might not have acquired sea service as master in a manner required by the *MPR*.

Therefore, the minimum certificate that these persons can obtain is a *Fishing Master, Fourth Class CoC*, which is a more stringent requirement than the certificate that the master of the same vessel might be holding. Therefore, there is a need for a new certificate that is more relevant for the watchkeeping officers on these vessels.

The fact that the *MPR* is now requiring masters of fishing vessels of less than 60 gross tonnage and all persons in charge of the watch to hold a certificate of competency is creating a huge shortage of qualified persons.

### **Transport Canada Policy**

In order to ensure a smooth transition with the entry into force of the *MPR*, the Department of Transport Canada Marine Safety (TCMS) will allow experienced fishermen meeting the requirements described hereunder to obtain the new certificate of service that will allow its holder to be the person in charge of a navigational watch on a fishing vessel of less than 100 gross tonnage, in order to meet the deck watch requirements of the *MPR*, in cases where the length of the voyage does not permit the master to be the sole person in charge of the deck watch.

To be able to obtain the *Certificate of Service as Watchkeeping Mate of a Fishing Vessel of Less Than 100 Gross Tonnage*, the applicant must meet the following requirements:

- a) At least twelve months of sea service acquired prior to July 1, 2007 as officer in charge of a navigational watch on one or more fishing vessels of at least 15 gross tonnage or at least 12 m in overall length while engaged on voyages that the certificate sought will permit;
- b) MED with respect to basic safety (A1);
- c) If the vessel is equipped with a VHF radiotelephone installation, an appropriate radio operator certificate issued under the *Radiocommunication Act*; and
- d) If the applicant has not acquired at least seven fishing seasons of experience as officer in charge of a navigational watch on one or more fishing vessels, with no two of those seasons having occurred in the same year,
  - (i) SEN limited;
  - (ii) Marine basic first aid; and
  - (iii) Small Vessel Operator Proficiency.

### **Validity and renewal**

The *Certificate of Service as Watchkeeping Mate of a Fishing Vessel of Less Than 100 Gross Tonnage* will be valid for a five-year period from the date of issue and the renewal requirements will be as per section 106 of the *MPR*.

The applications for the *Certificate of Service as Watchkeeping Mate of a Fishing Vessel of Less Than 100 Gross Tons* will be received at any Transport Canada Marine Safety office for a period of 10 years only from the date of coming into force of the *Marine Personnel Regulations* – i.e. until June 30, 2017, after which no fresh applications will be entertained.