



Pêches et Océans
Canada

Fisheries and Oceans
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Garde côtière
canadienne

Canadian
Coast Guard



Navigation Officer



Paul Beauchamp
Chief Officer
CCGS Des Groseilliers

Testimonial

"I started my career as a deckhand. Later on, I was promoted to helmsman, then winch operator, and finally, boatswain. Today, I am chief navigation officer and I am still passionate by my work which is anything but routine. Very few people can say that they have a splendid Arctic landscape as office window"



Paul Lefebvre
Navigation Officer
CCGS Des Groseilliers

What is a Navigation Officer?

The commanding officer has full responsibility of the vessel, while navigation officers are responsible for the safe navigation of the ship. It is their responsibility to keep the commanding officer informed of all events that might impact the vessel's mission, and the vessel's or crew safety. Les responsabilités des officiers varient selon leur grade au sein de l'équipe de navigation.

Officers responsibilities vary depending on the rank.



Navigation officers must know how to pilot a ship in order to ensure safe transits in sometimes restricted or ice covered waters, no matter what kind of weather or visibility prevail. They must have good navigation technics and a good knowledge of navigational equipment operation such as radar, electronic charts, gyrocompas, etc. They execute the route planning as per the commanding officer directions. They plot and follow the routes on charts, verify the available water depths, as well as ice charts, and do the radio communications.

They supervise the activities of the wheelhouse crew. On the other hand, the chief officer is responsible for all cargo handling by the ship's installations or by helicopter, including the storing of merchandises, properly secure equipments, charges distribution and calculation of the ship's stability. He is also responsible for safety standards concerning the take-off or landing of helicopters on the ship. He directs the boatswain and deckhands.

The chief officer is responsible for the safety of the ship. He ensures proper operation and handling of firefighting systems and the familiarisation of the crew members. Navigation officers also participate in search and rescue operation and operate small crafts during replenishing operations.



Canada

What academic and professional development do I need?

- Canadian Coast Guard College Study Program leading to a Nautical Science Degree and Officer Certification.
- 4-year college program with practical training in marine engineering. The candidate will access higher ranks by accumulating sea time and passing Transport Canada exams.
- Certification may also be obtained by accumulating Engine Room Rating sea time, ongoing training and successful completion of Transport Canada exams.

Where can I study?

- The CCG Colleges located in Sydney, Nova Scotia, offers a 4-year paid study program in navigation in both official languages. Upon successful completion of the program, the student obtains a Nautical Science Degree and a Watch Mate Certificate (3rd Mate). Then, the Officer is deployed on one of the CCG vessels. Higher ranks are accessed through experience at sea and successful completion of Transport Canada exams.
- The Institut Maritime du Québec offers a 4-year study program in navigation after which students enter the labour market as 3rd Mate. Higher ranks are accessed through experience at sea and successful completion of Transport Canada exams.

What are my career opportunities?

- Navigation Officer (several ranks);
- Captain / Commanding Officer;
- Fleet Management;
- Various positions within the Federal Public Service;
- Various marine-related positions.

What qualities and interests are essential?

- Strong interest for sciences and technological equipment;
- Interest in working at sea;
- Good concentration, communication and adaptation capabilities;
- Good work organization and be able to set priorities;
- Leadership and good judgement;
- Team work capabilities;
- To be able to work on irregular schedules and accept to go at sea for maximum periods of 42 days;
- Taste for adventure and travel.

Average annual income : 50,000\$ to 72,000\$ (under review)

Salary increases with ranks. Navigation Officers work a schedule called lay-day, or a period of 14 to 42 days at sea followed by equivalent time off with pay.

For more information

Canadian Coast Guard College : www.ccg-gcc.gc.ca/fra/College/Bienvenue

Canadian Coast Guard, Quebec Region : www.marinfo.gc.ca

Canadian Coast Guard, National Web site : www.ccg-gcc.gc.ca

Comité sectoriel de main-d'oeuvre de l'industrie maritime : www.csmoim.qc.ca

Institut maritime du Québec : www.imq.qc.ca

Transports Canada : www.tc.gc.ca (Marine section)