



Key Issues

New STCW Training Regime

According to the latest manpower estimates conducted by ICS and BIMCO, there are currently over 1.6 million seafarers serving international merchant trades. Shipping is a global industry and for 40 years, under the auspices of IMO, it has had a global system in place for ensuring that all of the world's seafarers have competences and qualifications that comply with a global standard, regardless of the nation responsible for training and issuing the certificate.

In 2017, the five year transitional period for implementing the 2010 amendments to the IMO Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (STCW 2010) finally came to an end. ICS had raised concerns at IMO about the extent to which all maritime administrations were fully prepared for the end of this major transition and the possibility that, through no fault of their own, some ships and crews might be unfairly penalised for not having all of the required certification.

As a consequence, IMO issued guidance to Port State Control inspection regimes requesting that they apply a pragmatic approach until 1 July 2017. For the most part this changeover appears to have gone smoothly with little evidence of serious problems.

To prevent last minute certification log jams and potential difficulties during Port State Control inspections, ICS had encouraged maritime employers to liaise closely with IMO Member States, to ensure that those maritime administrations responsible for issuing their seafarers' STCW certification were fully prepared, and that arrangements had been made to ensure that any necessary training has been undertaken by the seafarers which they employ.

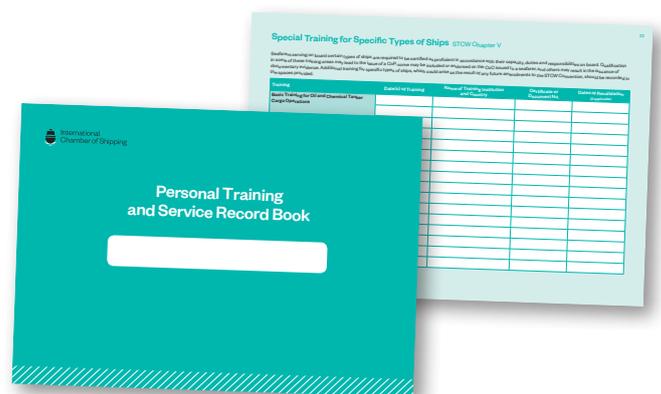
The new STCW provisions include updated seafarer competences, as well as changes to some seafarer grades and certification requirements. Most maritime administrations determined that seafarers holding national certificates of competence needed to have completed mandatory updating courses in order to be certified beyond 2017.

Maritime administrations should, where necessary, have therefore approved any special updating courses for seafarers, and made any necessary arrangements for the issue and revalidation of seafarers' certificates in accordance with the 2010 amendments. In their capacity as flag states, administrations have also needed to be ready to process a large number of applications for flag state endorsements, given that the majority of seafarers serve under a flag state that is different to that which issued their original STCW certificate.

One new requirement that should not be overlooked is that trainee ratings – including the new STCW grades of Able Seafarer (Deck) and Able Seafarer (Engine) – now need to provide documentary evidence of structured on board training that has been recorded in an approved training record book.

Thousands of trainee ratings worldwide are now using On Board Training Records produced by ICS, in addition to the thousands of officers worldwide that have qualified in accordance with STCW 2010 competence standards using the ICS books for cadets. Many maritime administrations have approved these ICS books for use in conjunction with their national certification regime including the Philippines, which produces a special edition of the ICS books tailored for its own certification system.

In September 2017, ICS published a revised version of its Personal Training and Service Record Book for qualified seafarers, which has been fully updated to take account of the current STCW regime as well as relevant requirements under the ILO Maritime Labour Convention. The intention is to provide seafarers and their employers with a uniform means of recording the training and drills which have been undertaken, for use when transferring between ships or employers, or when seeking to revalidate certificates.



In 2018, ICS will be considering the training and familiarisation of relevant personnel related to ballast water management and responsibilities under the IMO BWM Convention which entered into force in 2017. ICS is collecting information on company approaches to training and familiarisation via an online questionnaire.



ICS is also now considering the training implications of the increasing automation of ship systems, equipment and operations. This work will contribute to the wider ICS engagement with the regulatory scoping exercise for the use of Maritime Autonomous Surface Ships now being undertaken at IMO.

As an overarching activity, ICS members have also started to consider possible issues and priorities that might need to be addressed in any future major revision of the STCW Convention by IMO Member States, to ensure that

this vital regime remains fit for purpose in meeting the requirements of the industry. A continuing issue is reducing the need – which regrettably still exists with respect to many crew nationalities – for companies to provide significant additional training to seafarers that are meant to be fully qualified for seagoing service under the STCW regime.

