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Marine Emergency Duties (MED) Training

Since the 1970s, marine emergency duties (MED) training is required to work on commercial vessels. Marine industry players know these courses and most navigating personnel have taken them. However, since the regulatory reform, the rules governing this training have changed, causing considerable confusion in the industry. As a result, in this fifth regulatory column, I would like to outline the main modifications made to the training and their applications.

Main changes in MED training

The changes made to MED training by the *Marine Personnel Regulations* (MPR) are designed to align Canadian training with *STCW International Convention* requirements for vessels or crews with STCW certification. Modifications target primarily the divisions and names of training governed by the *STCW Convention*.

Equivalency between old and new courses

	Old MED courses	MPR equivalency
Courses not subject to the STCW Convention	Basic Safety (A1) or Small Vessel Safety (A2)	Basic Safety (MED A1) or Small Passenger Vessel Safety (MED A2)
	Small Non-Pleasure Vessel Basic Safety (A3)	Small Non-Pleasure Vessel Basic Safety (MED A3)
	Small Seasoned Passenger Vessel Safety (certificated personnel)	Small Seasoned Passenger-carrying Vessel Safety (certificated personnel)
	Small Seasoned Passenger Vessel Safety (non-certificated personnel)	Small Seasoned Passenger-carrying Vessel Safety (non-certificated personnel)
Courses subject to the STCW Convention	Survival Craft (B1)	Proficiency in Survival Craft and Rescue Boats other than Fast Rescue Boats
	Basic Safety (A1) and Marine Firefighting (B2)	STCW Basic Safety
	Basic Safety (A1), Marine Firefighting (B2) and MED for Officers (C)	Advanced Firefighting
	MED for Senior Officers (D)	MED for Senior Officers (MED D)

STCW Basic Safety MED training discusses mainly the practical aspects of firefighting and some basic pollution-prevention notions.

Proficiency in Survival Craft and Rescue Boats other than Fast Rescue Boats MED training focuses on lifesaving and evacuation. Some basic notions regarding the SAR transponders and VHF radios that life rafts are equipped with have been added.

Finally, the *Advanced Firefighting* and *MED for Senior Officers* MED training courses are intended mainly for officers and focus on directing and controlling firefighting operations.

Course content can be consulted in the Transport Canada publication *Marine Emergency Duties Training Program TP 4957*.

Obligation to hold a MED training certificate

Since the regulatory reform, certain rules have been modified with regard to the obligation to hold a MED training certificate. The summary is as follows.

Basic Safety

Under section 205(2) and (5c) of the *MPR*, every crew member who is required to be on board in order for the vessel to meet the safe manning requirements or who is assigned to a fire team on the muster must hold a training certificate in marine emergency duties with respect to STCW basic safety when **taking up his duties**. Note that crew members no longer have 6 months to obtain this training certificate. However, crew members who are not required to be on board in order for the vessel to meet the safe manning requirements and who are not assigned to a fire team on the muster need not hold a training certificate.

Exceptions:

The complete list of exceptions can be found in section 205 (3), (4) and (5) of the *Marine Personnel Regulations*. The main ones are:

- Crew members who are required to be on board in order for the vessel to meet the safe manning requirements of a vessel engaged in voyages in sheltered waters or near coastal voyages, Class 2, have a maximum of 6 months to obtain a basic safety training certificate (*MED A1, A2 or A3*) ((*MPR*, s. 205 (3) and (4)) if they are not assigned to a security duties on board the vessel;
- Persons who are not assigned to a fire team on the muster:
 - on a vessel engaged in a sheltered waters voyage and required to carry a fireman's outfit: MED training certificate *Basic Safety*;
 - on a vessel engaged in a sheltered waters voyage and not required to carry a fireman's outfit (*MED A1, A2 or A3* or MED *Small Seasoned Passenger Vessel Safety*).

Proficiency in Survival Craft and Rescue Boats other than Fast Rescue Boats MED training

Under section 205 (6) of the *MPR*, every person assigned on the muster list to the preparation or launching of a survival craft must hold the MED training certificate *Proficiency in Survival Craft and Rescue Boats other than Fast Rescue Boats*.