



Australian Government
Australian Maritime Safety Authority

THE NEW MARINE ORDER 505

Guidelines on the changes to the certificates
of competency and exemptions

January 2023





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Introduction to the Guidelines

The new Marine Order 505 has made some changes to the certificate of competency arrangements.

These Guidelines outline the:

- changes to the certificates of competency resulting from the new Marine Order 505, including the eligibility criteria for the new Coxswain Grade 3 certificate of competency;
- changes to medical certificates and sea time requirements;
- changes to endorsements and restrictions; and
- impact of the new Marine Order 505 on the current certificate of competency exemptions.

Overview of the new Marine Order 505

The new Marine Order 505 commenced on 1 January 2023. It includes the content that was previously contained in Part D of the National Standard for Commercial Vessels (NSCV), with the following key changes to the certificates:

- the introduction of three new near coastal certificates of competency:
 - the Coxswain Grade 3, which replaces the current Exemption 38 arrangements;
 - Sailing Master Coastal; and
 - Sailing Master Offshore;
- replacement of the Master <35m certificate of competency with the Master <45m certificate of competency;
- replacement of the Master <80m certificate of competency with the Master <100m certificate of competency; and
- phasing out of the Mate <80m certificate of competency.

There were also some changes to the sea time requirements, endorsements and restrictions for the certificates of competency.

In addition, the standard for the assessment of medical fitness for masters and crew of domestic commercial vessels was modified under the new Marine Order 505, and a medical certificate is now required for the first issue of all certificates of competency, and the validity duration of the certificate varies depending on age.

Finally, the new Marine Order 505 incorporated the provisions for the approval of registered training organisations to conduct mandated practical assessments, and the conditions of the approval, with only minor changes to the previous arrangements.

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Part 1 – Changes to the certificates of competency

1.1 The new Coxswain Grade 3 NC certificate

The new Marine Order 505 introduced the Coxswain Grade 3 certificate of competency.

The Coxswain Grade 3 certificate provides basic seamanship knowledge and skills, and it replaces the current Exemption 38 (Low complexity duties) arrangements. A Coxswain 3 certificate holder may operate small domestic commercial vessels in smooth waters or close to shore.

Coxswain Grade 3 certificate holders are required to acquire job specific training and skills in accordance with their organisation's Safety Management Systems (SMS), in addition to meeting the eligibility criteria for the certificate.

Importantly, a person who meets the eligibility criteria for the Coxswain Grade 3 the person can operate without having to apply for a Coxswain Grade 3 NC certificate of competency. Once the eligibility criteria has been satisfied, applying for a Coxswain Grade 3 certificate is optional.

Eligibility for the Coxswain Grade 3 certificate

To satisfy the criteria for the Coxswain Grade 3 certificate, a person must:

- achieve one of the five options set out in Table 1 below; and
- hold a current *Certificate of Medical Fitness Domestic Seafarers* that shows the person meets the *Standards for the medical examination of domestic seafarers*; and
- have a current first aid certificate equivalent to at least HLTAID011 *Provide first aid* (unless the person will be operating only in a marina or mooring area with alternative first aid arrangements – see below); and
- be at least 16 years old.

There are some differences in the duties and functions that may be performed by a person eligible for a Coxswain 3, depending on which eligibility criteria option set out in Table 1 is chosen. A person who satisfies options (c) or (e) may operate a tender further from the parent vessel. See below for more detail on the duties and functions of the Coxswain Grade 3.

As noted above, once the eligibility criteria for the Coxswain Grade 3 has been satisfied, applying for a Coxswain Grade 3 certificate is optional. If a Coxswain Grade 3 certificate is not obtained, the person must keep evidence of their eligibility to hold a Coxswain Grade 3 certificate on board any vessel on which the person is carrying out duties for which a Coxswain Grade 3 certificate is required.

A first aid certificate is not required if the person is only working in a marina or mooring area, provided:

- the operation of the vessel is supported by a person who holds a first aid certificate ashore or on a nearby vessel in the same operation (for example, the marina may provide first aid support services); and
- they do not apply for a Coxswain Grade 3 certificate.

In order to be issued the certificate, or to operate outside a marina or mooring area, or to operate inside a marina or mooring area without alternative first aid arrangements, the first aid certificate is required – see the new Marine Order 505 and Schedule 1 of Marine Order 504.

Table 1 – Eligibility criteria options for Coxswain Grade 3

Option (a)	Option (b)	Option (c)	Option (d)	Option (e)
Completion of the Australian Sailing Powerboat Handling Course	Completion of the RYA level 2 Powerboat course	Completion before [1 January 2023] of training and final practical assessment in accordance with Exemption 38 (<i>Marine Safety (Low complexity duties) Exemption 2020</i> for the performance of low complexity duties)	All of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold a licence issued by a State or Territory to operate a recreational vessel • Completion of at least 1 day qualifying sea service on a commercial vessel • Completion of a declaration on the approved form 	Completion of all of the following units with an approved training organisation from the MAR Maritime Training Package: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MARI003 Comply with regulations to ensure safe operation of a vessel up to 12 metres • MARK007 Handle a vessel up to 12 metres • MARN008 Apply seamanship skills aboard a vessel up to 12 metres

Declaration requirement for recreational boating licence holder (Option (d))

If Option (d) is selected, the declaration form AMSA 1882 must be completed in accordance with Schedule 1 of these Guidelines. Importantly, Part B of the form must be completed by an ‘observer’, who must witness the applicant complete the practical on water tasks set out in the form.

Duties and functions of the Coxswain Grade 3

A person eligible for, or who holds, a Coxswain Grade 3 certificate, may:

1. Command, and operate the engines of a vessel < 12 m long:
 - (a) carrying no more than 6 persons including crew and master unless the vessel is a tender mentioned in paragraph (d); and
 - (b) if the vessel is carrying passengers — only in daylight hours; and
 - (c) with propulsion power:
 - (i) for an inboard engine — <100kW;
 - (ii) for an outboard engine — <250kW;
 - (d) if the vessel is a tender that has a parent vessel <EEZ and the tender is capable of communicating with the parent vessel:
 - (i) within 3 n mile of the parent vessel for a person who satisfies eligibility criteria option (c) (completed training and a final assessment under Exemption 38) or option (e) (completed the specified three units from the MAR Maritime Training Package); and
 - (ii) within 1 n mile of the parent vessel for a person not mentioned in subparagraph (i); and
 - (iii) in line of sight of the parent vessel; and

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- (e) if the vessel is not one to which paragraph (d) applies — in any of the following:
 - (i) a marina;
 - (ii) a mooring area in sight and communication of a marina;
 - (iii) inland waters;
 - (iv) smooth waters;
 - (v) waters within 1 n mile of shore;
 - (vi) waters:
 - (A) of an aquaculture lease approved by a State or Territory; or
 - (B) approved by a State or Territory for daily transit to and from an aquaculture lease; or
 - (C) within 1 n mile of a State or Territory approved aquaculture lease;
 - (vii) waters within 250 m of a structure fixed to the shore.
- 2. Command and operate the engines of a vessel < 12 m long:
 - (a) that is used only for towing people; and
 - (b) with propulsion power for an inboard or outboard engine of < 500 kW; and
 - (c) in waters approved as a water ski area by a State or Territory authority; and
 - (d) in daylight hours only.

Conditions

If the person eligible for a Coxswain Grade 3 certificate has colour deficient vision, they may only perform duties during daylight hours.

Either the Coxswain Grade 3 certificate, or evidence of eligibility for a Coxswain Grade 3 certificate, must be kept on board the vessel on which the holder is performing duties for which the Coxswain 3 certificate is required.

Endorsements

A Coxswain Grade 3 certificate may be endorsed to allow the holder to command and operate the engines of a vehicular ferry-in-chains attached to the shore by cable where the holder of the certificate has:

- at least 20 days qualifying sea service on a ferry in chains.

In order to obtain the endorsement, the person must apply for (or already hold) the Coxswain Grade 3 certificate or higher certificate (See table 7 for more information).

1.2 The new Sailing Master certificates

The new Sailing Master Coastal NC and Sailing Master Offshore NC certificates of Competency replaced the previous Exemption 18 (Sail) and Exemption 33 (Sailing vessels with motor propulsion) arrangements.

Eligibility for the Sailing Master Coastal NC certificate

To satisfy the criteria for the Sailing Master Coastal NC, a person must:

- hold a commercially endorsed RYA Yachtmaster Coastal certificate;
- hold a Short Range Operator Certificate of Proficiency issued by ACMA (or higher qualification);
- satisfy any one of the following:
 - hold a Coxswain Grade 1 NC certificate of competency; or
 - hold a Marine Engine Driver Grade 3 certificate of competency; or
 - complete MAR Maritime Training Package *MARC037 Operate inboard and outboard motors*, or a course developed as part of the MAR Maritime Training Package to cover the same skills; or
 - complete *RYA Diesel Engine course and the Australian Sailing Powerboat Handling course*; or
 - complete the *RYA Diesel Engine course and the RYA Level 2 Powerboat course*; and
- have a current *Certificate of Medical Fitness Domestic Seafarers* that shows the person meets the *Standards for the medical examination of domestic seafarers*; and
- have a current first aid certificate equivalent to at least HLTAID011 *Provide first aid*; and
- be at least 16 years old.

Eligibility for the Sailing Master Offshore NC certificate

To satisfy the criteria for the Sailing Master Offshore NC, a person must:

- hold a commercially endorsed RYA Yachtmaster Offshore or Yachtmaster Ocean certificate; and
- hold a Long Range Operator Certificate of Proficiency (or higher) issued by ACMA; and
- satisfy any one of the following:
 - hold a Coxswain Grade 1 NC certificate of competency; or
 - complete MAR Maritime Training Package *MARC037 Operate inboard and outboard motors*, or a course developed as part of the MAR Maritime Training Package to cover the same skills; or
 - complete *RYA Diesel Engine course and the Australian Sailing Powerboat Handling course*; or
 - complete the *RYA Diesel Engine course and the RYA Level 2 Powerboat course*; and
- hold a current *Certificate of Medical Fitness Domestic Seafarers* that shows the person meets the *Standards for the medical examination of domestic seafarers*; and
- have a current first aid certificate equivalent to at least HLTAID011 *Provide first aid*; and
- be at least 16 years old.

Duties and functions of the Sailing Master Coastal NC certificate

A person who holds a Sailing Master Coastal NC may:

1. Command, and operate the engines of a sailing vessel <24m long:
 - (a) with propulsion power <100 kW; and
 - (b) in inshore waters.
2. Be chief mate or deck watchkeeper of a sailing vessel <45m long in inshore waters.
3. Operate a tender:
 - (a) for the vessel under the command of the master; and
 - (b) with propulsion power <100 kW
4. Undertake the duties and perform the functions of a General Purpose Hand NC.

Duties and functions of the Sailing Master Offshore NC certificate

A person who holds a Sailing Master Offshore NC may:

1. Command, and operate the engines of, a sailing vessel <24m long <EEZ²:
 - (a) with no more than 12 passengers if outside inshore waters; and
 - (b) with propulsion power <100 kW.
2. Chief mate or deck watchkeeper of a sailing vessel <45m long <EEZ².
3. Operate a tender:
 - (a) for the vessel under the command of the master; and
 - (b) with propulsion power <100 kW.
4. Undertake the duties and perform the functions of a General Purpose Hand NC.

What are the differences between Exemption 18 and the Sailing Master certificates?

There are some differences between Exemption 18 and the Sailing Master certificates. In summary:

- the seafarer must now hold the Sailing Master certificate of competency. Under Exemption 18, the seafarer was exempt from the certificate of competency requirement if the conditions were met, and there was no requirement to apply for approval to operate under the exemption;
- a medical certificate is now required, rather than a medical declaration;
- the duties and functions have changed; and
- some of the eligibility criteria have changed, including:
 - a Long Range Operator Certificate of Proficiency is now required for the Sailing Master Offshore NC, rather than a Short Range Operator Certificate of Proficiency; and
 - the RYA certificates must be commercially endorsed.

The eligibility requirements and duties and functions of Exemption 18, and the new Sailing Master certificates, are set out in the following table. The key differences are underlined.

² <EEZ means in inland waters and in waters to the outer limit of the exclusive economic zone of Australia. 10

Table 2: Requirements and allowances of Exemption 18 and the new Sailing Master certificates

Eligibility and duties	Exemption 18		New MO505	
	Inshore operations	Offshore operations	Sailing Master Coastal NC	Sailing Master Offshore NC
Eligibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Declaration of medical fitness • First aid certificate • Short Range Operator Certificate • MARSS00008 Shipboard Safety <p>PLUS either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RYA Yachtmaster Coastal Certificate; or • Coxswain (Sail) certificate <p>PLUS either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RYA Safety and Sea Survival; or • World Sailing Offshore personal survival course 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Declaration of medical fitness • First aid certificate • Short Range Operator Certificate • MARSS00008 Shipboard Safety <p>PLUS either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Master 5 (Sail) certificate; or • All: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - RYA Yachtmaster Offshore or Ocean; and - Either: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MARC037 Operate inboard and outboard motors; or • RYA Diesel engine course and the Australian Sail Powerboat Handling course; or • RYA Diesel engine course and the Australian Sail Level 2 Powerboat course <p>PLUS either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RYA Safety and Sea Survival; or • World Sailing Offshore personal survival course 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certificate of medical fitness • First aid certificate • Short Range Operator Certificate <p>PLUS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commercially endorsed RYA Yachtmaster Coastal certificate <p>PLUS either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coxswain Grade 1 NC certificate; or • Marine Engine Driver Grade 3 NC certificate; or • MARC037 Operate inboard and outboard motors; or • RYA Diesel Engine and the Australian Sailing Powerboat Handling course; or • RYA Diesel Engine course and the RYA Level 2 Powerboat course 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certificate of medical fitness • First aid certificate • Long Range Operator Certificate <p>PLUS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commercially endorsed RYA Yachtmaster Offshore or Ocean certificate <p>PLUS either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coxswain Grade 1 NC certificate; or • Marine Engine Driver Grade 3 NC certificate; or • MARC037 Operate inboard and outboard motors; or • RYA Diesel Engine and the Australian Sailing Powerboat Handling course; or • RYA Diesel Engine course and the RYA Level 2 Powerboat course
Duties and functions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Master of a sailing vessel ≤12m, <75 kW within 15 nm 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Master of a sailing vessel ≤24m, <75 kW within 100 nm of shore • Mate of a sailing vessels ≤35m <EEZ³ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Command and operate the engines of a sailing vessel <24m, <100 kW, in inshore waters • Chief mate or deck watchkeeper of sailing vessel <45m in inshore waters • Operate a tender <100 kW • General Purpose Hand NC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Command and operate the engines of a sailing vessel <24m, <EEZ³, <100 kW, with no more than 12 passengers if outside inshore waters. • Chief mate or deck watchkeeper of a sailing vessel <45m, <EEZ³ • Operate a tender <100 kW • General Purpose Hand NC

³ <EEZ means in inland waters and in waters to the outer limit of the exclusive economic zone of Australia.

What are the differences between Exemption 33 and the Sailing Master certificates?

Exemption 33 allowed a person to carry out engineering functions and duties on a sailing vessel <75 kW, where the person:

- held a Coxswain Grade 1 or Coxswain Grade 2 certificate; or
- completed MARC037; or
- completed the *RYA Diesel Engine* course and the *Australian Sailing Powerboat Handling* course; or
- completed the *RYA Diesel Engine* course and the *RYA Level 2 Powerboat* course.

These arrangements have been built into the new Sailing Master certificates, so that the holder of a Sailing Master certificate can both command the vessel, and operate the engines of the vessel.

However, this means that the applicant for a Sailing Master certificate must hold a commercially endorsed RYA Yachtmaster certificate, in addition to satisfying one of the options previously contained in Exemption 33.

In addition, the Coxswain Grade 2 certificate is not an option for satisfying the eligibility criteria for the Sailing Master certificates.

When do Exemptions 18 and 33 expire and how do I transition to the Sailing Master certificate?

Exemptions 18 and 33 will expire on 30 June 2025. Any seafarers operating under Exemptions 18 or 33 will need to obtain a Sailing Master certificate of competency before that date.

A person holding an appropriate commercially endorsed RYA certificate may apply to AMSA for a Sailing Master certificate of competency. A person holding a Coxswain Sail or Master 5 (Sail) certificate may also apply to AMSA for a Sailing Master certificate of competency – the Coxswain Sail and Master 5 (Sail) certificates may be considered to be equivalent training to the RYA certificates.

1.3 Changes to the <35m and <80m certificates of competency

The Master <35m NC certificate of competency has been replaced with the Master <45m NC certificate of competency, while the Master <80m NC certificate has been replaced with the Master <100m NC certificate. The Mate <80m certificate is no longer issued.

Master <35m

The Master <35m NC certificate of competency has been replaced with the Master <45m certificate of competency. There are no changes to the eligibility requirements.

When a person holding a Master <35m NC certificate of competency applies for renewal of the certificate, they will be issued with a Master <45m NC certificate. In addition, the holder of a Master <35m NC certificate can perform the duties and functions of the Master <45m NC certificate, immediately. Any endorsements on the current certificate will also continue to be recognised until expiry.

The differences between the Master <35m NC certificate and the Master <45 NC certificate are set out in the following table.

Table 3: Comparison of the duties and functions of Master <35m and Master <45m certificates

Master <35m	Master <45m
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Command a vessel <35m long <EEZ⁴ • Command a vessel <80m long in inshore waters • Act as Chief Mate or Deck Watchkeeper on a vessel <80m long <EEZ⁴ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Command a vessel <45m long <EEZ • Command a vessel <100m long and <3000GT in inshore waters • Act as Chief Mate or Deck Watchkeeper on a vessel <100m long <EEZ⁴ • Undertake the duties and perform the functions of a General Purpose Hand NC

Master <80m

The Master <80m NC certificate of competency has been replaced with the Master <100m certificate of competency. There are no changes to the eligibility requirements.

When a person holding a Master <80m NC certificate of competency applies for renewal of the certificate, they will be issued with a Master <100m NC certificate. In addition, the holder of a Master <80m NC certificate can perform the duties and functions of the Master <100m NC certificate immediately. Any endorsements on the current certificate will also continue to be recognised until expiry.

The differences between the Master <80m NC certificate and the Master <100m NC certificate are set out in the following table.

Table 4: Comparison of the duties and functions of Master <80m and Master <100m certificates

Master <80m	Master <100m
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Command a vessel <80m long <EEZ⁴ • Act as Chief Mate or Deck Watchkeeper on a vessel <80m long <EEZ⁴ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Command a vessel <100m long and <3000GT<EEZ⁴ • Undertake the duties and perform the functions of a General Purpose Hand NC, Master <24m NC and Master <45m NC

⁴ <EEZ means in inland waters and in waters to the outer limit of the exclusive economic zone of Australia.

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Mate <80m

The Mate <80m certificate is being phased out, and the certificate is no longer issued.

However, holders of a Mate <80m certificate can continue to carry out the duties and functions of the Mate <80m, as set out in Part D of the NSCV, until the certificate expires.

When a person holding a Mate <80m NC certificate of competency applies for renewal of the certificate, they will be issued with a Master <24m NC certificate. In addition, the holder of a Mate <80m NC certificate can perform the duties and functions of the Master <24m NC certificate immediately. Any endorsements on the current certificate will also continue to be recognised until expiry.

The differences between the Mate <80m NC certificate and the Master <24m NC certificate are set out in the following table.

Table 5: Comparison of the duties and functions of Mate <80m and Master <24m certificates

Mate <80m	Master <24m
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Be second in command on a vessel <80m long <EEZ⁵	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Command a vessel <24m long <EEZ⁵• Act as Chief Mate on a vessel <45m <EEZ⁵• Act as Deck Watchkeeper on a vessel <100m long and <3000GT <EEZ⁵• Act as Chief Mate on a vessel <100m and <3000GT in inshore waters• Undertake the duties and perform the function of a General Purpose Hand NC and Master (Inland waters) NC

⁵ <EEZ means in inland waters and in waters to the outer limit of the exclusive economic zone of Australia.

1.4 Minor changes to other certificates

Some minor changes have also been made to other certificates of competency, as set out in the following table.

Table 6: Minor changes to the certificates of competency

Certificate	Changes
General Purpose Hand NC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vessel length increased to <100m (from <80m) 5 days sea service on a commercial vessel is now required
Coxswain Grade 2 NC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No longer restricted to non-passenger carrying operations 10 days qualifying sea service now required where an AMSA approved task book is completed (up from 7 days) 50 days qualifying sea service now required where an AMSA approved task book is not completed (down from 60 days) First aid certificate is now required for all Coxswain 2 NC certificates (not just for Coxswain 2 certificates with a passenger-carrying endorsement)
Coxswain Grade 1 NC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No longer restricted to sheltered waters, even if sea service completed in sheltered waters 150 days qualifying sea service now required where an AMSA approved task book is not completed (down from 240 days)
Master (Inland waters) NC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Duties as Master increased to vessels <45m (in inland waters) (up from <24m).
Master <24m NC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Duties as Chief Mate increased to vessels <45m, in line with new Master <45m Duties as deck watchkeeper increased to vessels <100m and <3000GT in line with new Master <100m No longer restricted to sheltered waters, even if sea service completed in sheltered waters 360 days qualifying sea service now required where an AMSA approved task book is not completed (down from 600 days) All sea service must be completed on vessels ≥ 7.5m (option of completing up to half sea service on smaller vessels has been removed)
Marine Engine Driver Grade 3 NC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Option of restriction to outboard motors no longer available. The sea service requirements on vessels with inboard engines must be met.
Marine Engine Driver Grade 2 NC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sea service reduction for eligibility requirements whilst holding another lower certificate (such as MED 3 or Coxswain) is no longer available.
Marine Engine Driver Grade 1 NC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sea service options have changed to include either sea service while holding an MED 2 certificate or sea service while holding a workshop skills equivalent certificate (eg a Certificate III in Electrical fitting).
Engineer Class 3 NC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No changes

1.5 Changes to the requirement for a crew member to hold a certificate of competency

The interaction between the minimum crewing requirements for a vessel, and the requirement for a seafarer to hold a certificate of competency, could be unclear under the previous Marine Order 505.

The new Marine Order 505 clarified the requirement for seafarers to hold certificates of competency. Under the new Marine Order 505, a person must hold a certificate of competency in order to undertake a duty or to perform a function on a domestic commercial vessel, if the duty or function is mentioned in Schedule 1 to Marine Order 505 for the kind of certificate.

When is a General Purpose Hand NC certificate required?

General Purpose Hand NC

Note: The terms deck work, direct supervision, engine work, and general supervision are defined in section 4.

1. assist with deck work on a vessel <100 m long and <3000 GT <EEZ under general supervision of the master of the vessel or an appropriately certificated crew member to whom the master delegates the supervision
2. assist with engine work on a vessel with propulsion power <3000 kW <EEZ under general supervision of the chief engineer of the vessel or another appropriately certificated crew member to whom the chief engineer delegates the supervision

Note: This means that a person assisting with deck work or engine work under direct supervision rather than general supervision is not required to hold a certificate.

Under the new Marine Order 505, section 4:

deck work means operation or lookout tasks for any of the following:

- navigation;
- mooring;
- anchoring;
- cargo.

engine work means tasks relating to main or auxiliary machinery used for any of the following:

- propulsion;
- mooring;
- anchoring;
- cargo.

direct supervision means that the person being supervised is frequently within sight and hearing of the supervisor.

general supervision means that the person being supervised receives instruction and direction on tasks, and recurrent personal contact from the supervisor, but is not frequently attended by the supervisor.

1.6 Changes to the medical requirements

A medical certificate is now required for the first issue of each certificate. In addition, the standard for the assessment of medical fitness has changed.

Expanded medical certificate requirements

Under the new Marine Order 505, a certificate of medical fitness is required for the issue of all new certificates of competency. This is a change to the current Marine Order 505 and Part D, under which a medical declaration (not certificate) is required for the following certificates:

- General Purpose Hand NC;
- Coxswain Grade 2 NC;
- Coxswain Grade 1 NC;
- Master <24 NC;
- Master (Inland waters) NC;
- Marine Engine Driver Grade 3 NC; and
- Marine Engine Driver Grade 2 NC.

The requirements for a medical certificate on renewal remain unchanged – a medical certificate is only required for the renewal of a Master <45m NC, Master <100m NC, Marine Engine Driver Grade 1 NC and an Engineer Class 3 NC certificate of competency. For all other certificates of competency, a declaration of medical fitness is required for renewal.

New standard for the assessment of medical fitness

The standard for the assessment of medical fitness of seafarers has also been revised, and a new standard – *Standards for the Medical Examination of Domestic Seafarers* – is now in effect.

The key change to the previous standard is the maximum period for which a Certificate of Medical Fitness issued under the standard will be valid. Under the new standard, a Certificate of Medical Fitness may be issued for:

- up to 4 years if at the time of assessment the person is 19 to 50 years old;
- up to 2 years if at the time of the assessment the person is 51 to 60 years old; and
- up to 1 year if at the date of assessment the person is not more than 18 years old or is 61 or more years old.

Under the previous standard, a Certificate of Medical Fitness could only be issued for two years.

The new standard also includes more detail on the requirements in order to assist Doctors conducting assessments under the standard.

1.7 Changes to the endorsements

Endorsements that allow certificate of competency holders to operate beyond <EEZ⁷ are no longer issued.

Table 7: Endorsements available under the new Marine Order 505

Certificate	Endorsement	Changes
Marine Engine Driver Grade 3 NC Marine Engine Driver Grade 2 NC Marine Engine Driver Grade 1 NC Engineer Class 3 NC	Chief Engineer on a vessel that has steam as its main method of propulsion <750 kW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AMSA approved task book • 100 hours qualifying sea service on vessels with steam as the main propulsion power with propulsion power <750 kW while working on board as an assistant to any of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - an engineer - an engine driver - a chief engineer - a second engineer • basic boiler licence or a licence to operate a standard boiler • final assessment
Coxswain Grade 2 NC	Command and operate a vessel with inboard propulsion power <500kW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MAR Maritime Training Package unit MARB027 Perform basic servicing and maintenance of main propulsion unit and auxiliary systems • MAR Maritime Training Package unit MARC038 Operate main propulsion unit and auxiliary systems
Coxswain Grade 3 NC (only when actual certificate is issued) Coxswain Grade 2 NC Coxswain Grade 1 NC Master (Inland waters) NC Master <24 m NC	Command and operate the engines of a vehicular ferry-in-chains attached to the shore by cable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20 days qualifying sea service on a ferry-in-chains

Endorsements no longer be issued under Marine Order 505

The following endorsement will no longer be issued under Marine Order 505:

- Endorsements to 600nm.

Endorsements will no longer be issued which allow the holder of a certificate of competency to operate beyond the outer limits of Australia's Exclusive Economic Zone (the EEZ). Endorsements to current certificates of competency will continue until they expire.

- Endorsements to Engineer Class 3 to be Second Engineer on a vessel with propulsion <6000kW.

These endorsements were only issued to holders of previous State and Northern Territory certificates which had the endorsement prior to 1 July 2013. The endorsements are no longer issued, however, AMSA may consider applications for a specific exemption from operators affected by this change.

⁷ <EEZ means in inland waters and in waters to the outer limit of the exclusive economic zone of Australia.

1.8 Other changes resulting from the new Marine Order 505

Provisions for the approval of organisations to conduct final assessments

The new Marine Order 505 incorporated the provisions for the approval of registered training organisations to conduct mandated practical assessments, and the conditions of the approval, with only minor changes to the previous arrangements.

Greater flexibility to recognise equivalent training

New provisions in Marine Order 505 allow AMSA to recognise equivalent training to the training specified in Marine Order 505 for a certificate.

Equivalent sea service to the qualifying sea service specified in Marine Order 505 can also be recognised by AMSA under the new Marine Order 505. This continues the current NSCV Part D arrangements for recognising equivalent sea service.

Making available information about certificates of competency

New provisions in Marine Order 505 allow AMSA to provide information about the status of a certificate of competency to the owner of a domestic commercial vessel or to a foreign administration, including whether the certificate has been suspended or revoked. This helps prevent holders of suspended or revoked certificates from moving to a new vessel or jurisdiction

Revoked certificates must now be returned to AMSA

Under the new Marine Order 505, when a certificate is revoked (either on application by the holder of the certificate or on AMSA's initiative) it must be returned to AMSA.

New powers to require regulatory actions

Under the new Marine Order 505, AMSA has the power to require the holder of a certificate of competency to perform a regulatory action where they:

- have given false or misleading information to AMSA about their certificate;
- have contravened a condition on the certificate;
- have demonstrated incompetence or misconducted in relation to the safe navigation, management or working of a vessel; or
- cannot, for any reason, properly perform their duties or functions under the certificate.

Examples of regulatory actions that may be required include:

- completing a drug or alcohol rehabilitation program; and
- completing specified training relevant to the duties and functions of the certificate.

Part 2 The impact on the certificate of competency exemptions

Many exemptions have now been incorporated into the certificate of competency arrangements and are no longer required. These will be allowed to expire and will not be reissued after the current expiry date.

Seafarers operating under an exemption that is set to expire must ensure that they meet the requirements of the new Marine Order 505 prior to the expiry date.

All of the certificate of competency exemptions affected by the new Marine Order 505, and the transitional arrangements and requirements, are set out in the following table.

Part 2 The impact on the certificate of competency exemptions

Exemption	Arrangements provided through exemption	Marine Order 505 arrangements	Future of the exemption	What individuals will need to do before the expiry date
EX08 (Temporary service)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Division 2 provides an exemption from the requirement to hold a certificate of competency for a specified operation, for up to 30 days, with AMSA approval. Division 3 allows for temporary service following training and final assessment, while AMSA assesses the certificate of competency application. Division 4 allows for temporary service following expiry of the certificate of competency, while AMSA processes the application for renewal. The application must have been made prior to expiry of the certificate. 	<p>The temporary service arrangements have been incorporated into MO505.</p>	<p>No longer required, and will expire when the new MO505 commences.</p>	<p>Nothing. The arrangements continue under the new MO505. If a temporary crewing permit is required, an application can be made through MO504.</p>
EX12 (Inland waters)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Addresses a minor drafting error in NSCV Part D to ensure that allowances for 'inshore operations' extend to 'inland waters'. 	<p>The drafting error has been fixed.</p>	<p>No longer required and will expire when the new MO505 commences.</p>	<p>Nothing. Certificates of competency which permit operations on inshore waters also permit operations on inland waters under the new MO505.</p>
EX15 (Scientific research and educational activities)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allows the holder of a recreational boating licence to operate vessels <7.5m carrying out scientific research or educational activities within the Great Barrier Reef, Torres Strait, smooth or partially smooth waters, and other waters specifically approved. The master of the vessel must be at least 16 and the vessel may only carry employees of the owner and special personnel. 	<p>The new Coxswain Grade 3 will partially cover these arrangements.</p>	<p>Will expire on 30 June 2025 and will not be reissued.</p>	<p>Meet the eligibility requirements for the Coxswain Grade 3 or obtain a Coxswain Grade 2 or Grade 1, as applicable to the vessel and its operations, by 1 July 2025. However, AMSA may consider applications for a specific exemption from operators affected by this change, on a case-by-case basis.</p>
EX18 (Sail)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allows the holder of specified RYA Yachtmaster and related certificates to operate sail vessels without a certificate of competency. There are eligibility and competency requirements. 	<p>New Sailing Master Coastal NC and Sailing Master Offshore NC certificates of competency have been introduced.</p>	<p>Will expire on 30 June 2025.</p>	<p>Obtain a Sailing Master certificate of competency by 1 July 2025. Coxswain Sail and Master 5 (Sail) certificates may be recognised as part of an application for a Sailing Master certificate under the equivalent training provisions of the new MO505</p>

Part 2 The impact on the certificate of competency exemptions

Exemption	Arrangements provided through exemption	Marine Order 505 arrangements	Future of the exemption	What individuals will need to do before the expiry date
EX20 (Special operations)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allows the holder of a recreational boating licence to be the master of a vessel <7.5m and ≤38 kW operating in smooth and inland waters, without passengers and within 100m from shore or a structure attached to shore, without a certificate of competency. written approval from AMSA is required 	Covered by the new Coxswain Grade 3.	Will expire on 30 June 2025.	Meet the eligibility requirements for the Coxswain Grade 3 by 1 July 2025 – see Part 1 of these guidelines. An application for a Coxswain Grade 3 certificate is not required provided the eligibility requirements are met.
EX21 (Operator vehicular ferry-in-chains)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allows the holder of a recreational boating licence with 20 days on-the-job training and a first-aid certificate to be the master of a vehicular ferry-in-chains attached to the shore by cable. Written approval from AMSA is required. 	Covered by the new Coxswain Grade 3, with the vehicular ferry-in-chains endorsement.	Will expire on 30 June 2025.	Meet the eligibility requirements for the Coxswain Grade 3 – see Part 1 of these guidelines, or for a Coxswain Grade 1, Coxswain Grade 2, Master (Inland waters) or Master <24 m certificate. Apply for and obtain a Coxswain Grade 1, 2 or 3 certificate, or a Master (Inland waters) or Master <24 m certificate, with the vehicular ferry-in-chains endorsement by 1 July 2025.
EX26 (Expired certificates)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This exemption allows a person who held a certificate of competency issued by a State or the NT, which expired prior to 30 June 2013, to apply for an equivalent certificate of competency under Marine Order 505. 	Sections 13 and 14 of the new MO505 allow for equivalence in eligibility and sea service. The colour vision, vision tests, medical certificate and first aid certificate, will likely be required for a new application for a National Law certificate of competency.	Will expire on 31 December 2022.	To take advantage of the exemption arrangements, an application for a certificate of competency will need to be made by 31 December 2022. From 1 January 2023, the applicant will need to meet the eligibility requirements of MO505, or have equivalence in eligibility and sea service recognised by AMSA.
EX30 (Navigation Act seafarer qualifications)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exempts the holder of a Navigation Act seafarer certificate from the requirement to hold a corresponding National Law certificate of competency. 	Section 5(2) of the new MO505 and Schedule 1, Section 6(5) incorporate this exemption.	No longer required and will expire when the new MO505 commences.	Nothing. The arrangements are recognised under the new MO505. (Although note that there are some changes to the list of corresponding certificates).

Part 2 The impact on the certificate of competency exemptions

Exemption	Arrangements provided through exemption	Marine Order 505 arrangements	Future of the exemption	What individuals will need to do before the expiry date
EX33 (Sailing vessels with motor propulsion)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exempts a person performing duties as an engineer of a sailing vessel with propulsion power <75kW from the requirement to hold a certificate of competency, provided they hold a Coxswain Grade 1 or Coxswain Grade 2, or have completed specified RYA courses or MARC037. 	<p>New Sailing Master Coastal NC and Sailing Master Offshore NC certificates of competency have been introduced.</p>	<p>Will expire on 30 June 2025.</p>	<p>Obtain a Sailing Master certificate of competency by 1 July 2025.</p>
EX34 (Expired perpetual certificates)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exempts the holder of a NSW perpetual certificate that expired under NSW law who is applying for an equivalent certificate of competency from the eligibility and sea service requirements of NSCV Part D. 	<p>Sections 13 and 14 of the new MO505 allow for equivalence in eligibility requirements and sea service requirements. The colour vision and vision tests, medical certificate and first aid certificate, will likely be required for a new application for a National Law certificate of competency.</p>	<p>Will expire on 31 December 2022.</p>	<p>To take advantage of the exemption arrangements, an application for a certificate of competency will need to be made by 31 December 2022. From 1 January 2023, the applicant will need to meet the eligibility requirements of MO505, or have equivalence in eligibility and sea service recognised by AMSA.</p>
EX38 (Low complexity duties)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exempts a person from the requirement to hold a certificate of competency when performing low-complexity duties, provided they have completed specified MAR units and a practical assessment. 	<p>The new Coxswain Grade 3 NC certificate of competency replaces this exemption.</p>	<p>Will expire on 31 December 2022.</p>	<p>A person operating under EX38 satisfies the criteria for the Coxswain 3 and can continue to operate without applying for the Coxswain Grade 3 certificate of competency, provided that they have a current medical and first aid certificate as required by the new Marine Order 505 (see section 1.1 of these Guidelines for the medical and first aid certification requirements). Note that non-RTO training providers will not be able to provide EX38 training once EX38 is repealed. RTOs can continue to provide the 3 MAR units which may be completed in order to meet the Coxswain 3 eligibility criteria.</p>

Schedule 1 Declaration required for Coxswain Grade 3 for recreational boating licence holders

If Option (d) of the eligibility criteria for the Coxswain Grade 3 NC certificate is selected, the declaration form AMSA 1882 must be completed and lodged with AMSA.

Part B of the form must be completed by an 'observer', who must witness the applicant complete the practical on water tasks set out in the declaration form AMSA 1882. Guidance on the practical on water tasks to be witnessed by the observer is provided in Table 9 below. The observer must also comply with the observational requirements set out below.

The observer must either:

- hold a Coxswain Grade 2 or higher commercial dual or deck certificate of competency; or
- when assessing a person who will be operating only in a marina or mooring area:
 - be eligible for a Coxswain Grade 3; and
 - have held a recreational boating licence for at least two years; and
 - have at least six months relevant experience operating similar kinds of vessels in a marina or mooring area.

Note that a person who will be operating only in a marina or mooring area may also be observed by a person who holds a Coxswain Grade 2 or higher commercial dual or deck certificate of competency.

Observation requirements

When planning and conducting the observation, the observer must ensure that:

- photo identification (e.g. passport, licence) is checked for the applicant, unless the applicant is known to them;
- this document (AMSA1883) and the declaration form (AMSA1882) is made available to the applicant prior to the date of the observation;
- the observation is performed on board a vessel in an operational environment (on water), or in a simulated environment only where indicated;
- the observation includes a minimum of 20 minutes* at the helm plus 30 minutes for other tasks;
- where the observation is completed with a group of three or more applicants, the observation time includes a minimum of 20 minutes* at the helm per applicant plus 20 minutes per applicant for other tasks; and
- the demonstration of tasks is supported with questioning to determine the applicant's knowledge and understanding.

**The minimum time requirement is calculated on the amount of tasks to perform, and is ensuring that participants are given enough time to feel confident and be competent at the helm.*

Table 9: Guidance for on water tasks to be witnessed by the observer

Criteria	Guidance for on water tasks
1. Vessel, crew and passenger preparation	<p>Pre-departure checks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vessel seaworthiness: inspect the vessel to make sure it is maintained and in good condition. This could include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Checking hull integrity (look for obvious signs of corrosion, hull damage or decay) - Checking for watertightness (for example bungs are secure) • Check oil, cooling, fuel, batteries, steering, ropes and lines • Check tools and spares on board and that they are safely stowed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This could include spark plugs, spanner, spare battery • Locate and check all safety and fire-fighting equipment, ensuring all is in date and operational. Must include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Life jackets - Life buoys - EPIRB / distress signals - Communication systems – radio check Tx and Rx - On board alarm systems - First aid kit - Required fire-fighting equipment • Check maintenance logbook <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Confirm that engine and other equipment are serviced and maintained in accordance with manufacturer’s instructions • Check total load, number of passengers allowed and stability <p>Safe working practice awareness in relation to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Situational awareness • Safety Management Systems <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Confirm familiar with and follow organisation’s SMS • Domestic vessel legislation. For example, this could include familiarity with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the duties of owners and masters - section 27 of the National Law Act – what is reasonably practicable to ensure safety • Fuelling – sufficient quantity for voyage and/or safe re-fuelling opportunities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consideration of appropriate quantity of fuel should allow for emergencies / unforeseen circumstances • Pollution prevention – noise, wake, wash, waste, bilge water. This should include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Knowledge of the local requirements for sewage, grey water and oil discharge, draining of bilge, garbage disposal - Understanding what a reportable incident is (for example, oil spills, sewage discharges) who to report to and how to report it - Considering noise, sub-marine habitats (when anchoring) and marine life - Knowledge of environmental zoning charts related to area of operation <p>Ability to communicate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instructions to crew and passengers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - For example: crew inductions, passenger briefings, safety information, change of conditions, manoeuvring • Operational intentions to employer / relevant persons ashore (intended area of operation and planned time of return) • This should include the use of correct terminology for parts of a vessel during communications (e.g., bow, stern, port, starboard, helm, tiller, cleat)

Criteria	Guidance for on water tasks
2. Weather and tides	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check forecast for weather and sea conditions and plan voyage and operations accordingly. This should include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - accessing and applying weather and wind information and forecasts (sources can include Bureau of Meteorology website, radio, television, VHF marine radio services) - identifying risks in the area of intended operation (for example, wind strength, wave height) - knowledge of local weather conditions (for example, cyclones, mist, fog, rain, southerly blusters, squalls) - assessing the conditions on the water, including effect of wind, effect of tidal flow, effect of current, wash from other vessels, sea conditions - anticipating the impact on passenger safety and taking appropriate action (for example, avoid heavy weather conditions, monitor weather conditions and maintain situation awareness at all times) • Check current tides and plan voyage and operations accordingly. This should include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - correctly interpreting tide tables - knowledge of tides, depth of water at any given time, tidal streams and currents in area of operation - passage planning relating to tides
3. Navigation	<p>Comply with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Navigation aids – marks, buoys, signage and shapes • Collision regulations and avoidance techniques, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Maintain a proper lookout at all times - Safe speed - Overtaking - Head-on situation - Crossing situation - Action by give-way vessel - Action by stand-on vessel - Responsibilities between vessels - Risk of collision and action to avoid collision - Restricted visibility - Sound signals: port, starboard, astern, unsure of intentions • Local regulations and signage: speed limits, restrictions etc <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safely use any on-board navigational equipment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Compass, GPS, depth sounder, charts

Criteria	Guidance for on water tasks
4. Manoeuvring	<p>Safely manoeuvre the vessel:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should include recognising the features of the vessel that relate to its handling characteristics, including displacement and planing hulls, outboard and inboard propulsion units, rudders and propellers • Must carry out the following manoeuvres safely in normal conditions at: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ahead - astern - port - starboard - figure of 8 • Operate the vessel at varying speeds and with consideration of other vessels • Manoeuvre vessel on and off the plane (if applicable) • Control the trim and tilt of the engine (if applicable) • Safely berth and un-berthing the vessel, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - throwing, securing and casting off lines - maintenance of sufficient speed for control - use of forward, backward and sideways force of propeller - regard for tide, wind and sea state - considering the stability of the vessel and whether the ramp/jetty/pontoon is slippery and equipment is stowed correctly - safely embarking and disembarking passengers. Ensuring passengers are seated with hands inboard • Control the speed of the vessel • Utilise wind/tidal stream/current when manoeuvring the vessel • Anchor and retrieve anchor, considering: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - length of chain/line necessary - effect of wind and tide - position of other vessels - how anchor is lowered and set - anchor drift - engine power - use of deck equipment • Safely pick up and release a mooring, considering: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - other vessels - downwind approach - boat hook handling - tidal flow - approach speed - motor to reduce strain on line - mooring line and fouling of propeller - use of deck equipment, including windlass, bollards, winches, cleats, bow rollers • Perform an emergency stop • Examples of manoeuvres that would be completed to demonstrate competency: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Approach boat ramp with other vessels in vicinity - Drive into a headwind - Cross the wash of another vessel - Handle in a following or quartering sea - Safe approach to a floating object or pontoon - Safely retrieve a person overboard

Criteria	Guidance for on water tasks
5. Rope work	Check lines and ropes for deterioration and wear, and stow correctly
	Handle lines/ropes safely and correctly
	Ability to tie and use basic knots, including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bowline - Round turn and two half hitches - Reef - Clove hitch
6. Emergencies	Identify potential hazards on board, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lack of safety equipment or out of date safety equipment - Weather conditions and forecast - Smoking - Faulty equipment - Medical issues - Dangerous goods - Engine spark - Loose lines
	Identify the local rescue services, methods of contact, access points and timing
	Identify the appropriate actions for fire, collision, grounding, flooding and person overboard. The appropriate action should be in accordance with the vessel's Safety Management System.
	For emergencies: (by simulation) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to use firefighting equipment, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - identifying location and class of fire - raising fire alarm - wearing appropriate PPE - using appropriate method/equipment/extinguisher for fire - communication with crew and passengers - prevention of further outbreak • Ability to communicate with, and given clear instructions to, passengers and crew in the event of an emergency <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - For example, person overboard procedures, emergency lighting, use of pumping/baling equipment, EPIRB use - Correct use of marine radio in an emergency • Vessel abandonment procedures. This could include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Preparing for rescue: respond to muster and abandon ship signals, organise survival equipment, operate EPIRB, radio distress calls, participate in drills - Vessel abandonment: don a lifejacket and check, assist others, muster passengers and crew - In water survival: stay with vessel if partially afloat, stay together in a group, maintain morale and communication, lookout maintained for rescue craft, follow rescue instructions • Don a lifejacket and check
7. General	Emergency contact details Inform someone prior to departure and on arrival
	Know the operational limits of a Coxswain Grade 3 Near Coastal certificate

Meaning of terms used in Table 2

- By simulation – acting out or mimicking an actual or probable real-life event or situation of assumed circumstances or factors
- Check – to verify, inspect condition or test performance
- Comply – to be in accordance with demands, requirements, conditions
- Identify – to recognise or determine
- Inspect – to look carefully at or over and to view closely and critically

Suggested learning resources

- *BoatSafe Workbook: A practical guide to obtaining a recreational marine driver licence*, Maritime Safety Queensland
- Boating safety handbooks from State/ Territory marine safety agencies
- *Chapman Practical Boat Handling: For Every Situation*, Gregory O. Jones & Dave Kelley, 2006
- *Seamanship*, John Kelsey, 2011

