

RECORDS OF SERVICE

(version 1/03/2005)

From late 2004 NSW Maritime introduced a new format of books for recording qualifying service on board vessels.

WHY CHANGE?

Answer: The change to Competency Based Training and Assessment

The process of obtaining marine qualifications has changed over the past few years to become a competency based system. This change has occurred as a result of two on-going major national reform processes:

- a) Reform of the vocational education sector and the implementation of industry approved Training Packages and
- b) Review of the Uniform Shipping Laws Code by the National Marine Safety Committee and its gradual replacement by the National Standard for Commercial Vessels (in this case Part D).

Competency based training focuses on job outcomes – that is the skills and knowledge needed to perform in the workplace. The emphasis has now shifted to the combination of on-the-job learning and training with the formal off-the-job training conducted by training organisations.

Marine regulatory authorities have an expectation that the periods of statutory qualifying service required for each certificate of competency are in fact periods of learning, training and practice. In order to qualify for any certificate NSW Maritime requires that a person must now demonstrate their competence by:

1. Providing documented evidence of having performed certain job-related tasks on board a vessel and
2. Completing an approved competency based training and assessment program that includes specific units of competency from the Maritime Industry Training Package delivered by a registered training organisation approved by the Authority and

3. Satisfying the Authority during a final practical/oral assessment of meeting the outcomes detailed in the National Standard for Commercial Vessels (NSCV) Part D.

To ensure that the periods of qualifying service are focused on the competency outcomes of the NSCV Part D an on – the - job recording system needs to be used and several formats will be acceptable to record this:

- i) Either the NSW Record of Service (**RoS**) Book or
- ii) An acceptable alternative such as the National Maritime Safety Committee (NMSC) publications known as “**R.O.P.E.S.**” or
- iii) any other approved system developed by a registered training organisation that is also approved by the marine authority.

These books are designed to record job-specific tasks and other details of qualifying service in a structured format so that it can be submitted to the NSW Maritime Authority to assist in the process of assessing competency for commercial vessel qualifications.

The outcomes outlined in these books cover the areas of skill and knowledge that underpin a marine certificate of competency.

NOTE: Proper use of these books can lead to reductions in the qualifying service required for a marine certificate of competency and persons seeking such reductions are advised to complete them as directed and then submit them to NSW Maritime for determination of eligibility for a reduction.

NSW Maritime RoS Book

Obtainable from any NSW Maritime customer service office for a fee.

WARNING: This book is not a ROPES book. It is similar, but has been designed is for use in NSW only .

Persons expecting to claim a reduction in qualifying service in states/territories outside of NSW jurisdiction are advised that acceptance of the NSW RoS by the marine authority in those other jurisdictions cannot be guaranteed. In such cases they are advised to follow the ROPES system.

What is the difference between a RoS and ROPES

Apart from size and colour, the main difference is that for ROPES you need to purchase a separate book for each separate certificate you attempt i.e. if you are doing Master 5 and Marine Engine Driver (MED) 3 you will need to buy **two** ROPES books – one for Master 5 AND one for MED 3. Another difference is that at present there are no ROPES books for Master 4, Master 3, MED 1 or Engineer Class 3.

The NSW RoS book however is more flexible. It is written to be adaptable to any grade of certificate for commercial vessels less than 80 metres in length, and can be used for recording the service for any one command certificate (i.e. Coxswain or Master 5 or Master 4) and any one engineering certificate (i.e. MED 3, or MED2 or MED 1). For example, one book could be used to complete both Master 5 and MED 3. This saves quite a lot of duplication and is easier for NSW Maritime to administer. When using the RoS book you will need to nominate the grades of certificate that this book will be used for.

NSW Maritime will provide the same reductions of sea time for completion of RoS as is given for ROPES – providing of course that it has been completed properly.

Remember: If you intend to complete your training and obtaining a NSW Maritime certificate of competency you should get a RoS – if you intend to qualify across different states use the ROPES books.

What is the difference between the new RoS and previous Record of Service Books

Previous books have been used to record the quantity of qualifying service - i.e. it concentrated on time and frequency only. The NSW approach has been to require daily entries with an emphasis on “hours” and “days” of service.

The new RoS shifts the emphasis to the quality of the service – to the type of duties performed during the service. This assists assessors in determining the competency of an applicant and assists masters, owners and the applicants by providing guidance on what is required when training for a certificate of competency.

Using a RoS - What is required to be recorded?

1. Full details of the vessels, propulsion systems and equipment
2. Details of how, when and where the specific job experience has been gained
3. The name and contact details of each verifying signatory.
4. Periods of service now only need to be recorded on a monthly basis.

Outcomes (job skills)

Sections 3,4 and 5 of the RoS book detail the job skills that NSW Maritime expects the holder of a certificate of competency to be both experienced in and competent in. These job skills are based on the outcomes listed in Annex B of Part D of the National Standard for Commercial Vessels.

The Outcomes are graded into 3 categories:

- i) Those that are expected to be able to be done by any crew member i.e. master, engine driver and general purpose hand (Section 3 Common Tasks).
- ii) Those that are expected to be able to be done by a Master (including Skippers and Coxswains - Section 4).
- iii) Those that are expected to be able to be done by a Marine Engine Driver or Engineer (including where relevant Coxswains - Section 5).

The sub-tasks contained within these sections do not have to be undertaken in the order they appear, and may be done on different vessels. However some planning of task completion will be required.

If there are tasks that cannot be completed on a vessel where service is being accrued, it may be necessary to visit another vessel and seek their assistance. Tasks that may not be able to be completed on board during normal work hours may be able to be done later during quieter periods, or by arrangement with a training organisation (up to a maximum of 10%).

NOTES:

1. It is strongly recommended that book holders also keep a personal diary recording daily details of service and an exercise book, into which may be entered diagrams or photos of vessel features, experiences or copies of documents that support your claimed service. Assessors need evidence and the more evidence that you can provide, the easier the task of assessment becomes.

2. Safety Warning

When undertaking any tasks listed in a record book a person must always ensure that it is safe to do so and be assured that all other persons on board or nearby are aware of the proceedings. Permission from the Master and Engineer must be obtained before any activity occurs.

How many times does a task need to be performed and to what standard?

It is acknowledged that persons signing off tasks may not be trained teachers or assessors – but they must be experienced and technically competent mariners or where applicable qualified persons.

Signing-off of tasks should only occur when the task has been performed satisfactorily on board a vessel a sufficient number of times and in various operating conditions (e.g. day/night, good weather/bad weather, etc) and when the signatory is satisfied that the book-holder can perform those tasks safely.

The task should not be signed off if the signatory is not prepared to support the book-holders ability to perform it.

However, owners and masters are reminded that it is an offence under NSW legislation not to certify the correctness of a relevant entry in a record of service at the request of an applicant for a certificate of competency.

It should be noted that signing off any task does not mean that the supervisor is saying the crew member is “competent” in that task – that is the responsibility of a training organisation and the Authority. It just says that the signatory has witnessed performance of the task to a reasonable standard and is prepared to confirm that with an RTO or Authority examiner.

Who can sign the book?

Persons signing off tasks or service in this book need to be those who act in a supervisory role and who have witnessed the satisfactory performance of each task in accordance with industry best and safe standards.

Normally this will be the Master or Engineer onboard the vessel, but may also include the owner of the vessel, operations manager, or any other qualified person associated with the operations of that vessel or even an RTO trainer and assessor. This implies that the person is sufficiently technically competent in the subject to judge that the task has been completed in a satisfactory manner.

In cases where the book holder is also the master/coxswain of the vessel and wishes to have their own service verified, the signatory may be another qualified crew member/person who has witnessed the event. In these cases it is recommended that entries should also be ratified (signed off) by an independent person – such as: an authorised Authority Boating Officer, Surveyor, Examiner or Training Organisation mentor/assessor/trainer.

The Authority does not want to see close friends, relations or unqualified crew members signing off task entries.

Instructions to Persons verifying entries in a RoS book. (i.e. Masters, Engine Drivers, Engineers, Owners, Managers.)

1. Persons who sign off any qualifying service and/or who verify having witnessed tasks performed in the books must provide their personal details and contact details so that the Authority may confirm entries if necessary.
2. Signatures should only be entered when the signatory has sighted an entry and agrees with and is prepared to support the book holder’s service and experience. A signatory should NOT enter a signature into a task section that is blank.

3. Where a task is broken down into more than one sub-task, then each sub-task should be signed off separately.

4. The tasks in the books are meant to be signed off individually **during** the qualifying service period. The book or large sections of the book should not be signed off all at once, nor should signatures be bracketed. The book is not to be signed off retrospectively – i.e. well after the service was obtained - unless permission has been given by an authority to do so. In such cases reductions of qualifying service will not be granted.

Instruction to Book holders

1. Read through each of the outcomes and discuss and plan them with the vessel supervisor (i.e. owner, master and engineer) before attempting any of them.
2. When you have satisfactorily completed each task, you should provide brief details of how, where and when it was achieved and then get the person who supervised you to sign the book to verify that you have completed the task.
3. The person verifying and signing the book should also provide their details in the book.
4. Don't forget that the vessel details and periods of service must be completed.

Formal training programs and RoS/ROPES books.

An ideal way to develop specific competencies is to combine the formal part of learning with on-the-job experience. Book holders are encouraged to seek flexible learning arrangements with approved training organisations that allows for this combination of learning throughout that period of minimum qualifying service. Ideally, this arrangement would commence at the beginning of the qualifying service period to enable a planned and competency based approach to learning.

The RoS and ROPES books are primarily designed to assist NSW Maritime in the assessment of competency for the issue of a certificate of competency. However they may be used by a Registered Training Organisation (RTO) in any way it sees as relevant in competency based training and assessment. Such use may be different to that of NSW Maritime and if used they may become part of the audit arrangements that exist between the Authority and each RTO.

The Authority will accept a maximum of 10% of the signs-offs from an RTO provided that:

- i) The tasks are completed on an approved operational vessel

- ii) the tasks were not part of a formal pre-sea training period.

How will NSW Maritime use RoS & ROPES books

When a person applies to NSW Maritime for a certificate of competency records of their qualifying service must be submitted. From 2005 onwards major importance will be placed on the new format books.

When assessing eligibility for issue of a certificate of competency the Authority will assess the entries made in record books and determine if any reduction in the minimum statutory period of qualifying service is warranted.

The Authority will check the information contained in them and may contact the signatories to confirm its accuracy. It is an offence to provide false or misleading information in an application for a Certificate of Competency.

Book holders and signatories should familiarise themselves with the books to avoid incomplete or unsatisfactory completion of entries. Books that have not been completed satisfactorily may be either rejected by the Authority or returned to the applicant for completion. In such cases no reductions will be granted.

The Authority will expect an applicant to be able to perform any of the tasks contained in the RoS and will test these when conducting oral examinations for either the initial awarding or revalidation of a Certificate of Competency.

If an applicant is not able to complete a task that has been signed off in a book, it may not only prove to be embarrassing to an applicant but may also adversely affect the result of the assessment for qualifications or even lead to penalties (including additional service) being imposed by the Authority.

Satisfactory completion of an approved task book can result in a maximum 50% reduction in sea-service providing the section is completed properly and is verifiable and providing the Authority's assessment orals confirms the ability to complete the tasks signed off.

What about tasks performed in the past prior to issue of the RoS

Remember, the tasks in these books are meant to be signed off by witnesses as they are performed on board during periods of qualifying service. Retrospective (back-filling) of these books is not recommended and it is unlikely that you will get the maximum reduction of service.

If you believe that you have already completed some of these tasks but are unable to perform them before the owners/skippers/crew that you were on board a vessel with, you should:

- a. Find an alternative witness acceptable to the Authority and have them witnessed again OR

- b. Leave them blank.
- c. Discuss them with your training organisation and see if they can be checked during your formal period of training and assessment. The Authority will accept a maximum of 10% of the tasks signed off by an RTO, providing they have been performed and witnessed on board an operational vessel.
- d. Be prepared to have that task assessed by the Authority during your orals exam.

NOTE: As an aid to training it is strongly recommended that you record in an exercise book, diagrams, photos or sketches of the vessels layout and features such as pumping plans (piping diagram) electrical diagrams, fire safety equipment etc. When completing these sections appropriate documentation should be consulted: for example the vessel's Certificate of Survey or Class, Safety Management System, manufacturers' documentation/ manuals, vessel stability book or other handbooks

How often will a new RoS need to be purchased?

If after completing the book for a lower grade of certificate, you intend to subsequently pursue a higher grade of certificate, then a new book should be obtained and the tasks signed off again but relevant to the larger vessel.

Each RoS is intended to cover a period of approximately five years of qualifying service on up to 8 different vessels.

Further information

For further information on using this book, contact the Marine Certification section on phone (02) 9563 8769.