

Fishing Vessel Safety Course Requirements as per MGN 411

The MCA has put in place contingency plans to mitigate disruption to essential delivered services as a result of the ongoing COVID-19 outbreak.

The UK's current requirement for fisherman's safety course is summarised below.

Before starting work as a fisherman all new entrants must have completed the following course:

- 1 day Basic Sea Survival.

Within 3 months of starting work, all new entrant fishermen must complete the following additional courses:

- 1 day Basic Fire Fighting and Prevention;
- 1 day Basic First Aid; and
- 1 day Basic Health and Safety

A fisherman who has been working as a fisherman for two years or more, must in addition to the new entrants' requirements (above), complete the Seafish 1 day Safety Awareness and Risk Assessment course.

The MCA proposes the following flexible approach to allow the industry to keep operating in these challenging times.

1. A 3 month extension on the time allowed for all new entrant fishermen to complete the following additional courses:

- 1 day Basic Fire Fighting and Prevention;
- 1 day Basic First Aid; and
- 1 day Basic Health and Safety

This is aimed at new entrant fisherman only and allows a maximum of 6 months in which a new entrant could complete the required basic safety courses. To allow this 6 month extension the Skippers of a fishing vessel, regardless of size must have completed the full basic safety training requirements. Where these courses have not been completed the Skipper should run through a checklist to cover the important safety topics and complete a Risk Assessment to ensure the crew could respond to an onboard emergency incident such as a fire. Evidence of this should be documented and kept onboard the vessel. This only applies where the majority (over 50%) of the crew have completed all the required basic training.

2. The 1 day sea survival course for new entrants may be waived for up to one person per vessel **and** only for vessels where the minimum crew/manning level is 4. If there are fisherman who do not hold a 1 day sea survival course, the Skipper of the vessel must complete a checklist with fisherman to ensure they have ship board familiarisation on use of survival craft and related equipment. Evidence should be documented and kept onboard.

Owners/skippers of any vessels taking on untrained new entrants during lockdown must register them with Seafish so that, when the restrictions are lifted, they know who needs to complete the training. An email from the skipper/owner to training@seafish.co.uk with the following details will enable them to register the new entrants on their database:

Name of New Entrant:

Date of Birth:

Name and registration number of fishing vessel:

Port of operation:

Name of owner/skipper:

Contact telephone number:

3. The MCA will apply a 3 month extension on the time allowed for all fishermen to complete the Seafish 1 day Safety Awareness and Risk Assessment course.

These measures offer a short term solution to the problems of fishermen's training not being available during this current lockdown period. We will continue to monitor the situation and update as required.