

OTEN TAFE MARITIME STUDIES

Master 500 Ton / Deck Watchkeeper now available by Distance Education

In 2009 AMSA had a major change in its policy and allowed Distance Education for its STCW courses. Up to this point OTEN has only been able to run courses for state certification. OTEN has now developed a course for the Master Under 500ton / Deck Watchkeeper and having just completed the AMSA audit of the course will now be taking enrolments in second semester 2010. Information will be up on the OTEN website shortly.

The course consists of 22 units (subjects). OTEN supplies the learning materials with students required to purchase some texts. Units will be able to be submitted either in hard copy or online where they will be assessed and returned. This usually takes less than 2 weeks. As part of the course there is a task book to be completed on board. The distance course is complete in itself and covers all the requirements, however there is also a required 12 week attendance at a college. This has been required by AMSA. This will be of the nature of revision and practice, final exams in each unit and practical assessment and training.

The format of the course has not been finalised and a survey has been sent to interested student. The classroom delivery can be done in several ways. Three one month blocks, two six week blocks or a three month block. The block would be repeated over a two year period enabling all students to get to one block. The course would have to be completed in a two year period.

The short courses are not included. GMDSS, Advanced Fire, Ship Captains Medical etc these can be done at any AMSA approved college but would need to be completed before Orals. It is recommended that an assessment of sea time is made before enrolling and that you will have sufficient by the end of the course as time will be accruing during the course.

Onboard is a very obvious place to work through a course where everything is at hand and hands on experience can be gained to complete the assignments, however ship routines are not always very conducive to study in the modern shipping industry and it will take some motivation to complete. Distance study is not for everyone, but it does mean only three months of attendance not eight.

We would appreciate it if anyone interested in completing the distance master 500 T / Deckwatchkeeper would complete a short survey at <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/XTJRLJC>

If anyone has further questions please contact me directly.

Chris Heeks

OTEN Maritime Studies

chris.heeks@tafensw.edu.au