

How to attain a Marine Certificate of Competency for operations on Inland Waters



Step 1

Read these notes carefully.
If you are unsure of any of the requirements explained within contact your local NSW Maritime office or the NSW Maritime Marine Certification section on (02) 9563 8769.



Step 2

Obtain the minimum qualifying service and ensure that you have acceptable proof of it.

Complete the NSW Maritime forms detailing your experience.

See pages 3-4 and 8-9



Step 3

Have a medical examination to ensure that you meet the standards of medical fitness and eyesight as detailed in the NSW Maritime Medical Fitness Form.

See page 5



Step 4

Complete an approved fire-fighting training course and obtain a first aid certificate and study the syllabus attached to these notes.

See page 6



Step 5

Have your qualifying service assessed by submitting an application form to the NSW Maritime Authority with:

- Details and proof of qualifying service
- 2 colour, passport size photos
- proof of age & identity
- application fee of \$40
- copies of your training course certificates

You should receive a reply from the Authority within 4 weeks.



Step 6

Make an appointment for your oral/practical exam and pass it.

Pay any remaining fees and complete any remaining application requirements.

See page 6

Introduction

This publication outlines the procedures necessary to attain a certificate of competency for operating a commercial vessel on inland waters in NSW,

The national standard for marine qualifications is the National Standard for Commercial Vessels Part D but inland waters certificates are not specifically prescribed in this code. The regulations applying to inland waters qualifications are found in the NSW Certificates of Competency and Safety Manning Regulations 1986 made under the NSW Commercial Vessels Act of 1979. Because they do not meet the national standards, inland certificates are not able to be used on vessels operating in coastal or sheltered tidal waters and are issued as "restricted" certificates. You should be aware that if you move interstate these certificates may not be recognised by the marine authority of that State.

Commercial vessels are vessels used in conjunction with any type of business, trade and commerce. They include tourist/charter boats, work boats, paddle steamers, BBQ boats and fishing vessels and they are crewed in accordance with a Certificate of Survey issued by the NSW Maritime Authority. This certificate is kept in the vessel's Survey Record Book and it has an appendix B with it which details the minimum crewing requirements for the vessel. The qualifications you need to operate a commercial vessel depend on the vessel's length, class, type, engine power and area of operation. Some vessels require a separate Master and Engineer, while others may have a dually certificated person carrying out both functions. Except for smaller vessels, qualified General Purpose Deckhands are usually also required. It is recommended that you become familiar with the certificate and appendices during your training.

The specific pre-requisites for each grade of inland waters certificate are shown in the tables commencing on page 8.

If you require further information talk to your local boating officer or contact the marine certification section on (02) 9563 8769.

NSW Maritime Authority Certification Section
James Craig Road Rozelle Bay Sydney
Locked Bag 5100 CAMPERDOWN NSW 1450
Phone (02) 95638511



Qualifying service

What type of service qualifies?

One of the requirements for attaining a marine certificate is that you must gain a minimum amount of appropriate and relevant experience on vessels. We refer to this as qualifying service or “sea time”. The type of service we regard as being appropriate is that which provides you with the necessary experience to perform the duties of the certificate you are applying for.

Examples of the type of experience you should have are:

For Masters/Coxswains

- Vessel handling and manoeuvring, steering and navigating safely, berthing and unberthing, docking
- supervising passengers, monitoring the loading, stability and watertight integrity of your vessel
- handling ropes and gangways, operating emergency equipment, conducting emergency drills and practices on a regular basis
- keeping logs books and other necessary records

For Engineers

- Starting, operating and shutting down machinery, servicing and maintaining propulsion and auxiliary machinery. Service as a General Purpose Hand on a vessel will be accepted only where the GP Hand assists in pre-departure checks, regularly inspects all machinery while the vessel is under way and carries out minor maintenance, refuelling and other engine related tasks.
- Qualifications in the following trades count towards a marine engine drivers certificate: marine fitter, electrical fitter, diesel or motor mechanic, refrigeration mechanic.

If you have spent time on a vessel that is not directly related to the duties of a certificate holder (such as serving drinks, catering, repairing, or as a passenger or observer) the time does not qualify.

Does experience on non-commercial vessels count?

Private or non-commercial vessels are those which do not require a qualification to operate them in NSW (other than a General Boat Licence if they are driven at 10 knots or more). Service on these or recreational vessels will be considered for qualifying service for commercial certificates only if it is considered appropriate. Service in small recreational craft such as skiboats, runabouts and dinghies is considered appropriate only for a coxswain certificate and only if it was accrued while you were actually driving the vessels.

Because your certificate is meant for use on commercial vessels it is important that you also have experience on commercial vessels and particularly on the type of vessel you intend to operate.

Some commercial vessels have been exempted from survey and service accrued on these vessels may be recognised as commercial service.

How Much Service is Required?

The minimum qualifying service for each certificate is expressed in terms of “months”. For example a Coxswain (Inland) requires a total of 6 months service and a Master Class Five (Inland) 12 months service.

Currently, NSW Maritime defines a month in terms of “work” – a “working month” being equal to 20 separate working days which includes a minimum of 150 hours. When calculating service, both these values must be met. The following table is to be used to help you calculate your service:

Months	Minimum Days	Minimum Hours
3	60 days	450
6	120 days	900
12	240 days	1800
15	300 days	2250
18	360 days	2700
30	600 days	4500
36	720 days	5400

See the tables commencing on page 8 for details of the qualifying service required for each grade of certificate.

How am I expected to keep records of my service?

Approved Record of Service Books

Record of Service (ROS) Books are available from NSW Maritime Offices. They are used as a log of your service. The Master of the vessel should sign the book off immediately after the service is gained. If you are the Master then the Owner should sign the entries. If you are both the Master and the Owner then you may sign your own entries and have the entries verified every few months by your local Boating Officer – you will need to arrange this with the local officer. If you fail to complete the book properly the service gained may not be recognised as valid qualifying service.

Past Service

In cases where you obtained boating service in the past which you request to have counted towards an application for a certificate you will need to provide some reasonable form of proof that this has occurred. This will need to include

- Letters/References

If the service has not been entered into a record book then it must be detailed on a company letterhead, signed by your employer and supported by statutory declarations.

Suitable referees for supporting your application are : the master and/or owner , any organisation that is associated with local boating, , the executive of a boating or fishing club that you are affiliated with, or local Boating or Police Officers. You must ensure that you provide us with the name address and phone number of any witnesses so that we are able to contact them if necessary.

- Statutory declarations

You will be required to provide statutory declarations for all service including ones from persons who can verify and support your previous experience. Specific statutory declaration forms are available from NSW Maritime, and it is recommended that they be used. However, if you are using a standard commercially printed statutory declaration form you must include:

- the name, address and qualification details of the person making the declaration.
- identification number of the vessel, ie permit, registration or LFB number
- a description of the vessel including length
- the vessel's main use and the area of operation (indicate both inshore and offshore waters)
- engine type and capacity in kilowatts
- the actual dates of and amount of sea service in hours, days, weeks and years
- the duties you undertook

- **Other supporting evidence:**

Documents, such as: copies of vessel logs, tax group certificates, employment contracts, records of Naval service, fishing licences/returns, boat registration and licence details, or any other documents which help your claims.

How do I get my qualifying sea service assessed?

To have your sea service assessed you must complete a current NSW Maritime application form (downloadable from this website) and pay a non-refundable fee of \$40.00. This amount is a part payment towards the total certificate fee due to be paid at the time of your examination.

When submitting your qualifying sea service you must also provide the evidence to substantiate it (as detailed above). It is your responsibility to provide the supporting evidence to verify your service, and if you are unable to prove it adequately NSW Maritime will not be able to proceed with an assessment.



Medical and eye sight examinations

There are minimum medical standards for crews of commercial vessels. You must have a Medical examination to show that you are physically fit to carry out the duties required on board a commercial vessel. You will need to take the NSW Maritime medical fitness form to a doctor of your choice and have it completed. This medical remains valid for two years.

It is important that you do this early on in the process because many people have found out that they have some eyesight disability and never previously been aware of it. This may prevent the issue of a certificate or alternatively, it may result in an endorsement being placed on the certificate - for example: limiting you to operating in daylight hours only, or requiring you to always wear spectacles or contact lenses. If you have a difficulty in meeting the required standard you may choose to consult a specialist. If you have nil, or poor vision in one eye, you may be practically assessed whilst undertaking a voyage to demonstrate that it does not affect your ability to operate a vessel.



Make your application to the NSW Maritime Authority

Application forms are available from your local inland NSW Maritime Authority office. You should complete them and forward them to our Rozelle office or you may want to submit them through your local NSW Maritime Office for forwarding to Sydney for assessment. You are advised that local offices keep varying business hours and you should phone that office to determine when you can visit them.

Other documents to include

You will also need to provide the following documents. It is recommended that you include copies of them with your application, however you must submit the originals on the day of your oral examination with the NSW Maritime Examiner.

- **Proof of age and identity**

Minimum age limits apply to various grades of certificate. You will need to provide acceptable identification such as a photo Vehicle Drivers Licence, or a Passport, (or birth certificate and a secondary ID such as Medicare or credit card.) This may be produced at the time of your exam with NSW Maritime.

- **Photos**

Two good quality, passport size, colour photos, with your name and date of birth written on the back, are required for each application.

- **Two recent character references**

From anyone who can vouch that you are a fit and proper person to hold a certificate of competency for a commercial vessel. The referee must include their address and contact number. Note this type of reference is different to one that is used to verify your qualifying experience.

- **Initial fee**

\$40 of the certificate fee (see attached fee list) is payable when you make application to have your sea service assessed. This part of the fee is non-refundable. Please note that NSW Maritime fees are additional to those charged by training providers.

You should receive confirmation of your sea service assessment from the certification Section within four weeks of it being received.



Complete approved training courses

In addition to the qualifying service, the minimum training for an inland waters certificate is :

i) First Aid

Crew of a commercial vessel are expected to be able to provide elementary first aid and care in isolated locations while waiting for assistance. You will need to obtain and maintain a current First Aid certificate issued by an accredited training provider approved by WorkCover. To check on which courses are accredited call WorkCover on (02) 93705300.

ii) Fire-fighting

The purpose of this training is to provide you with sufficient knowledge and skills to enable you to prevent and control fires on board a vessel. The training is to include use of the fire fighting equipment provided on board inland passenger vessels, and include practical training in the extinguishment of contained fires with fire extinguishers and fire hoses.

Independent accredited fire fighting trainers, TAFE colleges, some regional Fire Brigade Units offer these courses which should be delivered by accredited trainers/assessors. You should ask your fire-fighting trainer if they are accredited with the Authority and if any doubt exists contact the Marine Certification Manager on (02) 9563 8511.

Other training

NSWTAFE (OTEN -DE) conducts correspondence courses for "coastal" certificates and you may find it beneficial to complete some or all of the modules of these courses, particularly if you plan to operate commercial vessels on tidal/coastal NSW Maritime. Phone OTEN on (02) 9715 8000 for details.

Evidence of having passed the required examinations

Prior to your examination with NSW Maritime you must be able to provide a Statement of Attainment or course certificates from your training provider indicating that you have successfully completed the two courses referred to above.

Literacy and Numeracy

You must be able to communicate orally and in writing in English. If you have difficulties in this regard we recommend that you contact the training provider or the NSW Maritime Authority examiners to discuss what assistance is available.



Practical/oral Examinations

You are required to have a practical/orals exam conducted by a NSW Maritime Authority examiner to ensure that you meet the required competencies and skill levels. This includes a vessel handling test on the water on a vessel of the class that you wish to be certified for. You will need to arrange with the owner and master of the vessel for permission to be tested on board the vessel on the day of your exam.

This test will only occur after you have received a letter from NSW Maritime approving your qualifying service and you have provided:

- proof of having passed all the required training

- all the items which are listed on the check list in the application form
- payment of any outstanding NSW Maritime fees. (These fees are separate from any fees charged by the training course providers, and are shown on the attached list.)

Master Four exams consist of a written test as well as the practical, while Coxswain and master 5 exams are practical/ oral. Attached is a description of the subjects you will be examined on.

Masters/Coxswain certificates of competency incorporate a NSW General Boat Licence so you will also be asked questions relating to the rules that regulate driving a vessel at speed. You will need to obtain the latest edition of the NSW Safe Boating Handbook to assist you for this.

Exam appointments

Exams are held periodically subject to demand. To make an appointment for a regional examination phone the Commercial Vessels Certification section at the NSW Maritime Head Office on (02) 95638769.

If you fail an examination

If you fail the NSW Maritime exam you are not eligible for re-examination for a period of at least one month. Subsequent failures may result in your eligibility for examination being reviewed. Additional examination fees will be charged.



Issuing your certificate

If you are successful and you have provided all the required documents, your certificate will be posted out to you by registered mail. You are not legally permitted to operate a vessel until you have received written confirmation of a certificate number.

Revalidating your certificate

It is important for you to maintain a Record of Service Book as Certificates of Competency are issued for a period of five years and then have to be revalidated. To revalidate your certificate you will be required to produce proof of having accrued 12 months sea service within the preceding five years, pass a medical and keep your First Aid qualification current. If you don't revalidate your certificate it will be cancelled. To revalidate a cancelled certificate requires further examinations and additional fees.

Upgrading your Certificate

To upgrade your Certificate for use on sheltered, tidal or coastal waters you will need to:

- complete all the training modules for that Certificate (see separate publication "How to attain a Certificate of Competency as Coxswain, Master Class 5)
- provide proof of having the appropriate qualifying service
- undertake an oral/practical exam with the NSW Maritime authority.
- Pay the full relevant certificate fee.

If, by now, you are in information overload, please call us! We will be happy to discuss your specific situation or clarify any points you are unsure of. Phone the certification section on:

(02) 95638769

Locked Bag 5100 Camperdown NSW 1450

General Purpose Hand

Minimum Age	Prerequisite Qualifying Service	Training required	Other Requirements
15	Nil	Approved training in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First Aid • Fire fighting • on board training in seamanship, accident prevention, responsibilities. Refer to the "National Marine Guidance Manual – Minimum Onboard Training" for direction on what training is required.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Medical/eyesight assessment * Proof of identity & age * Obtain an approved Record of Service Book * Complete application form & signed declaration <p>Before acting as a GP hand a person must be endorsed by the NSW Maritime Authority.(in record of service book)</p>

Prerequisites for inland water certificates of competency.
Inland waters are non-tidal waters that are open for public navigation.

Certificate	Maximum vessel Length/Power	Min Age	Prerequisite Qualifying Service	Training requirements
Coxswain	Able to act as master and/or engineer of vessels less than 12m with Maximum engine power 250kW per engine	18	Applicants must have:- * 6 months (120 days/900 hours) experience in small boats including appropriate local knowledge.	In addition to on-board training while obtaining your qualifying service you must complete:
Master Class Five	Authorised to operate vessels less than 24m as master. or mate on vessels 24 – 80 metres (This Certificate does not include an engineering qualification such as a Marine Engine Drivers certificate.)	18	Appropriate Local Knowledge of the inland water plus: For a person who has no previous certificate a minimum of 12 months (240 days/1800 hours) service to include: * At least 6 months (120 days/900 hours) on commercial vessels less than 35 m Or for a person holding any other certificate of competency service appropriate to the qualification based on the above.	* Approved Fire Fighting Course * Approved First Aid Course (WorkCover Approved) * Study the syllabus using an appropriate text
Master Class Four	Authorised to operate as master of vessels 24 metres or more in length and less than 80m. (This Certificate does not include an engineering qualification.)	20	<u>Candidates not holding any certificate of competency:</u> * 30 months (600 days/4500 hours) of approved service, including 12 months (240 days/1800 hours) of service on NSW inland waters within the previous 5 years. Candidates holding a certificate of competency as Master Class Five (NSW inland waters) or other appropriate certificate: * 12 months (240 days/1800 hrs hours) of approved service including 6 months (120 days/900 hours) as crew of a vessel operating on inland waters while holding Master 5 * 12 months (240/1800 days) within the previous 5 years. For the holder of other certificates, appropriate service to include at least 3 months (60 days/450 hours) on inland waters.	Note if you are accruing service as a General Purpose hand on board a commercial vessel you must have completed the above training as well as on board safety training. GPHs require an endorsement in a record of Service book before they can officially act as crew on a commercial vessel.

Propulsion Power and Plying Limits	Minimum Age	Prerequisite Qualifying Service	Training required	Other Requirements
Authorised to operate as engineer on motor vessels with max continuous power of less than 500 kW	18 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3 months service* with an approved trade certificate, OR 6 months service* if not the holder of an approved trade certificate <p>* Service afloat on commercial vessels assisting in servicing and operating propulsion machinery of not less than 75 kW</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * First Aid Course (Workcover approved) * Approved Fire Fighting Course <p>For steam endorsements an approved boiler operators certificate is required. Contact Senior Marine Surveyor for details.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completed application form & signed declaration Proof of service Medical/eyesight assessment * Proof of identity & age * Obtain an approved Record of Service Book * Pay NSW Maritime fees <p>Pass an oral examination with NSW Maritime (See file "Competencies for Engineers" at this web site.</p>

Marine Engine Driver Grade 2

Propulsion Power and Plying Limits	Minimum Age	Prerequisite Qualifying Service	Training required	Other Requirements
Authorised to operate as engineer on vessels of maximum continuous power of less than 750 kW	18 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3 months service* with an approved trade certificate, OR 6 months service* if holder of an MED 3 certificate <p>* Service afloat on commercial vessels assisting in servicing and operating propulsion machinery of not less than 150 kW</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * First Aid Course (Workcover approved) * Approved Fire Fighting Course <p>For steam endorsements an approved boiler operators certificate is required. Contact Senior Marine Surveyor for details.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completed application form & signed declaration Proof of service Medical/eyesight assessment * Proof of identity & age * Obtain an approved Record of Service Book * Pay NSW Maritime fees <p>Pass an oral examination with NSW Maritime (See file "Competencies for Engineers" at this web site.</p>

Note: Approved trades for reduction in service are : marine fitter, diesel or motor mechanic, refrigeration mechanic and electrical fitter.

EXAMINATION SYLLABUS - COXSWAIN (NSW Inland Waters) **(Oral and/or practical)**

Section 1 - Vessel Handling

Demonstrate by practical examination that the candidate can handle the proposed type or types of vessels in all conditions that may be expected within the proposed limits sought.

Section 2 - Emergency and Safety

- (a) Action to be taken in any emergency.
- (b) Steps to be taken if capsized or holed.
- (c) Rendering assistance - man overboard.
- (d) Seating, entering or leaving the boat by passengers.
- (e) Trim, stability and buoyancy.
- (f) Fuelling precautions and use of fuels including fuel with a flashpoint below 60°C. (Petrol)

Section 3 - Safety Equipment

- (a) Use of safety equipment.
- (b) Use of fire extinguishers.
- (c) Statutory requirements for equipment.
- (d) Care and Maintenance of equipment.
- (e) Use of distress signals.

Section 4 - Meteorology

Understanding of local weather conditions and seasonal changes in local weather and of stable and unstable weather patterns, strong wind and flood warnings.

Section 5 - Engineering Knowledge

- (a) Working knowledge of the propelling machinery.
- (b) The care and maintenance of engines and batteries.
- (c) Working knowledge of fuel filter systems.
- (d) Pumping and venting systems.
- (e) Precautions against fire associated with fuelling, battery leads, LP gas, etc.

Section 6 - Seamanship and Local Knowledge

- (a) Appropriate Regulations.
- (b) Lights shapes and channel markers.
- (c) Lock or local signals.
- (d) Statutory requirements regarding registration of vessels and licensing of drivers and carriage of equipment clear understanding of limitations of certificates.
- (e) Regulations for private boating and obligatory assistance, reporting accidents, etc.
- (f) Requirements for survey and maintenance of vessels and equipment.
- (g) Notices to Shipping.
- (h) Regulations made by any authority concerning the use of the waterway.

Section 7- The rule that apply for a vessel travelling at a speed of ten knots or more.

Section 8 - Local Knowledge of the specific enclosed waterway or lake for which the candidate is examined.

EXAMINATION SYLLABUS
MASTER CLASS 5 & 4 (NSW Inland Waters)
Written and/or practical

SHIP KNOWLEDGE

Section 1 - Design and Construction

- (a) To know the principal parts of a vessel and their various functions.
- (b) Practical appreciation of how the watertight integrity of a vessel is maintained.
- (c) Practical knowledge of fuel, fresh water and ballast water arrangements, including pumping, cross flooding, sounding and venting facilities.
- (d) Practical knowledge of bilge pumping arrangements.
- (e) Practical knowledge of the steering arrangement of a vessel.

Section 2 - Stability

A general understanding of the effect on the stability of a vessel of: Adding and removing weights. Disposition of passengers. Ballast and fuel. Slack tanks. Free surface.

Section 3 - Maintenance and Repairs

- (a) Methods of docking or slipping vessels.
- (b) Maintenance of vessel.

NAUTICAL KNOWLEDGE

Section 1 - Marine Legislation

- (a) Knowledge of the certificates required to be carried by vessels.
- (b) A working knowledge of the laws relating to the following:
Lifesaving appliances, Distress signals, Rendering assistance
Breaches of regulations re overloading, Fire appliances
Musters and drills, Reporting of accidents. Drugs and alcohol. Vessel Survey

Section 2 - Meteorology

- (a) A knowledge of basic meteorological terms so that a candidate can interpret information obtained from radio broadcasts and by weather maps.
- (b) A knowledge of the effect of fetch on wave height.
- (c) Stable and unstable weather patterns.

Section 3 - Protection of the Environment

A working knowledge of the laws relating to the protection of the environment including the pollution of the waters by oil and other materials. Management of sewage holding tanks.

Section 4 - Navigational Safety

- (a) A sound knowledge of the content and application of relevant Regulations and of channel and lock marking systems.
- (b) A knowledge of the content of publications and Marine Notices with respect to:
Navigational warnings.
Precautions concerning submarine cables and pipelines.
other information relating to the safe navigation of vessels on inland waters.

Section 5 - Practical Seamanship

- (a) Knots, hitches and bends in common use.
- (b) Care in use of rope, wire and chains.
- (c) Safe handling of moorings.

Section 6 - Vessel Handling

- (a) Berthing and unberthing.
- (b) Conning the vessel; effect of propellers on the steering of a vessel; turning a vessel short round; negotiating locks.
- (c) Effect of current, wind and shallows on manoeuvring.
- (d) Manoeuvring a vessel including vessels with independent or fixed paddles.
- (e) Dangers of manoeuvring and passing too close to vessels in a narrow channel or river.
- (f) Emergency manoeuvres - emergency stop and person overboard.
- (g) Towing and being towed.
- (h) Duties when under way and alongside.
- (j) Approaching a ferry crossing.

Section 7 - Safety Equipment and Emergency Procedures

- (a) Use and care of lifesaving appliances.
- (b) Use and care of fire fighting appliances.
- (c) Prevention of fire; fire fighting.
- (d) Action to be taken in the event of fire, collision, grounding and damage to the vessel.
- (e) Precautions for the protection and safety of passengers and crew in emergency situations.
- (f) Necessity of lines of communication on board.

Section 8 - The rules that apply for a vessel travelling at a speed of ten knots or more.

LOCAL KNOWLEDGE

Local knowledge of the specific enclosed waterway or lake for which the candidate is examined on.