



GUIDANCE NOTICE

Task Books

Purpose

The purpose of a 2017 task book is to ensure that seafarers gain practical training and experience on board and make the best use of time on vessels. It assists seafarers to become competent coxswains, masters watchkeepers or engineers. While the task book contains practical tasks that must be carried out on board a vessel, it does not cover all performance and assessment criteria or the full range of conditions.

The completion of a task book is not mandatory for the issue of a certificate of competency (CoC). However, Part D of the National Standard for Commercial Vessels (NSCV) provides for a reduction in the amount of qualifying sea service that is required when a task book is appropriately completed. The reduction in sea service provided by completion of a task book is dependent on the CoC and the applicant's previous experience, but is at least a 50% reduction. Task books are available for all CoCs other than General Purpose Hand.

The holder of the task book is responsible for its safe keeping throughout their training and for submitting the task book to the registered training organisation (RTO) and final assessor.

In addition to the requirements contained in a task book, an applicant for a CoC will need to meet all other criteria specified in the NSCV Part D Crew Competencies. This includes successfully completing a certificate or diploma course with a RTO, presentation of a record of qualifying sea service, and a range of other requirements.

How to get a task book

Task books are available from AMSA and some RTOs. To order a task book directly from AMSA, use [AMSA form 1057](#).

Task books may be purchased at any time during the process of gaining certification. There is no requirement to be enrolled in a course at a RTO to obtain a task book.

Key points to know about task books

AMSA 2017 task books:

- are required to qualify for the task book sea service option in NSCV Part D;
- are to be completed under supervision in the workplace;

- are to be completed while working on a vessel that meets the requirements for qualifying sea service as per NSCV Part D for the relevant CoC;
- contain only practical tasks;
- may form part of an agreed training and assessment strategy at a RTO;
- do not cover all performance criteria and evidence specified in the MAR Maritime Training Package; and
- do not take the place of the required training for the issue of a CoC.

A minimum of 80% of all tasks in the task book must be completed to qualify for a reduction in sea service.

How to use the task book - seafarers

Seafarers must:

- understand that task books do not provide workplace health and safety guidance on how to complete tasks and that individual seafarers and supervisors are responsible for tasks being conducted safely;
- perform all tasks under supervision;
- spread tasks out over a realistic timeframe, reflecting when they would normally be done on the job;
- complete tasks in the workplace in a seagoing or operational environment;
- ensure the vessel's name is recorded for each completed task, along with the date the task was completed and the supervisor's signature (each task must be signed off);
- make sure all tasks are completed (as far as practicable given the equipment, cargo and/or voyage pattern of the vessel(s) served on);
- be aware that final assessors may review the contents of the seafarer's task book, including level of completion and standard of the content, and ask questions on items covered in the book as considered appropriate. If the final assessor is not satisfied with the task book they may defer the oral examination until the deficiencies are rectified; and
- be aware that the National Regulator, a State/Territory Marine Safety Agency (MSA) or a RTO may validate the information contained in the task book, and may contact the signatories to check the accuracy of task book entries.

On receipt of the task book, the seafarer must complete the “Seafarer Details” section in the front of the book, attach a current photograph and sign the declaration.

As soon as possible when commencing duties on a vessel:

- the seafarer should complete Section 3 “Vessel Details” and Section 5 “Safety and Shipboard Familiarisation Guidance”; and
- the supervisor/qualified person should complete their details in Section 2 “Supervisor Details”, sign Section 3 to verify the vessel details and equipment have been accurately recorded, and ensure that the seafarer has met the requirements of, and has signed, Section 5.

It is important to note that vessel details and supervisor details must be completed for each vessel and each supervisor.

A precise record must be kept of the seafarer’s seagoing service including time spent on watchkeeping duties both on deck and in the engine room. This must be recorded in Section 4 “On Board Sea Service Record”.

Section 6 contains a list of on board tasks which should be progressively completed. Tasks may be completed in any order. It may be possible to complete a number of tasks concurrently. Some tasks will require observation over a period of time. It will be necessary to perform most tasks several times before an acceptable standard is reached for sign off by the supervisor/qualified person.

A number of tasks require documentary evidence of completion. This may include sketches, photographs, checklists, procedures, notes, and/or copies of documents. They form part of the task book completion requirements and are not optional. All documentary evidence must be attached to the task book and submitted with the task book. A seafarer may also use a separate exercise book for recording additional information provided that the exercise book is submitted with the task book.

For each unit there is a section where additional tasks above and beyond those listed may be recorded. This section is not compulsory but allows seafarers who have completed additional tasks to record those tasks.

Seafarers should endeavour to complete all tasks. However, in view of the equipment, cargo or voyage pattern of the vessel it is expected that in some cases it will not be possible to complete all tasks. A minimum of 80% of all tasks in the task book must be completed to qualify for a reduction in sea service.

How to use the task book - supervisors and qualified persons

Each task performed and recorded in the task book must be witnessed and signed off by a supervisor/qualified person who is connected with the vessel’s operation (master, engineer, owner or operations manager) and acts in a supervisory role.

A supervisor/qualified person must:

- ensure tasks are conducted safely;
- date and initial the task book in each box as each task is completed;
- sign each box when repetition of a task is required; and
- check that any sketches, photographs, checklists, procedures, notes, copies of documents and/or other additional information/material required to be attached are correct prior to signing off the task.

By signing the task book, supervisors/qualified persons are verifying that:

- a task has been performed to an industry standard in keeping with the best practices of seafarers and safe working; and
- they are satisfied that the seafarer can perform the task.

Regardless of whether tasks are completed on a recreational, or a commercial vessel, the supervisor or qualified person must:

- have a CoC that is at least equal to the qualification being supervised; or
- have a restricted CoC that is at least equal to the qualification being supervised, but may not sign off tasks that they are not permitted to do under the restriction; or
- have a workshop skill equivalent or trade qualification directly related to the qualification (e.g. a marine mechanic or diesel fitter can supervise engineering tasks, a refrigeration mechanic can supervise refrigeration tasks, an electrician can supervise electrical tasks); or
- be the owner, master or engineer of the vessel.

How to use the task book - RTOs

Tasks may not be signed off as part of the training program except when approved by the National Regulator. RTOs may, however, help a seafarer gain access to commercial vessels and equipment through industry partnerships, or provide an opportunity for task book completion on their training vessels or in their workshop where that opportunity is independent of formal training activities.

National Regulator task books are based on the MAR Maritime Training Package and may be used by a RTO, together with other criteria, as third party evidence to evaluate competence of a student. If this is the case, the RTO must validate the entries in the task book and sign off task book completion before the candidate is deemed competent and a certificate or diploma is issued.

Task book completion check

Once the task book is completed, a representative of a RTO or the final assessor must sign in the front of the book to verify that the task book has been completed to the extent possible given the equipment, cargo or voyage pattern of the seafarer's vessel(s). Anything less than 100% completion is only acceptable where it is not possible to complete all tasks. This is to allow for the fact that most vessels do not carry every kind of equipment, operate in every condition or perform every function. Section 3 contains details of the vessels, their operation and equipment and can be used to assess whether the level of completion is appropriate. A task book should not be signed off if it is evident to the signatory that tasks that could have been completed have not been. A minimum of 80% completion of tasks is required to qualify for a reduction in sea service. Completion should not be signed off if 80% has not been achieved.

To gain a reduction of sea service, it is not necessary for the task book to be completed prior to either starting or completing training with a RTO. However, it must be completed prior to lodging an application for a CoC.

Previous task books

The AMSA 2014 version of the task book may still be used as a record of completed tasks and sea service, provided the book is completed under supervision and signed off. Appropriate completion of an AMSA 2014 task book will also provide for a reduction in the required sea service requirements as defined in Part D of NSCV. However, AMSA 2014 task books must be signed off by a RTO when 100% complete if the seafarer wishes to qualify for the sea service reduction.

A seafarer with an AMSA 2014 task book may either continue with the 2014 book or get an AMSA 2017 task book and start over. Where tasks are identical in the two books they can be transferred from the 2014 book to the 2017 book. All tasks transferred must be signed off individually, preferably by the person who signed them originally, but at the very least by a "Supervisor/Qualified Person" (as defined in the task book and the guidance notice). The 2014 and 2017 books are, however, significantly different and there are a limited number of tasks that can be transferred.

All tasks must be completed in a single book. It is not acceptable to have some tasks signed off in a 2014 task book and some in a 2017 task book.

As for the AMSA 2017 task books, it is not necessary for the AMSA 2014 task book to be completed prior to either starting or completing training with a RTO to gain a reduction of sea service. However, it must be completed prior to lodging an application for a CoC.

More information

Information on RTO locations and industry guidance notices on qualifying sea service, eyesight and medical requirements, and other requirements for the issue of a CoC can be obtained from the AMSA website www.amsa.gov.au.