

**7 October 2020**

**Attention:** Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Reference Committee  
Inquiry into the policy, regulatory, taxation, administrative and funding  
priorities for Australian Shipping

**Subject:** Written questions on notice received from the Committee Chair,  
Senator Glenn Sterle (29 September 2020)

**AMC's Responses follow:**

1. There were a number of questions taken on notice. The crux of what the Senator was seeking was a description of the difference between the training that AMC offers for qualifications that fall under the Navigation Act and the Marine Safety (National Law) Domestic Commercial Vessel Act. This included:

- For ratings: a comparison between what is involved in obtaining a General-Purpose Hand (GPH) qualification (under the DCV Act) as compared to an Integrated Rating qualification (under the Navigation Act)? How far offshore and on what size of vessels can the GPH qualification be used?

○ **AMC Response:**

An Integrated Rating (IR) qualification under the Navigation Act is an international qualification for Australian registered vessels operating in international waters. The General Purpose Hand (GPH) near coastal is a domestic certificate of competency issued under Marine Order 505. IR training standards are prescribed by the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watch-keeping (STCW) whereas GPH training standards are outlined in schedule 1 of Part D of the National Standard for Commercial vessels (NSCV).

Certificate III in Maritime Operations (Integrated Rating) is the current pre-sea vocational training component for those who seek employment at sea as an Integrated Rating on ocean going vessels. This course provides the required training to qualify for Able Seafarer Deck, Able Seafarer Engine or Integrated Rating Certificates of Proficiency (subject to assessment and sea-time requirements by the AMSA). The course meets the following STCW Standards:

- a program of study (that complies with STCW Code sections A II/4, A II/5, A III/4 and A III/5) that includes vocational training;
- basic safety training (that complies with STCW Code section A VI/1 paragraph 2);
- security awareness training (that complies with STCW Code section A-VI/6 paragraph 4);
- proficiency in survival craft and rescue boats other than fast rescue boats (that complies with STCW Code Table A VI/2 1).

The Certificate III in Maritime Operations (Integrated Ratings) takes approximately 11 weeks to complete. Main topics covered in the course include:

- Overview of the shipping industry
- Cargo operations
- Watchkeeping duties
- Ship maintenance
- Marine rigging

- Deck machinery.
- Certificate of Safety Training (CoST) short courses. These include: elementary first aid; fire prevention and firefighting; personal survival techniques; personal safety and social responsibilities; and, security awareness.
- Main shipboard systems.

The Certificate I in Maritime Operations (General Purpose Hand Near Coastal) provides the skills and knowledge required to work as a GPH. The Australian Maritime College delivers this course utilising online documents, videos, interactive images and Tasks and Guided Studies (TAGS). The course is comprised of 3 stages:

- Shipboard Safety course (2 days).
- Approximately 10 hours of online study.
- Completion of an on-the-job Task and Guided Studies (TAGS) practical workbook.

The General purpose hand near coastal qualification allows one to work:

- Under direct supervision of the person in charge of a vessel or its engines.
- On deck or in the engine room of a vessel up to 80 metres long within the exclusive economic zone (EEZ).
- In the engine room only of vessels with propulsion power up to 3000 kilowatts.

- A similar comparison for masters' qualification – what is involved with becoming an unlimited ocean going master?

○ **AMC Response:**

AMSA's Marine Orders 70 and 71 set out the requirements for eligibility, training and experience requirements to become a master under the Navigation Act. To be eligible for a Master certificate of competency one must meet medical, sea service and course requirements as prescribed by AMSA. To meet the training requirements for a master, a person must have completed an approved program of study that meets the standards mentioned in STCW Code sections A II/1 and A II/2 and includes the following:

- training in advanced fire fighting (that complies with STCW Code section A VI/3);
- training in medical care on board ship (that complies with STCW Code section A VI/4 paragraphs 4 to 6);
- security awareness training (that complies with STCW Code section A-VI/6 paragraph 4);

and hold the following certificates:

- a certificate of proficiency in survival craft and rescue boats other than fast rescue boats (that complies with STCW Code section A VI/2 paragraphs 1 to 4);
- a GMDSS radio operator certificate (that complies with STCW Code section A IV/2).

To be qualified as master of a vessel of any gross tonnage in any operating area, a person's career must follow an AMSA approved pathway consisting of sea-service and certificate of competency requirements e.g. holding a chief mate certificate of competency. At AMC, the education and training requirements for the complete pathway from a deck cadet to master are offered through a Bachelor of Applied Science (Nautical Science) degree. The degree program includes the SCTW requirements for certificates of competency as deck watch-keeper, chief mate and master.

The learning outcomes of the program are as follows:

Demonstrate broad and coherent nautical knowledge by:

- Applying assorted navigation concepts to safely plan and conduct a voyage.
- Applying principles of cargo handling and storage on board a ship at the management level.

Assess and solve nautical problems by:

- Analysing, interpreting and evaluating a range of available data to inform decision making in standard-operational and emergency related scenarios on a commercial ship.
- Implementing responses which acknowledge stakeholders' expectations and needs.

Practice effective leadership as a master of a ship by:

- Applying relevant management theories to control the operation of a ship and care for the persons on board.
- Exhibiting appropriate communication, motivation, collaboration and decision-making strategies which enable safe operation of a commercial ship.

Demonstrate personal and professional stewardship through:

- Locating and adhering to regulatory frameworks and ethical codes relevant to ship operation in the international shipping industry.
- Performing all tasks in an ethical manner where the safety of persons and protection of the natural environment are of the greatest importance.

- What is involved with getting a Master less than 24metre certificate? What does this allow you to do? How far offshore can you operate, with how many passengers? What level of responsibility can you have on larger vessels? What training is required in stability? On handling dangerous goods? On managing crowds in an emergency.

○ **AMC Response:**

With a Master less than 24 metres near coastal certificate a person can work as a:

- Master on commercial vessels up to 24 metres long within the exclusive economic zone (EEZ) – 200nm.
- Chief mate or deck watchkeeper on vessels up to 35 metres long within the EEZ.
- Chief mate or deck watchkeeper on vessels up to 80 metres long in inshore waters.

The number of passengers carried depends upon the maximum number that the vessel is certified to carry as per its Certificate of Survey, and is not related to the Master less than 24 metres certificate of competency itself.

The course of training required to be certified as a Master less than 24 metres is Certificate III in Maritime Operations (Master up to 24 metres Near Coastal). Students are trained and assessed in accordance with the approved syllabus, as compiled by Australian Industry Standards (AIS) (a government-funded, not-for-profit organisation working with industry leadership to ensure Training Packages are contemporary, future-focused and aligned with industry needs).

Within that course, the Stability and Dangerous Goods training and assessment requirements are detailed in the Units of Competency MARN009 Perform seamanship operations on board a vessel up to 24 metres and MARB030 Slip or dock a vessel and maintain hull on a vessel up to 80 metres.

Specifically:

**MARN009**

- Check stability of vessel.
- Information from vessel stability data book is used to determine loading limits and displacement from draft.
- Stability conditions for proposed nature of voyage and operations are confirmed and required stress and stability criteria are met.
- Lash and secure stores, cargo and access ways.
- Cargo is stowed according to recognised principles and organisational procedures relating to transport and handling of dangerous goods.

**MARB030**

- Complete duties prior to re-floating.
- Tank quantities are applied to complete stability check to ensure that the vessel has an acceptable Metacentric Height (GM) once the vessel floats clear of the keel blocks or slipway.

Managing crowds in an emergency is not covered in M<24m training. This training relates to large passenger vessels, such as the Spirits of Tasmania, which are regulated by the STCW convention, and where AMSA require that training as part of the vessel's safe crewing requirements.

2. In addition to the major STCW-aligned qualifications you offer, AMC also offers STCW-aligned short courses or endorsements on things like fast rescue craft, crowd management, firefighting, tanker training. Can you describe the importance of these courses? Are Domestic Commercial Vessels required to have crew trained in these areas?

○ **AMC Response:**

AMSA approved short courses are designed to meet mandatory requirements pertaining to:

- Special training requirements for personnel on certain types of ships as per STCW.
- Emergency, occupational safety, security, medical care and survival functions as per STCW.
- Specific AMSA requirements e.g. revalidation of certificates of competency, continued competence.

Holding a particular short course certificate serves as evidence that the seafarer is competent to serve on a special type of ship, or is capable of responding to a specific shipboard emergency, or has currency of knowledge.

Some short courses are part of the training requirements for certificates of competency whereas others are not. For example:

- Fast Rescue Craft (FRC) training is for crew on board those STCW regulated vessels which carry a Fast Rescue Boat. The number of crew required to undertake FRC training would be determined by AMSA as the regulating authority, as part of the vessel's safe crewing requirements.
- Crowd Management training relates to STCW regulated passenger vessels, such as the Spirits of Tasmania, and where AMSA require that training as part of the vessel's safe crewing requirements.
- The crew (Deck, Engine, Integrated Rating) of every STCW regulated vessel is required to undertake Tanker Familiarisation training as part of the Certificate of

Competency training. Advanced Tanker Training is specific to certain crew (Deck Officers and Engineers) employed on board STCW tankers. The number of crew required to undertake Advanced Tanker training would be determined by AMSA as the regulating authority, as part of the vessel's safe crewing requirements.

- The crew of every vessel, STCW or DCV, is required to undertake basic fire-fighting training as part of the Certificate of Competency training.

3. Many bunker barges are effectively small tankers. If an Australian flagged bunker barge is registered as a Domestic Commercial Vessel, is the crew required to have a tanker endorsement under the DCV Act and Marine Orders?

○ **AMC Response:**

AMSA is responsible for ensuring that all ships are sufficiently and efficiently crewed. Crewing requirements are dependent on the length, size and power of the vessel, and are determined by AMSA. AMSA makes a determination and issues a Safe Manning Certificate for Australian vessels, except those less than 500 gross tonnage operating within designated port limits.

Operators of vessels less than 500 gross tonnage, except passenger vessels, operating within designated port limits must make an assessment of appropriate crew. Appropriate crewing is the number of certified or uncertified personnel that are needed to safely operate a vessel. Appropriate crewing must be determined by the owner as part of their general safety duties under the National Law, and should be documented as a part of the vessels safety management system.

For vessels of less than 80 metres in length and with a total propulsion power of less 3000 kW engaged on Australian near coastal voyages within the EEZ, AMSA will accept Australian domestic near coastal seafarer qualifications issued in compliance with NSCV Part D – Crew Competencies.

4. What roles in ports and the wider Australian maritime industry require STCW qualifications and experience? Is there an adequate supply of these people to be able to run our ports into the future?

○ **AMC Response:**

STCW qualifications are required for persons who operate and handle vessels above a certain size and in particular areas of operation. In ports, such people would typically be pilots of ships coming in and out of port plus the crew of any other vessel operating in the port such as Tugs, ferries and bunker barges to whom the SCTW Convention applies. Seafaring experience and knowledge are also useful in shore—based roles such as harbour masters and surveyors.

In the foreseeable future, the demand for people with STCW qualifications is likely to remain. In terms of supply, currently there is a small pipeline of Australian seafarers due to the Australian flagged fleet. If the Australian fleet diminishes further, there may be an impact on supply of Australian seafarers for port-related shore-based jobs.

5. What process are in place to allow seafarers who have been trained in the DCV stream of qualifications to move to the STCW stream of qualifications? Or vice-versa? Is this provided for in regulation or has AMC had to devise these processes themselves?

**AMC Response:**

Seafarers' qualifications are designed to meet the education and training requirements for specific certificates of competency. These certificates are issued by AMSA who set the requirements. Seafarers can move from one stream to another provided they meet AMSA's sea-service, medical and course of training requirements. Provided they have completed the prescribed sea-service, seafarer can choose to obtain an appropriate qualification. Entry pathways to STCW qualifications offered by AMC take into account entry via DCV qualifications (and vice-versa) as prescribed by AMSA.