



Ship Type: All Trade Area: All

Bulletin 206 - 08/01 - Standards of Training, Certification & Watchkeeping Convention

The Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping convention (STCW 95) comes into full effect next year with effect from February 2002 and requires flag states to accept direct responsibility for seafarers serving on their ships. Officers on ships registered under flags other than those issuing their certificate of competence will have to obtain a separate endorsement from a recognised flag state. It is thought that this will apply to more than 200,000 seafarers worldwide and flag states will be obliged to conclude agreements with countries supplying the labour. In fact the convention only requires agreement between maritime administrations but some countries seem to be intending to treat these agreements as a diplomatic issue requiring full government approval. This is likely to result in delays in concluding treaties which will in turn hold up the issuance of the flag state endorsements which will be demanded by port state control inspectors around the world. The situation is being monitored by both the International Chamber of Shipping and the International Shipping Federation. In addition to this, under the STCW Convention seafarers are required to take regular refresher courses which include personal survival techniques, first aid, fire prevention and basic fire fighting before they can qualify for new certificates.

Source of information: David Powell, Ship Inspections