



Gibraltar Maritime Administration

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Shipping Guidance Notice – 074

STCW Requirements for personnel on ships subject to the Polar Code

To: Ship Owners, Operators, Master's, Classification Societies and Recognised Organisations

1. Introduction

This notice applies to personnel on Gibraltar registered ships operating in polar waters subject to the requirements of Chapter XIV of SOLAS and any other vessel required to have onboard a person holding a training certificate for ships operating in polar waters.

2. Background

On January 1, 2017, the International Code for Ships Operating in Polar Waters (as per the IMO's Polar Code) entered into force through SOLAS Chapter XIV. Chapter 12 of Part I-A of the Polar Code requires that Masters, Chief Mates and Nav. W/K Officers to complete training as required by the provisions of the STCW.

Chapter 12 of the Polar Code requires that companies ensure that masters, chief mates and Nav. W/K Officers on board vessels operating in polar waters complete the training provided in the Polar Code, taking into account the STCW and the STCW Code.

Amendments to the STCW introduced these new training and certification requirements, came into effect on July 1, 2018.

3. Training and Certification Requirements (Polar Waters)

3.1 Basic Certificate of Proficiency (CoP)

Masters, chief mates and Nav. W/K Officers serving on board ships operating in polar waters are required to possess a CoP for personnel on ships operating in Polar Waters.

Candidates must complete an approved basic training course in polar waters in order to obtain a COP.

3.2 Advanced Certificate of Proficiency

The Polar Code requires Masters and chief mates serving on board ships operating in polar waters to hold an advanced CoP for personnel on ships operating in Polar Waters.

To obtain an advanced CoP for personnel on ships operating in Polar Waters, a candidate must:

- a) Comply with the requirements for certification in basic training for ships in polar waters;
- b) Complete an approved advanced training for ship operating in polar waters and;
- c) Have at least two (2) months in total of sea service within polar waters or in waters with acceptable ice conditions whilst serving as master, chief mate and Nav. W/K Officer.

4. Transitional Provisions (Until July 2020)

4.1 Basic training

Until July 1, 2020, seafarers who commenced approved seagoing service in polar waters prior to July 1, 2018, shall be able to establish that they meet the requirements of basic training for ships operating in polar waters by:

- a) Having successfully completed an approved seagoing service on board a ship operating in polar waters and performing duties in the deck department at the operational or at the management level for a period of at least three months in total during the preceding five years; or
- b) Successful completion of a training course meeting the training guidance referred to in Section B-V/g (STCW Code) for ships operating in polar waters.

4.2 Advanced

Until July 1, 2020, seafarers who commenced approved seagoing service in polar waters prior to July 1 2018, shall be able to establish that they meet the requirements of advanced training for ships operating in polar waters by:

- a) Having successfully completed an approved seagoing service on board a ship operating in polar waters and performing duties in the deck department at the management level, for a period of at least three months in total during the preceding five years within polar waters; or
- b) Successful completion of a training course meeting the training guidance referred to in Section B-V/g (STCW Code) for ships operating in polar waters and having completed approved seagoing service on board a ship operating in polar waters, performing duties in the deck department at the management levels, for a period of at least two months in total during the preceding five years.

5. Responsibilities of Companies

As well as placing responsibilities on masters and other seafarers, the STCW Convention also places responsibilities on the owners / managers of ships subject to STCW. The obligations are outlined in STCW I/14 and are reflected in the applicable Gibraltar Merchant Shipping legislation.

In summary, these obligations relate to –

- a) Ensuring seafarers assigned to any of its ships are appropriately qualified in accordance with the STCW Convention;
- b) ensuring its ships are manned in accordance with the applicable minimum safe manning document;
- c) seafarers receiving the appropriate refresher and updating training;
- d) full, readily available, records of seafarers being maintained (see STCW I/14.4 for details of the information to be recorded);
- e) ensuring seafarers are properly familiarised when assigned to its ships;

- f) ensuring effective coordination of the ship's complement in emergency situations and when performing safety, security and pollution prevention duties; and
- g) ensuring that there is an effective means of oral communication on board.

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Gibraltar Maritime Administration

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