

Marine Information Bulletin

New arrangements for the Small Vessel Operator's Certificate (SVOC)

Issued 2 July 2008 Revised 22 June 2010

Purpose

This bulletin is to remind holders of the SVOC of arrangements following changes to the *Transport Operations (Marine Safety) Regulations 2004* (the Regulation) that were approved on 1 August 2008.

Background

Previously operators of fishing ships less than 10 metres in length have been required to hold a SVOC. The recent changes to maritime regulation mean that from 1 August 2009 these certificates will not be recognised for the operation of these fishing ships. It will be necessary to hold a Coxswain – Restricted to fishing ships less than 10m (restricted coxswain). This licence will allow the holder to act as both master and engineer on a fishing ship less than 10m in length, or a recreational ship. It will be issued as a perpetual licence.

There was a transition period until 1 August 2009 where the holder of an SVOC was able to exchange their certificate for a restricted coxswain free of charge. From 1 August 2009 this exchange has not been free and the usual fees have applied for the issue of the coxswain licence.

From 1 August 2009, a person who operates a fishing ship less than 10m without at least a licence as a restricted coxswain, is operating without a valid licence and may be prosecuted.

From 1 August 2010, any operator who has not exchanged their SVOC for the new licence will be treated as a new applicant and will need to meet the full requirements for the issue of a licence as detailed in the notes for the guidance of candidates – Coxswain – Restricted to fishing ships less than 10m.

New applicants wishing to operate fishing ships less than 10m are required to obtain a restricted coxswain. This can be done either by:

- Presenting a statement from an existing training provider to verify that the training requirements under the previous arrangements have been met, or
- Completing the required competencies under the new arrangements with a registered training organisation as detailed in the Notes for the guidance of candidates - Coxswain – Restricted to fishing ships less than 10m.

Details

Information specific to individuals' circumstances appear below.

If you already have a SVOC:

It is no longer recognised as the licence to operate a fishing ship less than 10m in length. You are required to hold a Coxswain – Restricted to fishing ships less than 10m. You have until 1 August 2010 to exchange an existing SVOC for a Coxswain – Restricted to fishing ships less than 10m.

If you are training towards a SVOC:

If you are currently undertaking training towards a SVOC, you will be able to use your statement of completion from a training organisation to obtain a coxswain restricted to fishing ships less than 10m.

New applicants:

If you do not hold a SVOC and need to operate a fishing ship less than 10m, please read the Notes for the guidance of candidates - Coxswain – Restricted to fishing ships less than 10m. The training pathway for this licence will involve on the job training supervised by a registered training organisation. All the requirements for the licence are shown in the Notes for Guidance.

Implementation key dates:

The key remaining dates for the implementation of these changes are detailed below.

1 August 2010:

- End of period to exchange SVOC for Coxswain licence.
- All applications for a restricted coxswain will be treated as new applications.

Information

For further information about this Marine Information Bulletin, email msqmail@msq.qld.gov.au.

Other Marine Information Bulletins covering various topics relating to the safe operation of ships can be obtained from Maritime Safety Queensland's website www.msq.qld.gov.au and from the following Maritime Safety Queensland regional offices:

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Bundaberg	(07) 4131 8500
Cairns	(07) 4052 7400
Gladstone	(07) 4973 1200
Hervey Bay	(07) 4194 9600
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