

Coxswain Certificate of Competency

What does it qualify you to do?

It is a qualification to act as master and/or engineer of either trading or fishing vessels less than 12m in length and with engines up to 250kW, operating within Inshore Limits (up to 15 nautical miles from the coast.)

Note: It cannot be extended for vessels 12 metres or more in length nor can it be extended for operations beyond 15 nautical miles from the coast. For such cases a Master Class 5 and an MED 3 would be required.

To operate commercial vessels across designated ocean bars in NSW special bar endorsements are required (see below for details)

How much Qualifying Service is required?

12 months (i.e. 240 days that includes 1800 hours of relevant service on vessels 5 metres or more in length.

For an unrestricted Certificate the service must include the following minimum periods:

- 60 days on vessels with inboard diesel engines
- 120 days beyond sheltered waters limits
- 60 days on vessels 8 metres or more in length

If service has only ever been obtained on large vessels competence in small boat handling must be demonstrated.

Note: These periods can be reduced if approved on board competency based training programs are completed.

What Records of this Qualifying Service is required to be provided to the Authority?

At least 2 forms of evidence for each vessel you are claiming experience in as follows:

Firstly – A detailed Record of Service providing satisfactory evidence of the numbers of days and hours, areas of operation, vessel details

Secondly – supporting evidence such as letters from masters, owners, skippers, club officials, or any responsible person having detailed knowledge of your experience; commercial fishing licences, catch returns; mercantile marine documentation; reference letters; or any other documentation (such as passports showing entry into foreign ports, boat registrations/licences; business documents) that you believe supports your claim.

What training courses are required?

Certificate 2 Transport & Distribution (Maritime Operations) conducted at a Registered Training Organisation (RTO) approved by NSW Maritime.

Note: This training is competency based and you will require evidence of on board experience to complete that training.

You will also have to hold a Restricted Radio Operators Certificate and maintain a current First Aid Certificate.

How does NSW Maritime assess competency for a Certificate of Competency?

By a combination of the following:

1. Assessing the quality and quantity of an applicant's experience or qualifying service (sometimes referred to as sea-service. This is why much emphasis is placed on the need for good records of experience on board vessels.
 2. Checking for satisfactory completion of the designated training programs.
 3. By practical and oral testing of your skills and knowledge in the exam known as "Orals"
- The competencies that you are expected to be skilled and knowledgeable in are listed at the end of these notes and in the Record of Service (RoS) Book 2004 edition.

What other requirements must be met to obtain a Coxswain Certificate?

Make an application on the NSW Maritime form providing evidence of meeting all of the pre-requisites. That is:

1. Minimum age of 18 years with acceptable Proof of Identity
2. The medical and eyesight fitness standards set by the Authority.
3. The qualifying service records
4. Training records
5. Pay the statutory fees

The application form can be downloaded from the website or obtained from a local NSW Maritime Customer Service centre or by mail – contact 13 1256 for a form to be posted .

What if all of the pre-requisites can not be met? Are there restricted certificates?

Marine authorities are able to issue certificates in cases where the full national standard requirements are not met. Such certificates have reduced operational limits and vessel size to those shown for unrestricted certificates and are valid only in the state or territory that issued them. You should be aware that other State or Territory marine authorities are not obliged to recognise certificates marked with a "restriction" for use in waters under their jurisdiction.

The NSW Maritime will issue restricted certificates on a case by case basis to applicants who cannot meet the full eligibility criteria but can satisfy a satisfactory level of experience and competence without compromising safety. The decision to apply a restriction will be based on:

- i) the assessment of an applicants qualifying service and
- ii) level of the applicant's competence displayed during assessment

To modify or lift a restriction the certificate holder must:

- a) Obtain the additional qualifying service, and record it in a Record of Service Book
- b) Apply to the Authority with evidence proving the additional service
- c) Pay an additional fee and have the endorsement entered into the certificate

For more details read the following sections.

Restrictions – For those who do not meet all of the Pre-Requisites

RESTRICTED CERTIFICATES issued by the NSW Maritime

Note: These certificates may not be recognised for use outside of NSW.

| Certificate | Endorsement or Restriction | Reason for Restriction |
|-----------------------|--|---|
| Coxswain (Restricted) | 1. Radius of 15nm from a selected port or safe haven | The minimum 12 months service required does not include at least 120 days of coastal service but has at least 60 days. |
| Coxswain (Restricted) | 2. Sheltered waters | The minimum 12 months service required does not include at least 60 days of coastal service . |
| Coxswain (Restricted) | 3. Outboard engines only | The minimum service required does not include at least 60 days of service on vessels with inboard diesel engines. |
| Coxswain (Restricted) | 4. Vessels less than 8 metres in length | The minimum service required does not include at least 60 days of service on vessels 8 metres or more in length |
| Coxswain (Restricted) | 5. Inland waters (non tidal or not connected to sea) | An applicant intends working on non tidal inland waters only and has at least 120 days (incl 900 hours) service including 1 month appropriate service on inland waters. See separate file on this website. |
| Master 5 (Restricted) | 9. Restricted to a particular vessel, class of vessel and/or area of operation | In cases where an applicant wishes to operate as Master of a vessel that just exceeds Coxswain length (e.g. 12-13 metres or area of operation (out to 30nm). A minimum of 600 days service is required and the quality of service must be deemed appropriate for the circumstances. |
| Master 5 | (Restricted to Sail Charter Vessels) | Commercial vessel service requirements not met but at least 600 days service including 120 days in command of sailing vessels 8 metres or more has been proven. Applicant to have recognised sailing qualifications issued by either the Yachting Australia (formerly the AYF) the Royal yachting Association (RYA) or the International Yachting Federation (IYF). |



What does qualifying service mean?

Qualifying service is the experience gained on board vessels that enables you to become competent in the skills of a commercial vessel crew member. It is sometimes referred to as “sea time” even though it includes any experience gained on vessels operating on sheltered or inland waters.

Training organisations may use a similar expression – “work evidence”, which is necessary when seeking assessment for the issue of a certificate under a competency based training system.

Generally, you are required to have had experience that is **appropriate** for the grade of certificate that you wish to attain.

What is appropriate?

Examples of the experience that is considered appropriate for Coxswain are:

- steering and navigating a vessel less than 24 metres in length
- vessel handling and manoeuvring, particularly berthing and unberthing, anchoring and mooring
- participating in the loading of a vessel, maintaining watertight integrity and stability, managing crew and passengers, using ropes and tending mooring lines, performing

seamanship tasks, using safety equipment and performing on board maintenance of the vessels equipment, machinery and structure.

- Service as a general purpose hand on a vessel when the GPH assists in pre-departure checks, regular inspections of propulsion machinery while the vessel is under way and minor maintenance, refuelling and other engine related tasks.
- (Note: A GPH is required by the Commercial Vessels Act 1979 to be endorsed by the Authority to act as a GPH - completion of appropriate training is a requirement, in addition to meeting medical standards and making application for the endorsement. Persons who wish to obtain work experience and/or who are carried in addition to the official crewing complement should also complete this training to assist in meeting the requirements of OH&S legislation.)
- Starting, operating, checking and shutting down machinery; servicing and maintaining propulsion and auxiliary machinery

What is not appropriate?

If you did not play a major role in the navigation, seamanship or engineering functions of the vessel the service is not considered appropriate. For example:

- Service in hospitality duties (bar duties, catering, and entertainment) does not count.
- Service claimed involving recreational activities such as fishing/water skiing/sailing/diving will be heavily reduced, particularly if vessel size is below 5 metres.

Does qualifying service for Coxswain need to be obtained on Commercial Vessels?

No. For a Coxswain CoC relevant and appropriate non-commercial service is acceptable.

A commercial vessel is defined in the regulations as one used for the carriage of persons or goods for money or other valuable consideration, or one used in connection with a business or trade or commerce. There are four types surveyed commercial vessels.

- Class 1 trading vessels - surveyed to carry more than 12 passengers
- Class 2 trading vessels - surveyed to carry 12 passengers or less OR non passenger work vessels such as tugs, barges, line boats
- Class 3 fishing vessels - Licensed Fishing Boats (LFBs)
- Class 4 Hire and Drive vessels-
“Hire and Drive” commercial vessels do not require a certificated Master, therefore they do not qualify as commercial qualifying service when under hire, unless the service is claimed by an employee of the business hiring the vessel and the service was obtained during the course of employment. Detailed employment records are required to substantiate this service.

Non surveyed commercial vessels

Some commercial vessels, such as estuarine fishing/aquaculture boats, small work boats and government vessels may be exempted from survey. Service accrued on these vessels may be recognised as commercial service providing the service was:

- obtained as master or skipper and
- is well documented and

- it is appropriate to the grade of certificate.

Defence Force vessels

Relevant service on defence force vessels is recognised as commercial service when full military records of training and sea service are provided with an application. To be appropriate for command certificates naval service must have been served in the seaman branch while army service must have been in the water transport division. Defence force personnel will be required to provide documented detail of their service to satisfy the Authority that they have obtained the service required. Full records showing training and postings needs to accompany applications e.g. PH14 and PH408.

Does experience on recreational (non-surveyed) vessels qualify?

Service on recreational and non-surveyed vessels will be considered appropriate only if you can prove that it has been accrued while you were master/skipper of the vessels or you took an active role in the navigation/engineering/seamanship duties when under way.

Being on board a vessel without actually performing appropriate duties does not count (for example, acting as observer, cook or just as a passenger). Recreational vessel service only counts while the vessel is under way, and detailed records must be supplied if such service is to be accepted.

Recreational service which includes diving, fishing, water-skiing, yachting or other similar leisure activities will be adjusted to reduce the non boat-handling component of the activity.

Is vessel size important?

Yes. The length and engine power of the vessels claimed as qualifying service has to be appropriate to the grade of certificate you are applying for.

Generally service on vessels below the limits of 5 metres (for masters certificates) and inboard engines of 75kW propulsion power is not considered appropriate except in the case of a "restricted" certificate issued for operating very small or low powered craft.

Because of the main differences in boat construction and handling between smaller outboard engined planing hulls (the lower range of the Coxswain Certificate) and heavier displacement vessels with inboard diesel engines (the upper range) Coxswain certificates will be restricted unless competency has been demonstrated throughout the range.

As you progress from one grade of certificate to another you are required to obtain experience on longer vessels/ higher powered engines.

Applicants who have only had service on large ships are required to demonstrate their competency in handling small vessels.

How much ocean going experience is appropriate?

The general rule for a command certificate to be endorsed for coastal waters use without restrictions, is that fifty per cent of the total qualifying service required for that certificate must be obtained in coastal waters beyond sheltered waters limits (which are defined in the NSW Commercial Vessels (Permits) Regulations 1986.)

Restricted sea-going certificates may be issued on a case by case basis where less experience has been obtained. Restrictions may be gradually extended as offshore experience is gained and recorded and competency demonstrated in offshore navigation

and seamanship. In some cases further assessment of competency may be required by the examiners before a restriction is changed. Additional endorsement/examination fees apply in these cases.

Coxswain Certificates will not be issued for use beyond 15 nautical miles because this is the maximum distance permitted under the USL Code/NSCV. To proceed further you would need to apply for & obtain a Master Class 5 – however if you cannot meet all of the requirements for Master 5 a Restricted M5 may be issued depending on the amount & quality of experience obtained offshore.

How should service obtained overseas or in other States be presented?

The following minimum documentation is required:

- i. Evidence from the marine authority of the State in which the service was gained that the service is acceptable and appropriate for the specific grade of certificate applied for
- ii. Copies of vessel classification, survey and safety certificates, crew lists
- iii. Letters of reference on company letterhead detailing the period of service, nature of duties and areas of operation of vessel(s) and signed by the vessel's owner or management

Record of service books with entries for service on vessels operating in other Australian states must be ratified by the marine authority of that state. Alternatively you could submit an application to that authority to have the service assessed as being suitable for the certificate that you are applying for. The written assessment of that service by that marine authority should then be submitted to NSW Maritime.



How is a month defined?

NSW Maritime interprets a month in terms of 20 working days of 7.5 hours each. A “work month” is considered to be a period equivalent to 20 separate working days service that includes at least 150 hours work time. (Note: both of these criteria must be met and the issue of how to treat a working day in which the hours exceed 7.5 per day are irrelevant). These rates are set out in the following table.

| Months | Minimum Working Days | Minimum Hours |
|---------------|-----------------------------|----------------------|
| 1 | 20 days | 150 |
| 3 | 60 days | 450 |
| 6 | 120 days | 900 |
| 12 | 240 days | 1800 |

You will need to include in your application form totals of the number of days and hours accrued to ensure an examiner is able to assess your service in “months”. To calculate how many "months" a period of service equates to, divide the days by 20 and the hours by 150 and take the smaller of these two values.

For example: If an amount of service totalling 1560 hours obtained on 260 days is calculated how many "months" of service does this equate to:

Answer: Divide the days by 20 and the hours by 150 and take the smaller of these two values.

ie. $260 \text{ days} / 20 = 13$ and $1560 \text{ hours} / 150 = 10.4$

The service will be considered as 10.4 months because it has not met the minimum number of hours for the number of days served.

Similarly, if a person worked 150 days for 12 hours each (totalling 1800 hours) this service would equate to 7.5 months not 12 months, because the minimum number of days has not been obtained.

What proof of Qualifying Service is required?

If you cannot provide sufficient supporting evidence to verify your sea service the service may not be allowed and NSW Maritime will not be able to assess your eligibility. The responsibility is on you to provide proper records and details of your qualifying service and experience.

REMEMBER: The service that you claim on the application form must be supported by the provision of at least two of the following forms of evidence:

i) Approved Record of Service Books

Marine authorities issue record books for logging qualifying service and persons who have not kept an acceptable form of record book may either be refused eligibility for examination or be issued with “restricted certificates” until such time as an acceptable record is provided. The NSW Maritime now formats its Record of Service (RoS) Book as a task book with provision for providing vessel details and a monthly log and it is expected that it be kept up to date on such a basis. Entries should be signed off frequently by the master except that owners should sign off the service for the masters. In cases where the master is also the owner, they may sign their own book themselves as long as the service can be verified by a local NSW Maritime boating officer or other reliable witness. If entries in the books are not completed properly the service claimed may not be recognised as valid qualifying service.

A Record of Service Book issued by any marine authority may be used to support your service but you will need to be able to justify how the number of days claimed has been determined. If the service was accrued outside of NSW it must be confirmed (ratified) by the marine authority of that State or Territory before it will be considered by the NSW Maritime.

Record of Service Books are available from NSW Maritime offices or by mail (phone 02 95638769). To obtain a book you will need to complete an application form, provide two colour passport photographs, proof of identity and pay a fee (contact NSW Maritime for latest fees).

The National Maritime Safety Committee (NMSC) has developed a series of books known as R.O.P.E.S. (Record of Previous Experience & Service) which if completed satisfactorily may lead to reductions in the minimum qualifying service of up to 50 per cent. These books are obtainable only from the Rozelle office of the Authority or by post.

ii) Employment References

The qualifying service you are claiming must be substantiated by reference letters from owners. Letters should be on business letterhead paper, be signed by a senior manager

and must detail:- your duties; the days and hours of service; the area of operation and the vessel name, number, size and engine details. A sample reference letter is shown in the "Forms" file elsewhere at this website.

If you do not have a Record of Service or letters from employers then any documents that you believe may assist your claim should be submitted for consideration. Examples are:

a) other employment records such as group certificates or pay records

b) Other Documents

such as copies of fisheries catch documents, commercial fishing licences, vessel logbooks, dive logs, registration papers, insurance records, passports (for overseas service).

c) Training Record Books

Australia is currently experiencing significant change in the way people can be trained and become qualified, particularly with regard to competency based training. In some cases, on-the-job training and assessment can be achieved through registered training organisations (RTOs) approved by the NSW Maritime. Completion of an approved on-the-job competency based training program can reduce the amount of qualifying service required by up to 33%. Such training and assessment must be recorded properly in approved Training Record Books and submitted with your application.

The competencies that you are required to be assessed in for a certificate of competency are detailed in Part D of the National Standard for Commercial Vessels that is replacing the USL Code. The process of acquiring competency starts at the beginning of your qualifying service – however in the past the formal training process has occurred towards the end of it. It makes more sense to start your formal training as early as possible and it is recommended that you obtain either:

- i) a NSW Record of Service (RoS) Book or
- ii) An NMSC ROPES book

to facilitate competency based on-the-job training as you accrue your qualifying service.

e) Statutory Declarations

In cases where proper records have not been kept statutory declarations from owners, masters or other reliable referees are required. Statutory Declarations should include:

- the name, address, current contact details and qualifications of the person making the declaration.
- identification number of the vessel, ie survey, registration or LFB number
- a description of the vessel including its length
- the main use of the vessel and the area of operation (whether sheltered or coastal/offshore waters)
- engine type and capacity in kilowatts
- the actual dates of and amount of qualifying service in hours, days, weeks and years
- the duties performed – proportioned into deck and engineering duties.

A preferred format statutory declaration form is included in the "Forms" file.

You are advised that examiners may contact persons or organisations that have supported your qualifying service or provided a reference. You should ensure that you provide the name address and phone number of people verifying your service so that NSW Maritime is able to contact them if necessary. Be advised that legal action will be taken against persons who knowingly provide false information.

What if proof of service cannot be obtained?

If you do not have any records of your experience and cannot obtain any, you will probably not be accepted for examination. However in such cases you are advised to contact an examiner to discuss any options you may have available to you. At the very least you should discuss such service with the examiners to see if it can be taken into account when deciding on your eligibility for examination.

How must qualifying service be presented in an application?

The NSW Maritime application form includes a "Summary of Qualifying Service" section designed to provide an outline of the details of your service and assist the examiner to determine your eligibility. The form **MUST** be completed and signed as a statutory declaration.

You will need to determine the amount of service you are claiming for each vessel for both sheltered waters service and service beyond sheltered waters. If you have kept a Record of Service this should be easy - count up the entries to find the total days and hours of service that you have accrued. If you did not keep a Record of Service you will have to make an estimate of your service and show how you have calculated it. The following example shows the format for estimating your service.

Worked example; A person obtained the following service as general purpose hand aboard a charter vessel: worked two days per week on offshore fishing trips to the 100 fathom line off Sydney (30nm) and each trip averaged about 6 hours approximately. In addition he worked 2 days a week as a general purpose hand/barman on hospitality cruises around Sydney Harbour, with each voyage taking 5 hours and of which 3 hours was spent on hospitality duties. This was done for about 26 weeks per year for 5 years but was not recorded in a record of service book. His service would be calculated as follows:

Coastal waters service:

Days: days per week x weeks per year x number of years = 2 x 26 x 5
= 260 days

Hours: hours per day x days per week x weeks per year x number of years
= 6 x 2 x 26 x 5 = 1560
hours

Sheltered waters service:

Days = 2 x 26 x 5 = 260 days

Hours = 2 x 2 x 26 x 5 = 520 hours

(NOTE: Because the total of 5 hours worked on board included 3 hours on hospitality duties – Only 2 hours has been counted as appropriate service)

You will need to show how you have arrived at any calculated figures shown in the application form and it should be done as shown above.



Bar endorsements

are required to operate passenger vessels over the following ocean bar ports in NSW with a separate endorsement required for each individual bar port:

Batemans Bay, Bellinger River, Boat Harbour, Brisbane Water, Brunswick Heads, Byron Bay, Camden Haven, Clarence River Crookhaven River, Currarong, Evans Head, Forster, Lake Conjola, Macleay River, Manning River, Merimbula, Minnie Waters Moruya, Nambucca River, Pambula River, Port Macquarie, Richmond River, Sandown River, Shellharbour/Bass Point, Sussex Inlet, Swansea, Tathra, Tomaga River, Trial Bay, Tuross Inlet, Tweed River, Wagonga River, Wonboyn River, Woolgoolga, Woolli River

To obtain a bar endorsement you will need to provide:

i) Proof of experience in crossing over each bar at least 10 times inward and outward in varying conditions of tide and wind. If you are gaining experience on a passenger carrying vessel the crossings are to be undertaken with you controlling the vessel either :

- under the supervision of a master (who holds a bar endorsement for that bar) when passengers are on board or
- by yourself as master without supervision when no passengers are being carried.

ii) Statutory declarations are necessary to confirm these crossings and you must have the support of your local Waterways boating service officer to ratify this evidence.

iii) a bar endorsement fee

Note: a separate endorsement fee is charged for each bar endorsement or subsequent change to a restriction.

Boating and PWC licences

NSW legislation requires all persons operating a vessel at a speed of 10 knots or more to hold a NSW General Boating Licence, or if operating a PWC at any speed to hold a NSW PWC Licence. Being the holder of a certificate of competency as Master/Coxswain does not automatically mean that you are the holder of such licences - the certificate must be endorsed as such. Waterways Orals exams incorporate the General Boating Licence and if requested by the applicant can also incorporate the PWC test questions, so that these endorsements can be added to a certificate. Boating/PWC licences cannot be added to a Marine Engine Drivers certificate.

It is important to know that if you are found to have committed an offence which leads to the cancellation of or disqualification from your boat/PWC licence that this will also affect the operations of a commercial vessel. You will not be permitted to operate commercial vessels at speeds of 10 knots or more.

TDM units required for Coxswain NSCV (Part D) Certificate of Competency

| | |
|---------------------|--|
| TDM MB6 01A | Monitor condition and seaworthiness of a small vessel |
| TDM MC07 01B | Apply seamanship skills and techniques when operating a small vessel |
| TDM MC09 01B | Manoeuvre a vessel less than 12m within inshore limits |
| TDM ME1 01A | Understand orders and be understood in relation to shipboard duties |
| TDM ME5 01A | Transmit & receive information by marine radio/telephone |
| TDM MF7 01B | Observe safe working practices |
| TDM MF8 01B | Comply with emergency procedures |
| TDM MF10 01A | Provide First Aid |
| TDM MF11 01A | Survive at sea in the event of vessel abandonment |
| TDM MF12 01A | Minimise the risk of fire and maintain a state of readiness to respond to emergency situations involving fire |
| TDM MF32 01B | Apply domestic regulations when operating a small vessel |
| TDM MF53 02A | Fight and extinguish fires on board a small vessel |
| TDM MH12 02A | Plan and navigate a short voyage within inshore limits |
| TDM MR30 01A | Operate and carry out basic maintenance on small vessel marine propulsion system |
| TDM MR31 01A | Operate and carry out basic maintenance on auxiliary systems |
| TDM MR32 01A | Operate and carry out basic routine maintenance on marine extra low voltage electrical systems, starter motors and alternators |
| TDM MR54 02A | Carry out refuelling and fuel transfer operations |
| TDM MU5 02A | Ensure compliance with environmental considerations in a small domestic vessel |

TDM units required for Master 5 NSCV (Part D) Certificate of Competency

| | |
|---------------------|---|
| TDM MA11 01A | Maintain the stability of vessel using simplified information |
| TDM MB1 01B | Perform routine remedial, preventative and survey deck maintenance on a vessel |
| TDM MB6 01A | Monitor condition and seaworthiness of a small vessel |
| TDM MB7 01A | Slip vessel and maintain hull |
| TDM MC7 01B | Apply seamanship skills and techniques when operating a small vessel |
| TDM MC8 01A | Manoeuvre a vessel less than 24 metres in length within inshore limits |
| TDM MC10 01B | Steer a domestic vessel under the direction of the Master or officer in charge of a watch |
| TDM ME1 01A | Understand orders and be understood in relation to shipboard duties |
| TDM ME5 01A | Transmit & receive information by marine radio/telephone |
| TDM MF2 01A | Respond to navigational emergencies |
| TDM MF7 01B | Observe safe working practices |
| TDM MF8 01B | Comply with emergency procedures |
| TDM MF10 01A | Provide First Aid |
| TDM MF11 01A | Survive at sea in the event of vessel abandonment |
| TDM MF12 01A | Minimise the risk of fire and maintain a state of readiness to respond to emergency situations involving fire |
| TDM MF32 01B | Apply domestic regulations when operating a small vessel |
| TDM MF47 02A | Contribute to maintaining a safe watch - domestic vessels |
| TDM MF53 02A | Fight and extinguish fires on board a small vessel |
| TDM MH8 01A | Plan and navigate an inshore passage |
| TDM MH11 02A | Use radar to maintain safe navigation |
| TDM MH13 02A | Apply weather information when navigating a small commercial vessel |
| TDM MR1 01A | Operate and maintain steering gear arrangements |
| TDM MR2 01A | Use and maintain deck machinery installed on a vessel |
| TDM MR3 01A | Operate fuel, fresh and ballast water, bilge and fire pumping systems installed in a vessel |
| TDM MR54 02A | Carry out refuelling and fuel transfer operations |
| TDM MR55 02A | Perform rigging and lifting operations on board a small domestic vessel |
| TDM MU5 02A | Ensure compliance with environmental considerations in a small domestic vessel |