

**§ 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.

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(b) *Requirements for certification.* (1) To qualify for an endorsement as lifeboatman, an applicant must—

- (i) Be at least 18 years of age;
- (ii) Pass the prescribed physical and medical examination requirements specified in 46 CFR, part 10, subpart C; and
- (iii) Present evidence of having passed a chemical test for dangerous drugs or as having qualified for an exemption for testing described in § 16.220 of this subchapter.

(2) To be eligible for an endorsement as lifeboatman, an applicant must meet one of the following sea service requirements:

(i) At least 6 months of sea service in any department of vessels and the successful completion of an approved course.

(ii) At least 12 months of sea service in any department of vessels on ocean, coastwise, inland, and Great Lakes routes.

(3) Before an applicant is issued an endorsement as a lifeboatman, he or she must prove, to the satisfaction of the Coast Guard, by oral or other means of examination, and by actual practical demonstration of abilities, his or her knowledge of seamanship and the ability to carry out effectively all the duties that may be required of a lifeboatman. This requirement may be met by completion of an approved course in paragraph (b)(2)(i) of this section, provided the course includes actual practical demonstration of abilities.

(4) The practical demonstration must consist of a demonstration of the applicant's ability to—

- (i) Take charge of a survival craft or rescue boat during and after launch;
- (ii) Operate a survival craft engine;
- (iii) Demonstrate the ability to row by actually pulling an oar in the boat;
- (iv) Manage a survival craft and survivors after abandoning ship;
- (v) Safely recover survival craft and rescue boats; and
- (vi) Use locating and communication devices.

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

(i) Lifeboats and liferafts, the names of their essential parts, and a description of the required equipment;

(ii) The clearing away, swinging out, and lowering of lifeboats and liferafts, the handling of lifeboats under oars and sails, including questions relative to the proper handling of a boat in a heavy sea; and

(iii) The operation and functions of commonly used types of davits.

(6) An applicant, to be eligible for an endorsement as lifeboatman, must be able to speak and understand the English language as would be required in the rating of lifeboatman and in an emergency aboard ship.

**§ 12.409 General requirements for lifeboatman-limited endorsements.**

(a) *General.* Every person fulfilling the manning requirements for lifeboatman on any United States vessel fitted with liferafts, but not fitted with lifeboats, must hold an endorsement as lifeboatman or as lifeboatman-limited. No endorsement as lifeboatman or lifeboatman-limited 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.

(b) *Requirements for certification.* (1) To qualify for an endorsement as lifeboatman-limited, an applicant must—

- (i) Be at least 18 years of age;
- (ii) Pass the prescribed physical and medical examination requirements specified in 46 CFR Part 10, subpart C; and
- (iii) Present evidence of having passed a chemical test for dangerous drugs or of having qualified for an exemption for testing, as described in § 16.220 of this subchapter.

(2) An applicant, to be eligible for an endorsement as lifeboatman-limited, must meet one of the following sea service requirements:

(i) At least 12 months of sea service in any department of vessels on ocean, coastwise, inland, and Great Lakes routes.

(ii) At least 6 months of sea service in any department of vessels, and successful completion of an approved course.