

IMO SUB-COMMITTEE ON HUMAN ELEMENT, TRAINING AND WATCHKEEPING

7 –11 FEBRUARY 2022

The IMO Sub-Committee on Human Element, Training and Watchkeeping met remotely from Monday 7 through Friday 11 February 2022 under the Chairmanship of Mr Haakon Storhaug (Norway) and his Vice Chair, Mr Rafael Cigarruista (Panama), both of whom were subsequently re-elected for 2023.

The session was attended by delegations from Member States, Associate Members of IMO and observers from inter-governmental and non-governmental organisations in consultative status. Three Working Groups (WG) were formed and chaired as follows:

WG1 Implementation of the STCW Convention, Mr Luke Harden (United States);

WG2 Comprehensive Review of the 1995 STCW-F Convention (Mr Sebastian De Maria (France); and,

WG3 Human Element & Maritime Training, Mr Masashi Sugomori (Japan).

ADDRESS BY THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF IMO. The IMO Secretary-General, Mr Kitack Lim welcomed delegates to the eighth session of the Sub-Committee on Human Element Training and Watchkeeping [HTW 8]. Reflecting on two years of extraordinary sacrifices and challenges for the entire world under pandemic conditions, he stated ships have not stopped delivering vital supplies and goods around the globe. However, the price for this continued service was paid largely by seafarers who continue to experience difficulties in being repatriated to join their families after long periods away, or not being able to join ships, resulting in lost income. Access to vaccinations and vaccination status recognition, as well as access to medical care also continue to be challenges.

In addition to IMO policy development and direct interventions by its Seafarer Crisis Action Team (SCAT), new high-level initiatives are currently underway within the UN, in particular an ad-hoc interagency task force led by ILO with support from IMO, WHO, ICAO, and relevant social partners, to review COVID-19's impact on the world's transport and global supply chain and assess the impact on its workers.

This year's World Maritime Theme is "New Technologies for greener shipping", highlighting the need to support a green transition of the maritime sector into a sustainable future which he felt holds important considerations for the human element.

Mr Lim next highlighted two important items of work for completion at this session, namely the finalisation of the comprehensive review of the 1995 STCW-F [Fishing] Convention and the development of provisions for the use of electronic certificates of seafarers. He went on to single out a continuous output on the agenda – the role of the Human Element [HE] for which Assembly 32 has included a new specific HE strategic direction in the current Strategic Plan for the Organisation. This new inclusion will open further avenues to review all HE related aspects, including safety management systems to enhance sustainable shipping operation where human actions play a fundamental role.

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In furtherance of this work, a joint ILO/IMO Working Group has been formed to identify and address seafarers' issues and HE areas of common interest to both organisations. The Secretary-General next highlighted the important work of the sub-committee on the effective implementation of the STCW Convention and wished them every success with the development of new streamlined guidance and procedures for communication of subsequent reports and initial information, which is one of the main obligations for Parties emanating from the Convention. He noted that other important matters would be considered during the meeting such as: the validation of model courses, measures to ensure the quality of onboard training, measures to facilitate mandatory seagoing service and the development of training provisions related to the Ballast Water Management Convention.

With this, he wished delegates every success for the meeting and a happy, prosperous, and healthy year 2022.

DECISIONS OF OTHER IMO BODIES.

General. Having noted the discussions pertaining to its work made by a large number of other IMO bodies, the sub-Committee agreed to take action, as appropriate, under relative agenda items. Outcomes in particular were noted as follows.

MSC 103 – Seafarers' vaccination. The Sub-Committee noted that MSC 103 had adopted resolution MSC.490(103) on *Recommended action to prioritise COVID-19 vaccination of seafarers.*

III 7 – Appropriateness and effectiveness of provisions. It was noted that III 7 had requested MSC 105 (meets 18 – 29 May 2022) to initiate review of the appropriateness and effectiveness of the provisions identified for review, and refer the initial analysis of the criteria for the determination of same to relevant Sub-Committees.

MSC 104 – Certificates of seafarers. The Sub-Committee noted that MSC 104 had approved the *Guidance on Seafarers' training and certification for issuing Administrations, flag States and port States during the COVID-19 pandemic.*

A 32 – Seafarers' challenges during the pandemic. It was noted that Assembly, at its 32nd meeting, adopted resolution A.1160(32) on *Comprehensive action to address seafarers' challenges during the COVID-19 pandemic.*

VALIDATED MODEL TRAINING COURSES. The Sub-Committee recalled that HTW 7 had considered only, the planning of work for HTW 9, and had postponed consideration of all remaining documents to this session encompassing seven draft model courses, with a view to validation as follows:

- New model course on Passenger Safety, cargo safety and hull integrity training;
- Revised model course 2.03 on Advanced training in fire fighting;
- Revised model course 1.22 on Bridge resource management;

- New model course on Engine-room resource management;
- Revised model course 3.25 on Security awareness training for all port facility personnel;
- Revised model course 3.26 on security training for seafarers with designated security duties; and,
- Revised model course 3.27 on security awareness training for all seafarers.

Due to the impracticality of establishing several drafting groups during the limited time available at this session, the Secretariat proposed an alternative arrangement whereby three drafting groups will be given terms of reference defining each group's responsibility for their share of the seven courses they will cover during their separate meetings between HTW 8 and HTW 9. This was gratefully accepted and the Secretariat was requested to make necessary arrangements to be circulated well in advance of the drafting groups' meetings. MSC 105 will be invited to approve holding virtual meetings during 2022 of the three groups for validation of their work at HTW 9.

Model courses planned for validation by HTW 10. The Sub-Committee noted the overview of the complete set of IMO model courses provided by the Secretariat, including those not under the purview of HTW and endorsed the revision of the following courses:

- 1.32 on Operational use of Integrated Bridge Systems including Integrated Navigational Systems; and,
- 1.35 on Liquefied Petroleum Gas(LPG) Tanker Cargo and Ballast Handling Simulator.

Having approved the draft terms of reference and time frames for both revisions, the Secretariat was requested to take the necessary action to hire developers for the respective courses. Mr Jan-Willem Verhoeff (NL) was selected as review group Coordinator for 1.32 and Captain Vinayak Mohla (GlobalMET) for 1.35.

Seafarers' psychological safety, mental health and wellbeing (including sexual assault and sexual harassment (SASH)). Having considered document HTW 8/3/5 (Dominica) proposing to increase the priority for the revision of model course 1.21 on 'Personal Safety and Social Responsibilities' and following a lengthy discussion, the Sub-Committee:

- Recognised that psychological safety, mental health and wellbeing (including SASH) are issues of serious concern that require coordinated action by relevant organisations such as ILO and IMO;
- Agreed that before undertaking a revision of 1.21 to include training provisions on such matters, relevant requirements in the 1978 STCW Convention addressing these areas should be developed; and,
- Invited interested Member States and international organisations to submit relevant proposals to MSC for consideration and action, as appropriate.

ROLE OF THE HUMAN ELEMENT.

General. It was recalled that HTW 7 had considered only, COVID-19 related documents submitted under this agenda item, consideration of all other documents having been postponed to this session.

Strategic direction of the human element. The Sub-Committee noted that A 32 included a specific strategic direction on the human element in the *Revised Strategic Plan for the Organisation for the six-year period 2018 to 2023*, as in resolution A.1149 (32).

Joint ILO/IMO Tripartite Working Group to identify and address seafarers' issues and the human element. Following approval by C 125 to the establishment of the joint group, the ILO Governing Body also gave its assent in November 2021. Further endorsement will be subject to approval of the Group's method of work by relevant IMO Committees MSC and LEG at their forthcoming sessions.

Ongoing work on the human element, current status and future perspective (HTW 7/4). The Sub-Committee noted the information in document HTW 7/4 providing an outline of the ongoing work on the human element and highlighting its relevance. In this connection, China espoused the need to arrange and coordinate the work on the human element holistically whilst encompassing the new strategic direction and work conducted by all IMO bodies. This approach was acknowledged by the United States, whilst making the point that, in order for the MSC to address such an approach, more information about the intent and the extent of the proposal would be required with regard to the current ongoing approach taken on the human element by the Organisation. Noting all information provided on this matter, and recognising that it is not the only body responsible for human element matters in the Organisation, the Sub-Committee requested MSC 105 to invite all relevant IMO bodies to assess their respective involvement in the human element within their remit and report back to the Committee with a view to devising an outline for an holistic approach, taking into account resource and budgetary implications within the Organisation.

Establishment of the Working Group on Human Element and Maritime Training. The Sub-Committee established the Working Group, having furnished it with appropriate terms of reference. The report of the Group subsequent to its deliberations, was approved by the Sub-Committee in general, and on this item in particular:

- Agreed to the draft amendments to the *Organisation and method of work of the MSC and the MEPC and their subsidiary bodies and the associated draft MSC-MEPC circular*, for approval by MSC and MEPC;
- Agreed, in principle, to the draft guidance framework for the application of casualty cases and lessons learned to seafarers' education and training except for the appendix; requested the III Sub-Committee to review the information; and,
- Invited interested Member States and international organisations to provide contributions to the III Sub-Committee to enable finalisation of the appendix to the aforementioned draft guidance.

REPORTS ON UNLAWFUL PRACTICES ASSOCIATED WITH CERTIFICATES OF COMPETENCY. Following consideration, with great concern, of reports from Member States on the proliferation of fraudulent certificates of competency and endorsements, MSC 71 approved a circular on *Fraudulent certificates of competency* (MSC/Circ.900). In addition, A 21 adopted resolution A.892(21) on *Unlawful practices associated with certificates of competency and endorsements*.

The Sub-Committee invited Member States to provide the Secretariat with updated information for inclusion in the “certificate verification facility” accessible on the IMO website, in order to facilitate and respond, in a timely manner, to requests for verification of certificates.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STCW CONVENTION.

General. It was recalled that, following agreement at MSC 102, matters on the “implementation of the STCW Convention” should be given priority. HTW 7 took relevant action and endorsed an action plan for enhancing communication of the information system under the provisions of the 1978 Convention based on identified gaps. A Correspondence Group was then set up by HTW 7 and instructed to submit a report to this session (document HTW 8/6 (Luxembourg)) which was duly considered, along with 3 other submissions. The proposed procedures, and related comments, for the communication of information in accordance with the STCW Convention and Code were discussed, following which a working group (WG) was established to further examine these matters.

Report of the Working Group. Having considered the report of the WG, the Sub-Committee approved it in general and took action as follows:

- Endorsed the view of the Group concerning three issues identified to be considered at the next comprehensive review of the STCW Convention, i.e. timing for taking corrective measures as part of the submission of the independent evaluation report; modernisation of methods to handle information; and, reporting to MSC by the Secretary-General;
- Endorsed the proposal to refer the draft streamlined guidance to a correspondence group with a view to finalisation and report to HTW 9;
- Endorsed the view that the issue of additional Secretariat resources to cope with the growing relevance of the HE workload should be considered holistically at a later stage;
- Endorsed the Group’s agreement that a streamlined guidance for subsequent reports and procedures for initial communication of information should be developed;
- Endorsed the recommendation that a dynamic list reporting the status of the Party giving full and complete effect to the relevant provisions of the STCW Convention and Code should be produced; and,
- Approved the re-establishment of the Correspondence Group on the implementation of the STCW Convention to work intersessionally, together with its draft terms of reference.

DEVELOPMENT OF AMENDMENTS TO THE REVISED GUIDELINES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT, REVIEW AND VALIDATION OF MODEL COURSES.

It was recalled that HTW 6 had established a CG on Action Verb Taxonomy for Model Courses, under the coordination of China and that subsequently, HTW 7 had to postpone consideration to this session. Accordingly, the Sub-Committee instructed the WG on Human Element and Maritime Training to prepare draft amendments to the Revised Guidelines and to consider including guidance on the learning outcomes.

Report of the Working Group. Having considered the part of the WG's report relevant to this item, the Sub-Committee agreed the draft amendments to the *Revised guidelines for the development, review and validation of model courses* comprising inclusion of two new appendices on action verb taxonomy for model courses and guidance on learning outcomes, for approval by MSC and MEPC.

COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF THE 1995 STCW-F CONVENTION. Since this item is not of direct interest to InterManager members, it will not be covered in detail. However, should anyone like to be exposed to the 'nuts and bolts', they are readily available. Suffice it to record that after prolonged discussion in Plenary, a WG was tasked to examine a number of related issues, the report of which deliberations was approved in general, and in particular, the Sub-Committee:

- Noted the progress made by the Group on the draft STCW-F Convention and the draft Code, particularly finalisation of all the text apart from that due to consequential modifications emanating from the GMDSS modernisation;
- Invited submission of documents to HTW 9;
- Noted that due to time constraints, the Group was unable to prepare the draft resolution addressing training on response against piracy and armed robbery but invited inputs to HTW 9;
- Noted that, also due to time constraints, the Group was unable to prepare draft guidelines on the medical examination of fishing vessel personnel;
- Endorsed the work plan for the completion of the comprehensive review of the 1995 STCW-F Convention; and,
- Approved the re-establishment of the CG to work intersessionally.

DEVELOPMENT OF AMENDMENTS TO THE STCW CONVENTION AND CODE FOR THE USE OF ELECTRONIC CERTIFICATES AND DOCUMENTS OF SEAFARERS.

The Sub-Committee recalled that HTW 7 had:

- Recognised that further work was necessary in amending relevant regulations of the STCW Convention, provisions of parts A and B of the STCW Code and the development of guidelines;
- Noted that the draft guidelines on the use of electronic certificates of seafarers, when approved by the Committee, should only come into effect on the date of entry into force of the corresponding amendments to the STCW Convention and Code; and,

- Re-established the CG on the Use of Electronic Certificates and Documents of Seafarers, with terms of reference as set out in paragraph 9.5 of document HTW 7/16, instructing the Group to submit a report to this session.

The Sub-Committee considered document HTW 8/9 by the Russian Federation containing the report of the CG, in particular providing new draft definitions in STCW regulation 1/1; draft amendments to section A-1/2 of the STCW code; and, draft guidelines on the use of electronic certificates of seafarers and the associated draft MSC circular. Document HTW 8/9/1 by the Islamic Republic of Iran providing explanation of the requirements for a digital signature validation as well as different perspectives on issuing and updating certificates in the digital format was also considered.

In the subsequent discussion, the following views were noted:

- Although the information provided in document HTW 8/9/1 was valuable in the context of this work, no new elements regarding electronic certification, digital signature validation, trusted directories or related matters should be introduced at this late stage of the work;
- Photographs should be retained in electronic certificates in order to identify the holder of the certificate; and
- Registers of electronic certificates should be maintained by STCW Parties, in line with the existing requirements of the Convention.

Document HTW 8/9 was referred to the WG on Human Element and Maritime Training for further consideration and advice, as appropriate, with a view to finalising the work under this output.

Report of the Working Group. In response to the report of the WG on this item, the Sub-Committee:

- Agreed the draft amendments to the 1978 STCW Convention, regulations 1/1 and 1/2, concerning the inclusion of a new definition for “original form of any certificate required by the Convention”, for approval by the Committee with a view to adoption;
- Agreed the draft amendments to section A-1/2 of the STCW Code, clarifying the application in the Code of existing terms and terminologies to the certificates and endorsements in electronic form, for approval by the Committee with a view to adoption in conjunction with the adoption of related amendments to the 1978 STCW Convention; and,
- Agreed the draft guidelines on the use of electronic certificates of seafarers, for approval, in principle, by the Committee in conjunction with the adoption of the related amendments to the STCW Convention and Code.

DEVELOPMENTS OF MEASURES TO ENSURE QUALITY OF ONBOARD TRAINING AS PART OF THE MANDATORY SEAGOING SERVICE REQUIRED BY THE STCW CONVENTION.

The Sub-Committee recalled that HTW 7 had postponed consideration of this agenda item to the current session, in particular documents HTW 7/10 & 7/10/1, both by Georgia et al, HTW 7/10/2 (Japan) and HTW 7/INF.6 (IAMU) and these were discussed. The Georgia submissions provided information on the challenges faced by stakeholders regarding the organisation of mandatory Onboard Training (OBT) for prospective officers. Further, a proposal was made to develop amendments to the corresponding provisions of the STCW Convention and Code and also to upgrade the official status of the training record book (TRB) as documentary evidence of having fulfilled relevant requirements. For its part, Japan's submission proposed the development of additional guidance in part B of the STCW Code or separate guidelines for Administrations, shipping companies and maritime training institutions, instead of additional mandatory requirements to ensure onboard training. In the ensuing discussion, the Sub-Committee noted the following views:

- The lack of harmonised requirements for the implementation of onboard training programmes should be addressed;
- Onboard training and onshore training should be properly balanced, in particular through the use of simulators and the development of a methodology to ensure the quality of onboard training;
- Although the advantages of simulator-based training were acknowledged, the quality of onboard training needs to be addressed;
- Many differing views were expressed regarding the official status of the TRB as documentary evidence of having fulfilled relevant requirements;
- A work plan should be developed by a CG to consider comprehensively, matters related to the quality of onboard training and the issue of mandatory seagoing service before embarking on the development of specific measures; and,
- Non-mandatory provisions to address the quality of onboard training should be developed in the first instance.

Following the above deliberations, the Sub-Committee established the CG on Maritime Training under the coordination of the Russian Federation and instructed it to:

- Prepare a work plan to develop measures regarding the assurance of quality of onboard training required by the STCW Convention, including identification of expected goals, effectiveness and consequences of any measures to be adopted;
- Consider the proposals for the development of non-mandatory provisions relating to the quality of onboard training, as set out in documents HTW 7/10/1 and HTW 7/10/2, and advise the Sub-Committee accordingly; and,
- Submit a report to HTW 9.

DEVELOPMENT OF MEASURES TO FACILITATE MANDATORY SEAGOING SERVICE REQUIRED UNDER THE STCW CONVENTION. Having recalled that HTW 7 postponed consideration of this agenda item to the current session, the Sub-Committee considered three documents, namely:

- HTW 7/11 (Republic of Korea) proposing that an intersessional CG should be established to collate relevant information, in order to determine the level of difficulties faced by Member States and offer possible solutions;
- HTW 7/11/1 (Mexico) proposing consideration of short-, medium- and long term measures intended to facilitate access to mandatory seagoing service for candidates certification in order to reduce existing difficulties; and,
- HTW 8/11 (China) proposing an amendment to STCW regulation II/1, para 2.2, to provide flexibility in meeting the seagoing service requirements for the officers in charge of a navigational watch by introducing the option of combining seagoing service with simulator training and the establishment of a CG to develop draft guidelines for the implementation of onboard training requirements of the STCW Convention.

Following a lively discussion, the Sub-Committee further instructed the CG on Maritime Training, established under the preceding item, to collate information as follows, in order to better identify the difficulties faced by Member States in implementing STCW mandatory seagoing service provisions, taking into account comments made and decisions taken at this session, as well as documents HTW 7/11 and HTW 7/11/1:

- Actual practices for satisfying the mandatory seagoing service requirements;
- Problems in relation to the identified practices and possible solutions, classified as short- and long term measures; and,
- Submit a report on relevant matters under this agenda item to HTW 9.

DEVELOPMENT OF TRAINING PROVISIONS FOR SEAFARERS RELATED TO THE BWM CONVENTION. Having recalled that HTW 7 had postponed consideration of this item to the current session, the following documents were considered:

- HTW 7/12 (China and ICS), proposing amendments to chapters II and III of the STCW Code to address the training of seafarers related to ballast water management. It also provides an initial draft list of elements for the contents of a new model course and the revision of the existing model courses to support the implementation and compliance with the International Convention for the Control and Management of Ships' Ballast Water and Sediments, 2004, also the implementation of the amendments to the STCW Code; and,
- HTW 7/12/1 (Japan), proposing that only amendments to the STCW Code (chapters II and III) addressing basic knowledge of the BWM Convention and BWM systems should be developed, and for officers only. It also invited MEPC to consider means to ensure development of BWM plans addressing seafarers' training adequately and its proper implementation.

In the ensuing discussion, the following views were noted:

- Essential generic training for all seafarers should be provided in the STCW Convention whilst familiarisation concerning the operation and maintenance of specific systems should be addressed through STCW regulation I/14

(Responsibilities of companies) and the corresponding Safety Management Systems;

- Recognising that seafarers should be familiar with their duties of BWM in accordance with regulation B-6 of the BWM Convention, if the requirements addressing the maintenance and operation of BWMS are too detailed, they will create a burden for administrations and seafarers;
- If amendments to the STCW Code are developed and adopted, the emergence of a relevant model course and the revision of some existing model courses will be beneficial; and,
- Relevant amendments to the STCW Convention dealing with BWM should be developed as part of the next comprehensive review of the Convention.

Having listened to many differing views, the Sub-Committee felt that there is a need for a unified approach in preparation of amendments to the STCW Code, noting that an output on the comprehensive review of the STCW Convention has yet to be agreed. The Sub-Committee therefore invited interested Member States and international organisations to submit relevant proposals to the next session, taking into account the comments made at this session with a view to finalising the work on the output.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS.

Carriage for use of heavy fuel oil (HFO) as fuel by ships in Arctic Waters. The Sub-Committee noted that it has been invited by PPR 8 to review section 7 (Familiarisation, training and drills) of the draft guidelines on mitigation measures to reduce risks of use and carriage for use of HFO as fuel by ships in Arctic waters with a view to advising PPR 9. However, in examining the relevant sections of the guidelines, views were expressed that they contain duplicative provisions both in the context of the Polar Code and the STCW Code and could even go beyond the scope of the latter. The Sub-Committee therefore agreed to postpone consideration of this item to HTW 9, inviting submissions accordingly, and agreed to advise PPR 9.

International Code of Safety for Ships Carrying Industrial Personnel (IP Code). The Sub-Committee noted that MSC 104 had considered document MSC 104/11/3 (Bahamas, France and ITF) commenting on the fact that in the provisions of the draft IP Code, there is no requirement for crew members regarding crowd management training, despite the fact that such ships sometimes carry a large number of people (industrial personnel) with concomitant risk. MSC 104 tasked HTW 8 to advise whether or not training of seafarers would be necessary on either IP certified ships, or, on all cargo ships, in which case a new output would be required.

Following further consideration, the Sub-Committee invited Member States and international organisations to submit relevant proposals for a new output to MSC, taking into account the comments made at this session.

Cybersecurity-related training for seafarers. Document HTW 8/15/1 (Republic of Korea) proposed discussing the necessity of developing, for possible inclusion in the 1978

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STCW Convention, relevant provisions on cybersecurity-related training for seafarers taking into account the emergence of the digitalisation era in the maritime industry. Following discussion, interested Member States and international organisations were invited to submit relevant proposals for a new output to MSC.

Draft interim guidelines on safe operation of onshore power supply service in port for ships engaged in international voyages. The Sub-Committee instructed the WG on Human Element and Maritime Training to consider the personnel, training and familiarisation provisions of the draft interim guidelines, based on document HTW 7/WP.5, taking into account the areas to be considered and comments made at HTW 7, with a view to advising MSC 105. In considering the Group's subsequent report on this instruction, the Sub-Committee:

- Noted the inconsistency reported between draft interim guidelines and the STCW Convention with regard to "high voltage" for referral to MSC 105 for action; and,
- Agreed the draft modifications to section 6 of the draft interim guidelines on safe operation of onshore power supply (OPS) service in port for ships engaged on international voyages, for consideration and approval by MSC 105.

Simulator training – the use of free-fall lifeboat simulator in the training of seafarers. The Sub-Committee noted the information in document HTW 7/INF.8 introducing the new developments on seafarers training with the use of free-fall lifeboat simulators as a supplement to the existing training requirements.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING. The next meeting of the Sub-Committee, HTW 9, has been scheduled from 6 to 10 February 2023.

End

Captain Paddy McKnight