



Wanna be a Navigation Officer?

How would you like to understand the dynamic interaction between the wind, waves, and a huge Coast Guard ship? Do you have a knack for math? Are you a keen visual observer and a good listener? Then, we may have the job for you!

What do they do?

Under the supervision of the chief officer, navigation officers are responsible for navigating Coast Guard vessels, which are involved in icebreaking and sovereignty; fisheries enforcement; scientific research; search and rescue; aids to navigation; and environmental response.

Since navigation is all about vectors, a good grasp of mathematical concepts is essential. Effective navigators understand the dynamic interaction between the wind, the waves and the ship. They have keen surveillance skills to be excellent listeners and excellent visual observers. Being a proficient communicator, both as a listener and as a transmitter, is necessary because radio and telephone communications are part of the daily bridge watch.

A navigation officer has daily contact with the commanding officer and is required to act on the commanding officer's behalf while navigating the vessel and communicating with other vessels and shore.

How do I become a Navigation Officer?

To become a navigation officer you must obtain a Watchkeeping Mate certificate of Competency. Spending time at sea allows a graduate to apply for testing with Transport Canada (TC), to become a ship's officer. After accumulating sea time as an officer, you can write the First Mate test to obtain the First Mate (1MIV) certificate; Master, Intermediate Voyage (MIV) certificate; and then finally, the Master Mariner (MM) certificate. You will also have to successfully pass an oral interview at each test level.

Like all positions on Coast Guard vessels, you will require a Marine Emergency Duties (MED) certificate (MED A1, B1, B2), a valid medical certificate and a security clearance.

Individuals interested in the Officer Cadet Training Program (OCTP) offered at the Canadian Coast Guard College should visit the College website for more information at www.cgc.gc.ca.

Openings for jobs with the Canadian Coast Guard (CCG) are advertised through the Public Service Commission (PSC) website at www.jobs.gc.ca.

spotlight on...



Wendy Joliffe, Navigation Officer, CCGS Leonard J. Cowley

Here, Wendy is seen aboard the CCGS Leonard J. Cowley as the vessel escorts a Portuguese fishing vessel to the Azores Islands.

"Anyone thinking about a career at sea should try living at sea for a while. Once someone has determined that a seagoing life is for them, (s)he should start by writing their "tickets" (certificates) for the desired seagoing position.

I love being responsible for the safety of the crew and of the ship while on a voyage. I love working with people of varying backgrounds and experience. I love the camaraderie that comes from living with people in close quarters for extended periods (imagine a six-week Arctic trip, working with the same people every day for 12 hours every day!). I love crew change day and being able to come home without worrying about what's happening at my job while I'm home (I am replaced by an exact double when my shift is completed). I love that I serve the Canadian public in an essential service and I am proud to represent the Federal Public Service of Canada."

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