

## Annex to Shipping Circular 17 of 2018

### Common Questions and Answers

**Q1** What is the limit of Polar Waters?

**A1** *Polar Waters* means the Antarctic area and/or Arctic waters, as defined in SOLAS regulations XIV/1.2 and XIV/1.3, respectively, and MARPOL Annex I, regulations 11.46.2; Annex II, regulations 10.21.2; Annex IV, regulation 7.17.3; and Annex V, regulation 3.13.2.

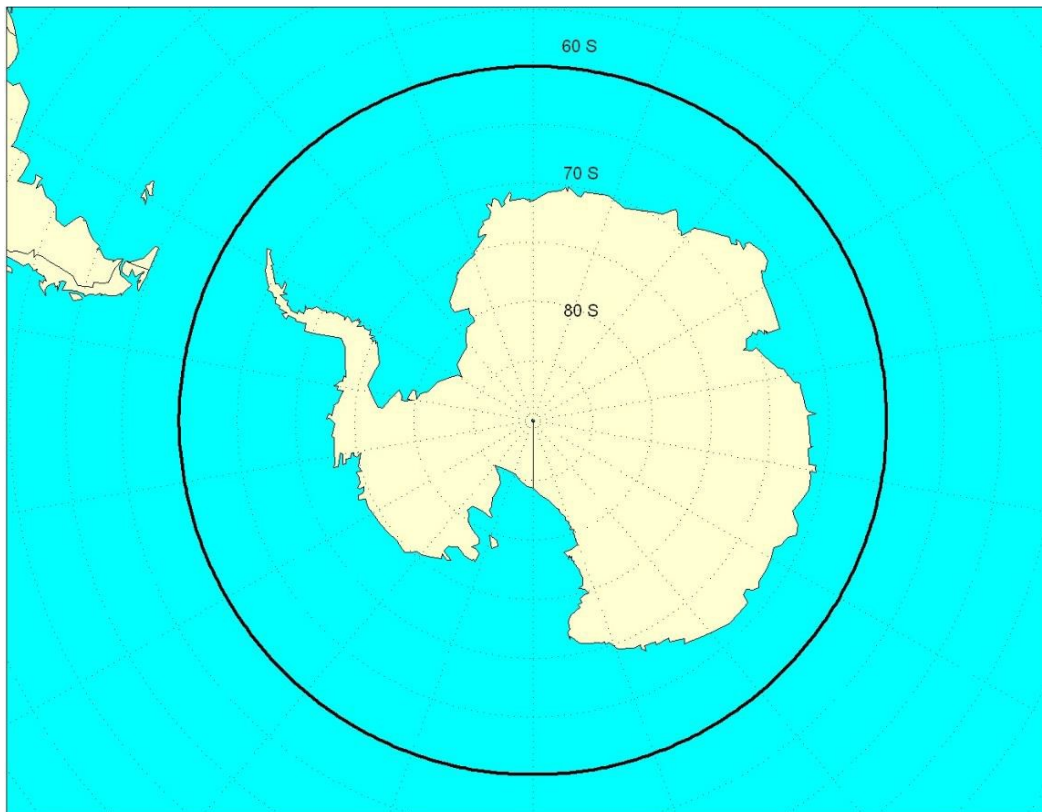
**Q2** What is the geographical limit of the term “Antarctic area” in the Polar Code?

**A2** The Polar Code defines *Antarctic area* as the sea area south of latitude 60° S.

**Q3** What is the geographical limit of the term “Arctic waters” in the Polar Code?

**A3** *Arctic waters* means those waters which are located north of a line from the latitude 58°00′.0 N and longitude 042°00′.0 W to latitude 64°37′.0 N, longitude 035°27′.0 W and thence by a rhumb line to latitude 67°03′.9 N, longitude 026°33′.4 W and thence by a rhumb line to the latitude 70°49′.56 N and longitude 008°59′.61 W (Sørkapp, Jan Mayen) and by the southern shore of Jan Mayen to 73°31′.6 N and 019°01′.0 E by the Island of Bjørnøya, and thence by a great circle line to the latitude 68°38′.29 N and longitude 043°23′.08 E (Cap Kanin Nos) and hence by the northern shore of the Asian Continent eastward to the Bering Strait and thence from the Bering Strait westward to latitude 60° N as far as Il'pyrskiy and following the 60th North parallel eastward as far as and including Etolin Strait and thence by the northern shore of the North American continent as far south as latitude 60° N and thence eastward along parallel of latitude 60° N, to longitude 056°37′.1 W and thence to the latitude 58°00′.0 N, longitude 042°00′.0 W.

The following chartlets depict the estimated area of coverage.



Maximum extent of Antarctic area application



Maximum extent of Arctic waters application

**Q4** Do all seafarers require to hold a new certificate or an endorsement to their certificate of competency (COC) in order to serve in the Polar Waters?

A4 No. Only deck officers are required to be trained and hold appropriate certificates of proficiency (COP) or endorsement to their COC as per STCW Regulation V/4. Marine engineer officers and ratings do not require COP or endorsements.

**Q5** Where can seafarers attend training courses in Singapore?

A5 Singapore Maritime Academy will conduct the training courses, at two levels.

**Q6** What are the meaning of the term “ice free water”?

A6 *Ice free waters* means no ice present in a sea area in the vicinity. If ice of any kind is present this term shall not be used.

**Q7** What is open water?

A7 *Open water* means a large area of freely navigable water in which sea ice is present in concentrations less than 1/10. No ice of land origin is present<sup>1</sup>

**Q8** Can a deck officer holding a valid COC (Deck Officer) Class 1 with limitations as “Master –Nil”, be deployed to serve as Master of a ship which operates in the polar waters?

A8 No. Although the COC had endorsement as unlimited, it did not cover the polar waters. Masters and deck officers to be deployed in Polar Waters must hold a COP in advanced training. To qualify he needs to attend basic training course, hold a COP in basic training, have two months of sea service on ships operating in the polar waters as officer in charge of navigational watch, attend advanced training course and hold a COP in advanced training. Then he / she would be able to serve as Master on board ships operating in the Polar Waters.

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<sup>1</sup> Refer to the WMO Sea Ice Nomenclature.

**Q9** What does the term “Waters that contain ice in concentration of x/10” mean?

A9 This term describes concentration of ice, in tenth, on the water surface. The WMO publication No. 259 “Sea Ice Nomenclature” is widely accepted as an authoritative reference standard.

**Q10** Masters and deck officers have experience in sailing in Polar waters, will their past experience be considered to qualify for COP at advanced level or COP at basic level?

A10 The transitional provisions of the STCW Convention, allows Masters and Deck Officers who have commenced seagoing service on board a ship operating in polar waters prior to 1 July 2018 and performing duties in the deck department at management level, for a period of at least three months in total during the preceding five years could qualify for COP at advanced level. Masters and deck officers who qualify under the transitional provisions of the STCW Convention should apply to their national maritime authority who issued their COC for COP to operate in Polar waters.

**Q11** What is Regulation V/4 of the STCW Convention?

A11 Full text of Regulation V/4 of the STCW Convention is as follow:

**“Regulation V/4**

*Mandatory minimum requirements for the training and qualifications of masters and deck officers on ships operating in polar waters.*

1. Masters, chief mates and officers in charge of a navigational watch on ships operating in polar waters shall hold a certificate in basic training for ships operating in polar waters, as required by the Polar Code.
2. Every candidate for a certificate in basic training for ships operating in polar waters shall have completed an approved basic training for ships operating in polar waters and meet the standard of competence specified in section A-V/4, paragraph 1 of the STCW Code.
3. Masters and chief mates on ships operating in polar waters, shall hold a certificate in advanced training for ships operating in polar waters, as required by the Polar Code
4. Every candidate for a certificate in advanced training for ships operating in polar waters shall:
  - i. meet the requirements for certification in basic training for ships in polar waters;
  - ii. have at least two (2) months of approved seagoing service in the deck department, at management level or while performing

watchkeeping duties at the operational level, within polar waters or other equivalent approved seagoing service; and

- iii. have completed approved advanced training for ships operating in polar waters and meet the standard of competence specified in section A-V/4, paragraph 2 of the STCW Code.
5. Administrations shall ensure that a Certificate of Proficiency is issued to seafarers who are qualified in accordance with paragraphs 2 or 4, as appropriate.

*Transitional provisions*

6. Until 1 July 2020, seafarers who commenced approved seagoing service in polar waters prior to 1 July 2018 shall be able to establish that they meet the requirements of paragraph 2 by:
- i. having completed approved seagoing service on board a ship operating in polar waters or equivalent approved seagoing service, performing duties in the deck department at the operational or management level, for a period of at least three months in total during the preceding five years; or
  - ii. having successfully completed a training course meeting the training guidance established by the Organization for ships operating in polar waters.
7. Until 1 July 2020, seafarers who commenced approved seagoing service in polar waters prior to 1 July 2018 shall be able to establish that they meet the requirements of paragraph 4 by:
- i. having completed approved seagoing service on board a ship operating in polar waters or equivalent approved seagoing service, performing duties in the deck department at management level, for a period of at least three months in total during the preceding five years; or
  - ii. having successfully completed a training course meeting the training guidance established by the Organization for ships operating in polar waters\* and having completed approved seagoing service on board a ship operating in polar waters or equivalent approved seagoing service, performing duties in the deck department at the management level, for a period of at least two months in total during the preceding five years.”

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