

Refresher courses: Regulations VI/1 (basic training and instruction), VI/2 (rescue boat operation), and VI/3 (advanced fire fighting)

The Manila amendments to the STCW Convention enters into force on 1 January 2012, with a transitional period until 31 December 2016.

STCW Certificates of proficiency issued in Germany which attest attendance at courses in safety familiarisation, basic training and instruction (Regulation VI/1), rescue boat operation (including fast rescue boats, Regulation VI/2), and advanced fire fighting (Regulation VI/3) only remain valid if an appropriate refresher course is attended at intervals not exceeding five years.

Certificates of Proficiency, Certificates of Competency, documentary evidence of training

Documentary evidence of basic training continues to be provided in the form of official Certificates of Proficiency issued under Regulations VI/1, VI/2, and VI/3. As before, these certificates will have no validity date.

All mariners are required to attend approved refresher courses and have to provide documentary evidence of having attended such courses.

Holders of STCW Certificates of Competency who are qualified to serve as Master or Nautical/Engineer Officer have to present a Certificate of Competency as evidence of their qualification according to Regulations VI/1, VI/2, and VI/3. Documentary evidence of having completed basic training and refresher courses will be checked in connection with the initial issuance and renewal of Certificates of Competency. From 1 January 2012, Certificates of Competency will include a statement of applicable regulations.

Refresher courses

Refresher courses can be attended at training institutions offering [approved courses](#).

The refresher course for basic safety training (Regulation VI/1) will last 3 days. It may be reduced to 2 days if documentary evidence of approved seagoing service of at least 12 months during the past 5 years can be provided. Irrespective of the position on board, seagoing service will be generally recognized if it has been completed on board SOLAS ships because appropriate safety drills are mandatory on such ships.

Refresher courses for rescue boat operators according to Regulation VI/2 and advanced fire fighting according to Regulation VI/3 last one day each.

Documentary evidence of attendance at refresher training that has been officially approved by other parties to the STCW Convention will be recognised if such parties are included in the [White List](#), and provided that verification of the authenticity and validity of the certificates according to Regulation I/2 is possible.

In order to avoid excessive burdens on training institutions in 2016 and to ensure that mariners are qualified for continued service on board beyond 2016, refresher courses should be attended as soon as such courses are available and the oldest certificate, usually that attesting basic safety training, is more than five years old.

Moreover, it is urgently recommended that Masters and Officers apply immediately for a Certificate of Competency with a validity of five years as soon as they have successfully completed a refresher course. Otherwise, it will probably be impossible to process all applications within a reasonable period of time before the transitional period ends in 2016.