

Renewal of New Zealand STCW-F-aligned certificates

This guideline is for applicants renewing New Zealand certificates of competency that are aligned with STCW-F

SeaCert

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1. Overview

Renewal of New Zealand STCW-F-aligned certificates

This guideline is for seafarers wanting to renew (revalidate) a New Zealand certificate of competency that aligns with STCW-F (International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Fishing Vessel Personnel).

The information in this guideline applies to the following New Zealand STCW-F-aligned certificates:

- Skipper Fishing Vessel
- Skipper Fishing Vessel – Unlimited
- Mate Fishing Vessel
- Mate Fishing Vessel – Unlimited
- Marine Engineer Class 4 (STCW-F aligned)
- Marine Engineer Class 5 (STCW-F aligned)
- Marine Engineer Class 5 motor and steam (STCW-F aligned)

Your STCW-F aligned certificate can be renewed for up to five years.

The information in this guideline covers training, sea service and other requirements for your renewal, how to apply and pay for your renewal, and where to find more information.

maritimenz.govt.nz/seafarers

Disclaimer:

These guidelines provide information and explanations about the requirements set out in the maritime rules, but are not a substitute for the rules themselves, which are the law. These guidelines refer to provisions in the Maritime Rules Part 32, Seafarer Certification. The Director of Maritime New Zealand (Maritime NZ) will grant a certificate only when satisfied that all requirements have been met. In this guideline, any references to 'we' or Maritime New Zealand (Maritime NZ) relating to a decision about the issue or renewal of any seafarer certificate are references to the Director or a person acting under the Director's delegated authority.

maritimenz.govt.nz/rules

2. Requirements

To renew your New Zealand STCW-F aligned certificate, you need to prove that you meet all of the requirements. We recommend you check that you can meet the medical fitness and eyesight standards (including for colour vision), and that you understand the fit and proper person requirements.

In summary, you need to:

- be medically fit and have good eyesight
- be of good character and a fit and proper person
- have a current STCW-F-aligned certificate of competency
- prove you have the minimum sea service requirements for the certificate
- have the required ancillary certificates and demonstrate ongoing competence in these proficiencies, where required.

Each of these requirements and how to prove that you meet them is explained below.

The Director must also be satisfied that you continue to meet the overall training and competency standards for the certificate, taking into account your sea service and any bridging, refresher or updating training you have done.

2.1 Sea service

To renew an STCW-F-aligned certificate of competency, you must demonstrate continued professional competency by providing evidence of your approved sea service, performing functions appropriate to the certificate you hold.

Sea service requirements

Your sea service must have been served on a relevant vessel, as set out in the table below:

Type of certificate	Required sea service
STCW-F deck certificates	At least 12 months' approved sea service within the previous five years
STCW-F aligned engineering certificates	At least six months' approved sea service within the previous five years Or 45 days of approved sea service in the three month immediately before applying for renewal

Renewal of MEC 4 or MEC 5 Certificates

From 4 March 2023, sea service required for renewal of MEC 4 and MEC 5 certificates will increase to twelve months in the previous five years. This is to comply with STCW-F.

MEC 4 and MEC 5 certificate holders who do not meet the STCW-F requirement, but meet the sea service requirement for renewal of a national certificate (six months in the previous five years) will still be able to renew their certificate. In this case, it will be renewed with a condition stating that it is not valid for use on fishing vessels. If you gain the required sea service at a later date, you can apply to have the condition removed. Please take this into account when gaining your sea service.

2. Requirements (continued)

Proving your sea service

You are responsible for making sure your sea service is documented and verified by your ship's master or company.

To support your sea service, you must provide at least one of the following documents for each vessel you have served on:

- *certificate of sea service* (available on Maritime NZ's website)
- completed seafarer's record book
- discharge certificate or discharge book (ensuring that any section on watchkeeping is appropriately signed off).

The documents you provide as evidence of sea service must contain all of the following details for each vessel you have served on:

- your employer's name and contact details
- the name, tonnage and type of vessel (for example, cargo vessel, tanker, bulk carrier)
- the vessel's length overall
- the type of cargo carried and area of operation
- the dates you were employed and the sea time completed between those dates
- your duties, including watchkeeping where relevant to your certificate.

Any statutory declarations you have made are *not* acceptable as proof of your sea service.

Calculating sea service for voyages of 24 hours or more

Relevant qualifying sea service is expected to be on voyages of 24 hours or more, calculated as follows:

- from the sign-on date of starting work on the ship to the sign-off date of discharge (both dates are inclusive)
- by counting each whole calendar month during this period as one month
- for multiple voyages, by adding together extra days that do not fall within a calendar month, with each addition of 30 days to be calculated as one month.

Extended time in port is generally not counted as sea service, and nor is time on leave.

2. Requirements (continued)

Note:

Voyage means a voyage between a port or place of departure and a ship's final port or place of arrival. It includes any period of 24 hours (or more) where you are signed on or employed on the vessel and you remain on board.

For example: If your service record shows your sign-on date as 3 March and sign-off date as 14 April, your sea service would be calculated as one month (3 March to 2 April) and 12 days (from 3 to 14 April inclusive).

Calculating sea service for voyages of less than 24 hours

This sea service applies only to certificates where service in excess of 12 months may be on voyages of less than 24 hours, provided all of the conditions of sea service are met. Sea service on these voyages (for example, day work) is calculated by counting the number of months made up of days, as follows:

- counting each period of eight (or more) hours worked in each 24-hour period as one day's service
- counting periods of more than eight hours at a rate of more than one day (may be expressed in decimal points) at the Director's discretion, if the Director is satisfied there are suitable policies and processes in place to manage fatigue
- counting each additional 20 days (or more) in a 30-day period as one month's sea service. (A month is calculated as 160 or more hours worked over 20 or more days in a 30-day period.)

Where insufficient hours are accrued in a period of 30 days, additional hours or days may be accrued as described above until 20 days have been reached. This can then be counted as one month's sea service.

You cannot claim for more days of sea service than you actually served. You also cannot claim for time spent on leave or extended periods in port.

For more information about calculating your sea service, refer to the Maritime NZ website:

maritimenz.govt.nz/seafarers

2.2 Alternatives to sea service

If insufficient sea service has been gained during the five-year period, it may be possible to renew an STCW-F-aligned certificate by passing an approved test or successfully completing an approved course that is appropriate for skippers and officers serving aboard fishing vessels (especially for seafarers returning to sea service on fishing vessels).

Equivalent renewal experience

The Director may renew an STCW-F-aligned certificate if the holder has completed at least 2.5 years of non-seagoing experience in the previous five years, in a position considered by the Director to be equivalent to seagoing service. These positions may include:

- lecturers at approved fishing training providers
- marine/technical managers at companies operating STCW-F-sized fishing vessels (of 24 metres overall length or more).

2. Requirements (continued)

Documenting sea service or equivalent experience

To renew your certificate, you must provide evidence of recent sea service or equivalent experience. In most cases relevant sea service will be sufficient, but the Director may consider that other types of experience satisfy in full or part the requirements for relevant experience equivalent to sea service.

The following table sets out the types of experience that may be considered and the documents you would need to provide with your renewal application. Acceptable forms of assessment, examination or (refresher) training will be notified on Maritime NZ's website or by training providers as these are determined.

Type of experience	Document you must provide
Completing sea service in the role to be renewed (check the certificate requirements)	Evidence of sea service containing information and of a type acceptable to the Director, as indicated in the relevant certificate guideline (eg certificate, testimonial or discharge book)
Completing and passing relevant bridging, refresher or updating training acceptable to (as specified by) the Director	Documentation from a training provider indicating the name of the person trained, specific training standard provided, the date and a statement that the person demonstrated competency at the required level
Passing an assessment of a type specified by the Director	Documentation from an approved assessor indicating the name of the person examined, the specific nature of the assessment, the date and a statement that the person demonstrated competency at the required level
Passing an examination that uses a framework set by the Director	Documentation from an approved examiner indicating the name of the person examined, the specific nature of the examination, the date and a statement that the person demonstrated competency at the required level
Spending at least 30 months in the preceding five years: <ul style="list-style-type: none">employed in a relevant shore-based roleor engaged in performing relevant functions	Letter from an employer stating the position, functions and duties, period of employment (or performing the relevant functions) and how the employment (or performance of functions) is considered relevant to the certificate being renewed
Performing on-board functions appropriate to the certificate for at least three months immediately before application: <ul style="list-style-type: none">in a supernumerary capacityor a lower officer rank than the certificate to be renewed is valid for.	Company letter confirming completion of on-board training and experience as a supernumerary Or evidence of not less than three months of sea service containing information and of a type acceptable to the Director, as indicated in the relevant certificate guideline

Note: If the certificate has expired, you must obtain a dispensation to sail before proceeding to sea, unless you hold another valid certificate.

Notes:

Examples of acceptable documentation are a signed and dated letter, certificate or assessment record containing the required information.

Training providers, examiners or assessors are those approved either under the New Zealand Education Act or by the Director of Maritime New Zealand, or acceptable to the Director.

2. Requirements (continued)

2.3 Ancillary certificates

There is no requirement for seafarers to renew basic or advanced training for ancillary certificates. However, we encourage you to maintain the currency of any first aid or medical aid/care certificate in accordance with the requirements of the issuing organisation, and to consider maintaining any STCW ancillary proficiency training.

2.4 Fit and proper person

We need to confirm that you are of good character. To help us do this, there are several forms we need from you. These are outlined below.

Requirement	Document(s) you must provide
Be of good character	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A completed <i>fit and proper person form</i>, which must have been signed and dated no more than three months before we receive your application• A police clearance report for any country or countries outside New Zealand that you have lived in for 12 months or longer in the past five years (covering the entire period you lived in that country or countries)

Refer to 5. *Forms* for all of the forms that you will need to complete your application.

2. Requirements (continued)

2.5 Medical examination and eyesight tests

You need to prove that your medical fitness and eyesight meet the required standard.

Requirement	Document(s) you must provide
Be medically fit	<p>A certificate of medical fitness for seafarers that is valid at the time we renew your certificate.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• This is a special medical certificate that complies with STCW regulation I/9. You must get this from an approved medical practitioner, or from a medical practitioner approved for issuing seafarer medicals in another country that is party to STCW.• You may use an existing medical certificate if it will be valid (usually less than two years old) when your certificate is renewed.
Have good eyesight	<p>Eye test results showing you have met the required standards for visual acuity (including a letter eyesight test and colour vision). Your letter eyesight test and colour vision results, assessed as part of the seafarer's certificate of medical fitness, must still be valid at the time we renew your certificate.</p> <p>If there is any doubt about you passing the eyesight test, your medical practitioner will refer you to a registered optometrist.</p>

For more information about the medical and eyesight requirements for your certificate, refer to the guidelines on Maritime NZ's website:

maritimenz.govt.nz/seafarers

3. When and how to apply

Apply when you have completed all of the certificate requirements. Once we have received all of the information we need from you, it may take us up to 20 working days to process your application, so send it in as soon as possible (and at least one month before you need your certificate).

Make sure you include all of the documents we have asked for. Refer to *3.4 Checklist* to make sure you have everything you need for your application.

Note:

If your application is incomplete, it will not be processed and we will return your application and other documents to you.

3.1 Copies of supporting documents

We only need copies of your supporting documents, not the original versions.

The only exception is supporting documents for the *fit and proper person form* (your passport or driver's licence and birth certificate) – these need to be certified by the trusted referee listed in your *fit and proper person form*.

We do not need to see any of the documents you have already sent to us for other applications – just make a note about these documents in your application. However, if any of these documents have expired or will expire before we issue your certificate, we need to see a copy of the new or renewed document.

3. When and how to apply (continued)

3.2 Fees

There is a fee for your application. Refer to the Maritime NZ website for information about fees.

maritimenz.govt.nz/fees

You will be invoiced once we have formally received your application. A reference number and instructions explaining how to pay will be sent with the invoice.

You can pay:

- online using a credit card or debit card, *or*
- by internet banking or bank deposit.

Refer to the Maritime NZ website for more information about how to pay your fees:

maritimenz.govt.nz/howtopay

As well as the application fee, you may have other fees and expenses to pay. For example, you may need to pay for your eyesight tests, medical examination, training and ancillary courses.

3. When and how to apply (continued)

3.3 Application process

This is the application process for renewal of a New Zealand STCW-F-aligned certificate of competency. Complete each step before you move on to the next one.

1 Do you meet all the requirements?

You need to check that you meet all of the requirements for this certificate.

2 Do you have the documents we need?

You need to prove that you meet the requirements. Include all of the documents we have asked for with your application form. Use the checklist to help you (see 3.4. *Checklist*).

Remember we need copies, not the originals.

3 Send us your application by courier or email

There are two options for you to send your application:

1. Send your application by email, attaching the scanned documents.
The application form has information about the requirements for electronic copies.
2. Use a courier to send us your completed application forms and supporting documents.

The addresses are on the application form.

4 Confirmation and/or request sent

We will send you an email or letter to confirm that we have received your application and advise you of any documents we need from you before we can assess your application.

We must receive your payment before we can finalise your application.

3. When and how to apply (continued)

5 **Assessment and payment of application fee**

Once you have sent us all the documents we need, we will assess your application and make a decision. This will usually take 20 working days (about a month) from the time we let you know that we have received your application.

We will send you an invoice with your reference number and information on how to pay the application fee once we begin the assessment. Please note we cannot release your certificate unless payment has been received.

6 **Issue certificate**

We will send you:

- your certificate, if your application has been successful, or
- a letter or email explaining why your application was unsuccessful.

3. When and how to apply (continued)

3.4 Checklist

Use this checklist to make sure that you have everything you need for your application.

Check that your documents are complete and have been signed, dated and sighted as required.

We need to see all of the documents listed below to confirm that you have met each requirement. The only exceptions to this are documents that you have already sent to us for other applications (just note this in your application). However, if a document has expired or will expire before we renew your certificate, we need to see a copy of that new or renewed document.

About you

- Your current STCW-F-aligned certificate (original version)
- Seafarer certificate application form*
- Fit and proper person form* - including sighted and signed copies of the ID documents specified on the form
- Police clearance for other countries (if applicable)
- Copy of certificate of medical fitness for seafarers

Your sea service

- Evidence of sea service or equivalent

Remember:

- Send your application to us by courier or email (for an emailed application, you will need to send your certificate by courier)
- Send your application for renewal to us well before the certificate is due to expire

3. When and how to apply (continued)

3.5 Where to send your renewal application

To provide extra security, we recommend that you courier your application form and documents to us.

Alternatively, you can scan and email your application and supporting documents. (Refer to the application form for information about how to send your documents electronically. You will need to separately courier the original of your certificate to us.)

Courier your application to:

Seafarer Certification
Maritime New Zealand
1 Grey Street
WELLINGTON 6011

Or

Email your application to:

seafarers@maritimenz.govt.nz

4. Contact us for help

If you need more information about the requirements for your renewal application, visit the Seafarer Certification section of our website.

maritimenz.govt.nz/seafarers

If you can't find the information you need, send us an email:

seafarers@maritimenz.govt.nz

Tell us what you need help with and remember to include your contact details (email address and phone numbers).

We need your completed application before we can assess whether you meet the requirements to renew your certificate.

5. Forms

To renew an STCW-F-aligned certificate, there are several forms that you must provide and others that you may need to provide.

Everyone applying to renew an STCW-F-aligned certificate of competency must complete and send us all of the following forms:

- *Seafarer certificate application form*
- *Fit and proper person form.*

Other forms you may need to use:

- *Certificate of sea service*
- *Summary of seagoing service form.*

Each of these forms is available on the Maritime NZ website:

maritimenz.govt.nz/seafarers

Note:

You must complete these forms correctly for your application to be valid. Carefully read any notes before you start.