

§ 12.403 Service or training requirements for able seaman (A/B) endorsements.

(a) The minimum service required to qualify for the various categories of endorsement as able seaman is as follows:

(1) *Able seaman—unlimited.* Three years of service on deck on vessels operating on oceans or on the Great Lakes.

(2) *Able seaman—limited.* Eighteen months of service on deck on vessels of 100 GRT or more which operate in a service not exclusively confined to the rivers and smaller inland lakes of the United States.

(3) *Able seaman—special.* Twelve months of service on deck on vessels operating on oceans or the navigable waters of the United States, including the Great Lakes.

(4) *Able seaman—offshore supply vessels.* Six months of service on deck on vessels operating on oceans or on the navigable waters of the United States, including the Great Lakes.

(5) *Able seaman—sail.* Six months of service on deck on sailing school vessels, oceanographic research vessels powered primarily by sail, or equivalent sailing vessels operating on oceans or on the navigable waters of the United States, including the Great Lakes.

(6) *Able seaman—fishing industry.* Six months of service on deck, not as a processor, onboard vessels operating on oceans or on the navigable waters of the United States, including the Great Lakes.

(b) Approved training programs may be substituted for the required periods of service on deck as follows:

(1) A graduate of a school ship may be qualified for a rating endorsement as A/B, without further service, upon satisfactory completion of the program of instruction. For this purpose, “school ship” is interpreted to mean an institution that offers a complete approved program of instruction, including a period of at-sea training, in the skills appropriate to the rating of A/B.

(2) Training programs, other than those classified as a school ship, may be substituted for up to one-third of the required service on deck. The Coast Guard will determine the service/training ratio for each program and may

allow a maximum of 3 days of deck service credit for each day of instruction.

§ 12.405 Examination and demonstration of ability for able seaman (A/B) endorsements.

(a) Before an applicant is issued an endorsement as an A/B, he or she must prove, to the satisfaction of the Coast Guard, by oral or other means of examination, or by actual demonstration in a Coast Guard-approved course, his or her knowledge of seamanship and the ability to carry out effectively all the duties that may be required of an A/B, including those of a lifeboatman or lifeboatman-limited.

(b) The examination, whether administered orally or by other means, must be conducted only in the English language and must consist of questions regarding—

(1) The applicant’s knowledge of nautical terms, use of the compass for navigation, running lights, passing signals, and fog signals for vessels on the high seas, inland waters, or Great Lakes, and distress signals; and

(2) The applicant’s knowledge of commands in handling the wheel by obeying orders passed to him or her as helmsman, and knowledge of the use of the engine room telegraph.

(c) The applicant must provide evidence, to the satisfaction of the Coast Guard, of the knowledge of principal knots, bends, splices, and hitches in common use by actually making them.

(d) The applicant must demonstrate, to the satisfaction of the Coast Guard, knowledge of pollution laws and regulations, procedures for discharge containment and cleanup, and methods for disposal of sludge and waste material from cargo and fueling operations.

§ 12.407 General requirements for lifeboatman endorsements.

(a) *General.* Every person fulfilling the manning requirements as lifeboatman on any United States vessel must hold an endorsement as lifeboatman. No endorsement as lifeboatman is required of any person employed on any unrigged vessel, except on a seagoing barge and on a tank barge navigating waters other than rivers and/or canals.