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Mišković, Darijo; Mohović, Đani; Rudan, Igor

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Comparison of Training Qualifications Programs, for Operating Boats and Yachts, which are not Covered by STCW Convention in the United Kingdom and the Republic of Croatia

Usporedba programa izobrazbe za upravljanje brodicama i jahtama, koje nisu pokrivena STCW Konvencijom u Velikoj Britaniji i Republici Hrvatskoj

Darijo Mišković

Maritime Department
University of Dubrovnik
E-mail: darijo.miskovic@unidu.hr

Đani Mohović

Faculty of Maritime Studies
University of Rijeka
E-mail: dmohovic@pfri.hr

Igor Rudan

Faculty of Maritime Studies
University of Rijeka
E-mail: rudan@pfri.hr

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Summary

Research in this paper was conducted under the EU project TRECNET Core Curriculum for Skippers of Small Commercial Vessels (in short TCC-SCV) where a Faculty of Maritime Studies Rijeka was a project partner. The goal of the project was to analyze seven professional SCV skipper qualifications from UK, France, Spain, Germany, Slovenia, Czech Republic and Croatia by breaking them into their smallest parts called Fundamental Elements and thereby offering objective comparability. After reviewing and comparing training programs in The United Kingdom and The Republic of Croatia for qualifications, required for operating boats and yachts, set by the appropriate Authorities, this paper analyzed skipper/yacht master certification scheme in terms of theoretical education and practical trainings, syllabus contents, required experience, examination methods and evaluated the overall characteristics. At the end, the authors pointed out to some deficiencies in current training program in The Republic of Croatia and drew the conclusion that experience and lessons from other training programs can find purpose for training program reform in their own country.

Sažetak

Istraživanje u ovom radu provedeno je u sklopu EU projekta TRECNET (Osnovni nastavni plan i program za voditelja brodice i zapovjednika jahte – skraćeno TCC-SCV), a Pomorski fakultet u Rijeci je partner na projektu. U TCC-SCV projektu analizirane su kvalifikacije za voditelje brodica i zapovjednike jahti u sedam zemalja EU-a (Velika Britanija, Francuska, Španjolska, Njemačka, Slovenija, Češka i Hrvatska) na način da su programi kvalifikacija analizirani razdvajanjem svake kvalifikacije na temeljne elemente koji su razvrstani u kategorije i međusobno uspoređeni. Nakon pregleda i usporedbe programa obuke za kvalifikacije potrebne za upravljanje brodicama i jahtama u Velikoj Britaniji i Republici Hrvatskoj, propisane od strane nadležnih tijela, u ovom se radu analiziraju sheme izdavanja ovlaštenja za voditelje brodica / zapovjednike jahti, u smislu teorijskog obrazovanja i praktične obuke, programskih sadržaja, potrebnog iskustva, načina ispitivanja te se ocjenjuju ukupne karakteristike. Na kraju, autori ističu neke nedostatke u trenutnom programu izobrazbe u Republici Hrvatskoj i zaključuju da iskustva i primjeri iz drugih programa mogu poslužiti za reformu programa izobrazbe u našoj zemlji.

KEY WORDS

shorebased training
practical training
experience
certification

KLJUČNE RIJEČI

teoretski tečaj
praktični tečaj
plovidbeno iskustvo
ovlaštenja

1. INTRODUCTION/Uvod

This paper compared training qualifications programs, for operating boats and yachts, which are not covered by the STCW Convention in of the two European countries: The United Kingdom and The Republic of Croatia. Programs are set by the appropriate Authorities. Appropriate authority for The United Kingdom is the Royal Yacht Association-RYA, and for The Republic of Croatia it is Ministry of Maritime Affairs, Transport and Infrastructure. Both of them developed training programs for their countries individually. Based on them, certification

scheme for skippers and yacht masters was created.

Training program in the UK for sail and motor cruisers/ yachts, is set according RYA Yachtmaster Scheme Syllabus & Logbook - G158. Usage of Powerboat is also defined by training program RYA Powerboat Scheme Syllabus & Logbook - G20 [1,2]. Training program in The Republic of Croatia is set in Regulations for Boats and Yachts [3].

Training programs in both countries have been analyzed in terms of theoretical education and practical trainings, duration,

syllabus contents, required experience, examination methods and overall characteristics. Main difference between them is that United Kingdom made distinctions among motor, sail and powerboat usage, while The Republic of Croatia considers them as equal. Differences have been detected in the Regulations for boats and yachts regarding permissible navigation as for Certificates for Boat Skipper - Category C and Yacht Master Category A which is not suitable due to the deficiencies in the training program. At the end, the proposal for training program reform in the Republic of Croatia has been given.

2. TRAINING PROGRAMS FOR QUALIFICATIONS IN UK / Programi izobrazbe za ovlaštenja u Velikoj Britaniji

To obtain qualifications in the United Kingdom, quite extensive and optimized training program has been created in order to meet the candidate's needs. Training program consists of theoretical and practical courses. After the successful completion of theoretical and practical part of the desired course, followed by the exam, participants will receive a certificate.

Following certificates are available: Day Skipper, Coastal Skipper, RYA Yachtmaster Coastal, RYA Yachtmaster Offshore and RYA Yachtmaster Ocean. For those who have needs for recreational and professional powerboat usage, Powerboat Scheme of certification is available.

2.1. Day Skipper Certificate / Ovlaštenje za voditelja brodice po danu

To obtain this certificate, the candidates are offered a combination of Shorebased Courses and Practical Courses. Practical Courses differ, based on candidate's choices, whether they want to operate a sailboat or a motor boat.

Starting shorebased course is Essential Navigation and Seamanship Course followed by practical courses. After a successful completion of all the elements, a student is recommended to attend Day Skipper Course, also shorebased.

Essential Navigation and Seamanship Course is an entry level course and provides an introduction to the basic skills required for taking a small boat to sea. Syllabus contains 11 topics¹ which are covered during minimum 16-hour course. There is no formal assessment for this course.

Practical courses vary according to the purpose and previous experience of candidates. These courses take place at sea, on board a sailing yacht or motor-cruising vessel operated by an RYA Training Centre.

Sail cruising courses which are offered to candidates are:

- Sailing skills: Start Sailing-Level 1 (optional)
- Sailing skills: Start Sailing-Level 2 (optional)
- Start Yachting (recommended)
- Competent Crew (recommended)

These courses are intended for complete beginners in sailing. Upon completion, candidates will be experienced with rope work, sail handling, they know how to keep an efficient lookout, understand where to obtain a weather forecast and will learn about personal safety, seamanship and helmsman ship to the level required to be a useful crew member of a cruising yacht².

Motor cruising courses which are offered to candidates are:

- Start Motor Cruising (optional)
- Helmsman Course (recommended)

The aim of these courses is to introduce candidates to the skills required for boat handling and seamanship in motor cruises. The candidates will gain an understanding of how to assist the skipper and be a useful crew member. The theoretical part of the course is the basic introduction into the vessel types³. The requirements for the mentioned courses are shown in Table 1. Minimum age is not to be considered as required age for Day Skipper certificate.

Day Skipper Shorebased Course is a comprehensive introduction to chart work, navigation, meteorology and the basics of seamanship for Competent Crew. Syllabus contains 17 topics⁴ which are covered during minimum 40-hour course. At the end of the course a standard set of assessment papers is provided, along with numerous exercises.

The Day Skipper Practical course is where all the theory is put into practice. Course is taught on board a cruising yacht (sail course) or motor cruiser (motor course) of 7 meters length of waterline to 15 meters length overall. Under the guidance of an instructor candidates will learn pilotage, seamanship and boat handling up to the standard required to skipper a small cruising yacht or motor cruiser⁵.

Table 1 Summary of Practical courses and required pre-course experience

Tablica 1. Sažetak praktičnih tečajeva i prethodno iskustvo prije tečaja

	Sail cruises courses				Motor cruising courses	
	Start sailing- Level 1	Start sailing- Level 2	Start Yachting	Competent Crew	Start Motor cruising	Helmsman
Duration	16 hours	16 hours	2 days	5 days	1 day	2 days
Minimum age	12	12	8	12	8	12
Recommended pre-course experience:						
Days at sea	0	2	0	0	0	0

Source: authors as per [1]

¹ RYA YachtmasterSchemeSyllabus&Logbook, G158, pg.81

² RYA YachtmasterSchemeSyllabus&Logbook, G158, pg.10-18,25-28

³ RYA YachtmasterSchemeSyllabus&Logbook, G158, pg.19-24

⁴ RYA YachtmasterSchemeSyllabus&Logbook, G158, pg.83-85

⁵ RYA YachtmasterSchemeSyllabus&Logbook, G158, pg.33-38

Table 2 Summary of Practical courses and required pre-course experience
 Tablica 2. Sažetak Praktičnih tečajeva i zahtijevano prethodno iskustvo

	Day Skipper (Sail)	Day Skipper (Motor)
Pre-course experience	5 days, 100 miles, 4 nights hours on board sailing yacht	2 days on motor cruiser
Minimum age	16	16
Minimum duration	5 days, either as 3 weekends or 3 days + 2 days	4 days or 2 weekends

Source: authors as per [1]

After successfully completing the practical part of the course Day Skipper Certificate is issued by the training center. Day Skipper is the person capable of safely skippering a small cruising yacht or motor boat, by day in waters he/she is familiar with.

2.2. Coastal Skipper Certificate / Ovlaštenje za voditelja brodice

For those who want to navigate further from the coast, Coastal Skipper Certificate is a next step. Candidates are recommended to complete Coastal Skipper/Yachtmaster Offshore Shorebased course, followed by Coastal Skipper practical course.

Coastal Skipper/Yachtmaster Offshore shorebased course is conceptualized in a way to introduce candidates deeper into the subject, particularly navigation and meteorology. The syllabus contains 17 topics⁶ which are covered during minimum 40-hour course. The course follows a set syllabus and has the exercises and formal assessment papers contained in it.

Coastal Skipper practical course focuses on the practical application of theory, and it is considered that the candidates have the theoretical knowledge required for coastal and offshore passages. The main point is on developing higher levels of independence. Particular attention is paid to candidate's ability to pilot a vessel, by day and night. Taking longer passages, away from familiar area, candidates will be placed in new and unknown areas and higher level of overall navigational and pilotage skills will be developed.

Coastal Skipper is somebody capable to skipper a motor cruiser or a cruising yacht, of 7 meters to 15 meters LOA, on coastal passages by day and night. There are two types of coastal certificates:

- Coastal Skipper Course completion Certificate, awarded by a Training Centre upon a successful completion of the course,
- RYA Yachtmaster Coastal Certificate of Competence, awarded by RYA on successful completion of an exam.

2.3. RYA Yachtmaster Coastal / RYA Yachtmaster Offshore - Certificates of Competence / RYA Voditelj obalne jahte / RYA Voditelj jahte na otvorenome moru – ovlaštenja o osposobljenosti

Successful completion of the Coastal Skipper practical course means that the candidate has the knowledge and understanding to be examined for the RYA Yachtmaster Coastal /Offshore Certificate of Competence, provided that there is sufficient sea time experience.

The form of the exam for both certificates is practical. The candidate must provide sail/motor boat (as required), not less than 7 meters (LWL) and no more than 24 meters (LOA), in seaworthy condition. The boat must be equipped as per requirements and be efficiently manned, as the examiner will not take part in the management of boat during the exam [4].

Minimum exam duration is about 6-10 hours for one candidate, 8-14 hours for two candidates. The candidates will

Table 3 Summary of Practical courses and required pre-course experience
 Tablica 3. Sažetak Praktičnih tečajeva i zahtijevanog prethodnog iskustva

	Coastal Skipper (Sail)	Coastal Skipper (Motor)
Pre-course experience	15 days, 2 days as skipper, 300 miles, 8 nights hours	15 days, 2 days as skipper, 300 miles, 8 nights hours
Minimum age	17	17
Minimum duration	5 days	5 days

Source: authors as per [1]

Table 4 Pre-exam requirements for RYA Yachtmaster Coastal Certificate of Competence
 Tablica 4. Zahtijevi za RYA ovlaštenje za osposobljenost za obalnog voditelja jahte

	RYA Yachtmaster Coastal (Sail)	RYA Yachtmaster Coastal (Motor)
Minimum age	17	17
Sea Time*	800 miles logged within 10 years prior examination, 30 days living onboard, 2 days as skipper, 12 night hours For holders of the Coastal Skipper Practical Course Completion Certificate this is reduced to 400 miles, 20 days living on board, 2 days as skipper, 12 night hours	
Certification	GMDSS Short range Certificate (SRC) or higher grade of marine radio certificate First aid certificate-valid	
*at least 50 per cent of the minimum sea time for RYA Yachtmaster exam candidates must occur on vessels less than 24 meters length over all (LOA)		

Source: authors as per [1]

⁶ RYA YachtmasterSchemeSyllabus&Logbook, G158, pg.86-89

Table 5 Pre-exam requirements for RYA Yachtmaster Offshore Certificate of Competence
 Tablica 5. Pred ispitni zahtjevi za RYA ovlaštenje o osposobljenosti za voditelja jahte na otvorenomu moru

	RYA Yachtmaster Offshore (Sail)	RYA Yachtmaster Offshore (Motor)
Minimum age	18	18
Sea Time*	50 days, 2500 miles, including at least five passages over 60 miles, acting as a skipper for at least two of these passages and including two which have involved overnight passages. 5 days experience as a skipper. At least half the sea time must have been accrued in tidal waters. All qualifying sea time must be within 10 years prior to the exam.	
Certification	GMDSS Short range Certificate (SRC) or higher grade of marine radio certificate	
	First aid certificate- valid	
*at least 50 per cent of the qualifying mileage must occur on vessels between 7 m LWL and 24 meters length over all (LOA) -less than 80GT (motor/sail)		

Source: authors as per [1]

be set tasks to allow them to demonstrate their ability and also will be asked questions on any part of the syllabus for all Practical and Shorebased courses up to Coastal Skipper level [4]. This certificate enables the skipper to undertake passages in coastal waters by day and night.

Minimum exam duration is about 8-12 hours for one candidate, 10-18 hours for two candidates. The candidates will be set tasks to allow them to demonstrate their ability as a skipper of an offshore cruising yacht/motor cruiser and may also be asked questions on any part of the syllabus for all courses except RYA Yachtmaster Ocean [4]. This certificate enables the skipper to undertake any passage during which the vessel is no more than 150 miles from the harbour.

2.4. Conversion of Certificates / Konverzija ovlaštenja

For skippers who obtained Yachtmaster Coastal or Yachtmaster Offshore Certificate, weather sail or motor, conversion exam is available and allows them to obtain equivalent certificate. The same rules apply whether candidates are converting from sail to power, or from power to sail. Exam duration is about three hours

and the examiner may ask questions and set tasks of any part of syllabus, but focus will be on the areas which differ [4].

2.5. RYA Yachtmaster Ocean– Certificate of Competence / RYA Voditelj jahte na otvorenom moru - Ovlaštenje

For those skippers who wish to upgrade their knowledge and skill, in order to sail on passages of any length and in all parts of the world, RYA Yachtmaster Ocean Certificate is the next step. As in the previous cases, skippers are recommended to attend Yachtmaster Ocean shorebased course. The aim of this course is to introduce candidates into an extensive passage planning, worldwide meteorology and astronomical navigation. The syllabus contains 13 topics⁷ which are covered during minimum 43-hours course.

After completing the theoretical part of the course, the candidates must take an exam. Exam consists of oral and written test with the candidate who has successfully completed pre-exam requirements.

Table 6 Requirements for RYA Yachtmaster Certificate conversion
 Tablica 6. Zahtjevi za konverziju RYA ovlaštenja za voditelja jahte

	RYA Yachtmaster Coastal (motor-sail)	RYA Yachtmaster Offshore (motor –sail)
Sea Time*	Minimum 400 miles, 12 days living onboard, 2 days as skipper, 12 night hours	Minimum 1250 miles, 25 days living onboard, 3 days as skipper, three passages over 60 miles, including one overnight and one as skipper
	At least half of qualifying time must have been gained in tidal waters	At least half of qualifying time must have been gained in tidal waters
*at least 50 per cent of the qualifying mileage must occur on vessels between 7 m LWL and 24 meters length over all (LOA) -less than 80GT (motor/sail)		

Source: authors as per [1]

Table 7 Pre-exam requirements for RYA Yachtmaster Ocean Certificate of Competence
 Tablica 7. Predispitni zahtjevi za RYA ovlaštenje za voditelja jahte na otvorenom moru

RYA Yachtmaster Ocean	
Minimum sea time*	- Ocean passage as skipper or mate of watch. The candidate was fully involved in the planning of the passage, including selection of the route, the navigational plan, checking the material condition of the yacht and her equipment, storing spare gear, water and victuals and organizing the watch-keeping routine. - During the passage a minimum non-stop distance of 600 miles must have been run by the log, the yacht must have been at sea continuously for at least 96 hours and the yacht must have been more than 50 miles from land or charted objects while sailing a distance of at least 200 miles. All qualifying sea time must be within 10 years prior to the exam
Certification	GMDSS Short range Certificate (SRC) or higher grade of marine radio certificate
	First aid certificate- valid
	RYA/MCA Yachtmaster Offshore Certificate of Competence
*at least 50 per cent of the qualifying mileage must have been accrued on vessels between 7 m LWL and 24 meters length over all (LOA) -less than 80GT	

Source: authors as per [1]

⁷ RYA Yachtmaster Scheme Syllabus & Logbook, G158, pg.90-91

Table 8 Pre-exam requirements for RYA Yachtmaster Ocean Certificate of Competence
 Tablica 8. Predispitni zahtjevi za RYA ovlaštenje za voditelja jahte na otvorenom moru

RYA/MCA Advanced Powerboat	
Minimum sea time	Two years relevant experience including night pilotage. As a guide 30 days, 2 days as skipper, 800 miles, 12 night hours If candidate hold RYA Advance Powerboat Course Completion Certificate the sea time is reduced to 20 days, 2 days as skipper, 400 miles, 12 night hours
Certification	VHF/SRC operator's license RYA First Aid certificate

Source: authors as per [2]

During the oral part of the examination, the candidate must provide the examiner:

- narrative account of the planning and execution of the qualifying passage
- navigational records which are completed on board a yacht, on passage out of sight of land, showing that the candidate has navigated yacht without the use of electronic navigational aids. Records must include, as minimum, planning, reduction and plotting of sun-run-meridian altitude sight and a compass check carried out using the bearing of astronomical bodies [1].

During the oral test, candidate may be required to answer questions on various aspects of navigation, meteorology, maintenance and repairs. Written part of the exam includes questions on sights and sight reduction and worldwide meteorology.

2.6. RYA Powerboat Scheme / RYA Shema brodice na motorni pogon

The RYA Powerboat Scheme is applicable to those candidates who wish to use sports boats, RIBs, dories and launches, and other boats which do not normally provide accommodation or cooking facilities [2].

Although not required, candidates are offered Shorebased Course – Essential Navigation and Seamanship to gain basic knowledge before starting with practical courses.

Level 1 Start Powerboating Course – no requirements for pre-course knowledge. Minimum age required is 8 years. Minimum course duration is 1 day. Course provides a practical introduction to boat handling skills and basic theory.

Level 2 Powerboat Handling Course - no requirements for pre-course knowledge. Minimum age required is 12 years. Minimum course duration is 2 days. Course content is: close quarters boat handling, high speed manoeuvres, man overboard recovery and collision regulations. After completing the course, the candidate is able to handle powerboat in familiar waters by day. The exam consists of theoretical and practical part. The candidate must complete the practical exercise⁸ and answer questions on Section B. For those who seek an assessment on coastal waters, he/she will demonstrate the knowledge and practical application of Section C⁹.

Intermediate Powerboat Cruising Course – requires boat handling skills to the standard of Powerboat Certificate Level 2 with coastal endorsement. Minimum age required is 16 years and minimum course duration is 2 days. It is strongly recommended that candidates hold a first aid certificate and a VHF/SRC operator's certificate. The course content is: day time navigation skills, passage planning and electronic navigation. After successfully completing the course, the candidate will be able to navigate powerboat on coastal passages by day.

⁸ PowerboatScheme, Syllabus & Logbook, G20, pg. 18

⁹ PowerboatScheme, Syllabus&Logbook, G20, pg. 16

Advanced Powerboat Cruising Course – requires boat handling to the standard of the Intermediate Powerboat Certificate with a thorough knowledge of navigation and chart work to the level of the Coastal Skipper/RYA Yachtmaster Offshore Shorebased. It is strongly recommended that candidates hold a first aid certificate and a VHF operator's certificate. Minimum age required is 17 years and minimum course duration is 2 days, with at least 1 night navigation exercise. After successfully completing the course, the candidate will be able to navigate a powerboat on coastal passages by day and night.

RYA Advanced Powerboat Certificate of Competence for those who wish to obtain this certificate the exam is required. The form of the exam is practical and takes about 4-5 hours. Minimum age is 17 years. The candidate must provide a seaworthy vessel capable to reach the speed of minimum 12 knots.

The tasks set for each course and obtained sea time, as specified in Yachtmaster and Powerboat Scheme -Syllabus and Logbooks, require instructor's signature after completion. For British flagged pleasure vessels less than 24 meters load line length, or less than 80 gross tons, in UK waters, Certificates of Competence are not required.

3. TRAINING PROGRAMS FOR QUALIFICATIONS IN THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA / Program izobrazbe za ovlaštenja u Republici Hrvatskoj

In the Republic of Croatia, the training program is defined by Regulations for boats and yachts, created by the Ministry of Maritime Affairs, Transport and Infrastructure. Training program is created in order to meet the candidate's needs, and it consists of theoretical and practical courses. After the successful completion of theoretical and practical part of desired course, participants will receive a license/certificate.

Following certificates are available: Boat Skipper - Category A, Boat Skipper - Category B, Boat Skipper - Category C, Certificate of Competency for Yacht Master Category A and Yacht Master Category B.

3.1. Boat Skipper - Category A / Voditelj brodice – A kategorija

For those who wish to obtain this license, training program is set in accordance to the requirements of article 51. of the Regulations for boats and yachts. Syllabus contains basics of navigation¹⁰, and provides an introduction to the basic skills required before taking a small boat to sea. There is no formal requirement to attend the course. For those who wish to attend, the course is available at the maritime training centers. The course duration is not regulated, but Training centers state duration of about 4-6 hours [5,6].

¹⁰ Regulations for boats and yachts, Appendix 6

Candidates are required to take an exam at the local Harbor Master Office. The exam is conducted in oral and/or written and practical way. The age limit is set to 15 years. After the successful exam completion, the candidate will be competent to handle and manage a pleasure boat up to 7 meters and power up to 15 kW in the enclosed sea and the territorial waters of the Republic of Croatia, up to 6 Nm from coast of land or island.

3.2. Boat Skipper - Category B / Voditelj brodice – Kategorija B

A person who wishes to operate a boat or yachts, up to 30 GT, for personal use (sports, entertainment) need to obtain this license. Training program is set in accordance to the requirements of article 52. of the Regulations for boats and yachts. Syllabus contains 5 topics¹¹.

There is no formal requirement to attend the course. For those who wish to attend, the course is available at the maritime training centers. The course duration is not regulated and maritime training centers state duration from 3-8 hours [5,6,7].

Candidates are required to take an exam at the local Harbour Master Office. The exam is conducted in oral and/or written and practical way. The age limit for candidates is set to 16 years. After the successful exam completion, the candidate is entitled to sail with each vessel that is registered in the register of boats, up to 12 Nm from the coast and islands. Up to the age of 18, the person is not allowed to operate boats that have propulsion power higher than 15 kW. After the age of 18, until the end of his life, there is no power propulsion limit.

3.3. Boat Skipper - Category C / Voditelj brodice – Kategorija C

For those who wish to obtain this license, training program is set in accordance to the requirements of article 53. of the Regulations for boats and yachts. The course attendance, for the Boat Skipper - Category C is mandatory. It consists of theoretical and practical part of the course. The syllabus contains 6 topics¹² which are covered during 25 hours course. Upon the completion of theoretical part, the candidates attend 6 hour practical course.

After the course completion, the candidates are required to take an exam at the local Harbour Master Office. The exam is conducted in oral and/or written and practical way. The practical part of the exam is conducted on a boat or a yacht. The age limit is set to 18 years and candidate must prove valid medical exam certificates, issued by Occupational health practice in The Republic of Croatia.

A person holding a certificate of a Boat Skipper-Category C is qualified to operate boats and yachts up to 30 GT for personal and commercial purposes, unlimited engine power in international shipping, all around the world.

3.4. Yacht Master Category A / Voditelj jahte Kategorija A

Course Yachtmaster A, up to 100 GT, is designed for people who want to work as professional captains of yachts (skippers), and for all those who intend to carry out commercial activities in nautical tourism or simply want to command larger yachts, whether they owner hire them.

For those who wish to obtain this license, training program is set in accordance to the requirements of Article 54. of the

Regulations for boats and yachts. The course for the Yacht Master Category A is mandatory. It consists of theoretical and practical part of course. Syllabus contains 6 topics¹³ which are covered during 50 hour course. Upon completion of theoretical part candidates are attending 25 hour practical course.

After the course completion, the candidates are required to take an exam at the local Harbor Master Office. The exam is conducted in oral and/or written and practical way. Practical part of the exam is conducted on a boat or a yacht. The age limit is set to 18 years and the candidate must prove valid medical exam certificate, issued by Occupational health practice in The Republic of Croatia.

3.5. Yacht Master Category B / Zapovjednik jahte kategorija B

Course Yachtmaster B, up to 500 GT, is designed for people who want to work as professional captains of yachts (skippers), and for all those who intend to carry out commercial activities in nautical tourism or simply want to command larger yachts, whether they own or hire them.

For those who wish to obtain this license, training program is set in accordance to the requirements of Article 55. of the Regulations for boats and yachts. The course for the Yacht Master Category B is mandatory. It consists of theoretical and practical part of the course. The syllabus contains 7 topics¹⁴ which are covered during 174 hour course. Upon the completion of the theoretical part, the candidates attend 40 hour practical course.

After the course completion, the candidates are required to take an exam at the local Harbor Master Office. The exam is conducted in oral and/or written and practical way. The practical part of the exam is conducted on a boat or a yacht. The age limit is set to 20 years and the candidate must prove valid medical exam certificate, issued by Occupational health practice in the Republic of Croatia.

4. DISCUSSION/Rasprava

Comparing and analyzing training programs, in the United Kingdom and in the Republic of Croatia, significant differences have been noticed, particularly regarding training scheme, practical courses and required experience (sea time).

Training program in the United Kingdom is quite complex, and set in a way that candidates must pass a series of theoretical and practical courses and examinations to obtain the required certificate. The distinction has been done, whether a candidate wants the certificate for sail, motor or powerboat.

Certification Scheme is developed in a way that candidate gradually progress through day time navigation, followed by night time navigation. The areas of navigation are also set, from familiar waters up to ocean navigation. Between each course, and next certificate, the candidate must collect enough experience which allows him/her to apply for the next exam. By doing so, the candidate will have the opportunity to transform theoretical knowledge to practice, and develop her/his skills gradually. The authors have found some discrepancy in the syllabus for Day Skipper.

As mentioned above, Day Skipper certificate allows sailing in familiar waters by day only. The question arises when a skipper encounters the situation of restricted visibility. This

¹¹ Regulations for boats and yachts, Appendix 7

¹² Regulations for boats and yachts, Appendix 8

¹³ Regulations for boats and yachts, Appendix 9

¹⁴ Regulations for boats and yachts, Appendix 10

topic is mentioned in the theoretical part of the Day Skipper course, with set duration of one hour. In the practical course for Day Skipper, the topic has not been mentioned. Further concern relates to the practical course for Coastal Skipper, part Adverse Weather Conditions, during which the candidates acquire the knowledge and skills required for navigation in restricted visibility.

It would be necessary to transfer this part from the Coastal Skipper to Day Skipper practical course, since there is a real possibility of occurrence of such an event, especially in UK waters, and skippers can be found unprepared.

There is also an issue with Powerboat scheme. The question arises: Is there really a need for powerboat scheme when a Powerboat is in fact motor cruiser, only with stronger propulsion. By acquiring certification for operating motor cruiser, which is bigger, it is considered that skipper has the skills to operate also a smaller boat, in this case Powerboat. This is supported by the fact that almost every motor cruiser and sailing cruiser is equipped with a powerboat, as a tender. Powerboat scheme should remain for those candidates who wish to operate Powerboat only.

The training program in the Republic of Croatia is quite opposite to the one set in the United Kingdom. There is no distinction in certification regarding boat propulsion (sail, motor or powerboat), and time of a day. Navigational areas are set according boat/yacht equipment.

Also, training program does not require from candidate to gradually progress with certificates, as in the United Kingdom. The candidate in the Republic of Croatia may choose to apply for the highest Skipper or Yacht Master certificate at any time he desires.

The training programs for Boat Skippers, category A and B, is quite well organized, considering geographical position and meteorology conditions which affect the area of the Adriatic Sea. The duration of the provided courses is questionable, considering program content. Due to this fact, the candidates are required to have previous experience and to take a lot of home studying.

The problem arises with the training programs for Boat Skipper- Category C and Yacht Master Category A. These certificates, as per Regulations for boats and yachts, allow candidates to sail all around the world, but training program does not cover the required material. The knowledge and the experience of collision avoidance rules and the meteorology are the most important materials for each skipper. For example, if a candidate wants to apply for Boat Skipper – Category C course, without previous knowledge and experience, training program states 1.5 hours of lecturing and 1 hour of exercises for Collision Avoidance Rules and 0.5 hours for meteorology. Every seaman knows that just reading collision avoidance rules, without interpretation, requires a lot of additional time. To make a problem even worse, the theme of astronomical navigation is provided only for the course Yacht Master Category B.

Also, tracing a question of whether a person with 6 hours of navigational experience (Boat Skipper Category C), 25 hours (Yacht Master Category A) and 40 hours (Yacht Master Category B) of navigational experience gained through practical courses is skilled enough for sailing in offshore area, let alone the oceans.

5. CONCLUSION/Zaključak

Based on the above, we can conclude that training programs for Skippers and Yacht Masters, in the UK and the Republic of Croatia, have a significant role for their preparation regarding the protection of human lives at sea and safe flow of navigation.

There are no remarks for training scheme and program in the United Kingdom considering the geographical positioning and meteorology conditions which prevail there. It is structured in a way which allows candidates to develop their knowledge and skills, and progress gradually. The proposal is to work on the issues that are crucial for basic skipper qualifications, in a way that certain topics, necessary for safe navigation, are transferred from the advanced courses to beginners' course.

Regarding Powerboat Scheme, the author's opinion is that one part of the course for motor boats should have particularities of the Powerboat Scheme in order to facilitate obtaining the necessary certification for skippers.

Analyzing the training scheme and programs in the Republic of Croatia and comparing it with the one in the United Kingdom, a wide range of questions has emerged. Listed shortcomings in the above-mentioned chapter can easily place skipper in a position from which there is no easy way out.

That problem can be solved, i.e., in a way that current Regulations for boat and yachts, sections for training program and allowed areas of navigation, is changed. It would be a good idea to consider UK system by implementing navigational areas, as coastal, offshore and ocean navigation and set a minimum required experience for candidates before taking exam for higher certificates. The training program, set for Certificates for Boat Skipper- category A and B, should remain the same. Minimum hours set for training, in training centers, should be clearly defined.

Changes have been recommended for Boat Skipper-Category C and Yacht Master Category A certification, regarding allowable navigational areas or adequate changes to their training programs to be made.

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