



MARITIME SAFETY COMMITTEE  
79th session  
Agenda item 14

MSC 79/14/5  
8 October 2004  
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## ROLE OF THE HUMAN ELEMENT

### Human Element Strategy

#### Submitted by the ICFTU

#### SUMMARY

<b><i>Executive summary:</i></b>	This paper is commenting on the proposal by Liberia for a Human Element strategic plan to enhance maritime safety and security culture
<b><i>Action to be taken:</i></b>	Paragraph 8
<b><i>Related documents:</i></b>	MSC 79/14, resolution A.947(23), BLG 8/14 and resolution A.468(XII) 1981

### General

1 The document MSC 79/14 submitted by Liberia draws attention to Assembly resolution A.947(23) on the Human Element Vision, Principles and Goals for the Organization. In supporting this paper we wish to expand on one specific area as referred to in paragraph 6.1, i.e. 'to facilitate the comprehensive consideration of the human element in development of guidance, tools, mandatory and non-mandatory instruments.'

2 It has become evident at various forums that there is no defined set of standards for seafarers' occupational health and safety in existence and whilst there is undoubtedly an overlap in the competencies of the IMO and ILO in this matter neither body has addressed more than limited areas of concern within the workplace.

3 The most recent work in this area is the ILO Code of Accident prevention on board ships at sea and in port, 1996, however this does not contain safety and health standards. In areas other than maritime, particularly those covered by the WHO and ILO there are relevant standards and instruments for workers and, as addressed in the report of BLG 8, paragraph 9.10, these bodies should participate in any work carried out in these areas.

### Noise

4 The reference document for noise within the ILO new consolidated convention has been IMO resolution A.468(XII) 1981, however accepted levels, standards and practices in more modern studies have been substantially revised. This resolution for instance does not define the acceptable minimum standards for ear muffs in various noise levels or point out the dangers associated with ear plugs and there is no consideration of sound pressure.

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**Vibration**

5 Considerations of vibration must encompass both low and high frequency plus consideration of the damage inflicted on personnel subjected to long sustained vibration such is caused by modern medium speed engines. There are recent construction standards including ISO 6954.2000 (E) International Standards on Mechanical Vibration in respect to crew habitability and have been substantial studies identifying the damage of full body vibration and long term injuries inflicted on seafarers.

**Ambient environmental factors**

6 In the ABS study on Ergonomics and Crew Habitability on Ships, 2003 and other recent documents a range of factors are considered and taken into account. These include climate control, air temperature, airflow and quality, lighting, surface reflection, radiation and general ergonomics when setting an ambient level in the work place or living space. Other considerations that are being considered in BLG and DSC Sub-Committees are cacogenic gases such as benzene and the presence of dangerous substances.

7 There is documented evidence of the long term damage to seafarers' health in the past and effective, defined standards for seafarer's occupational health and safety contained in one instrument, is long overdue.

**Action requested of the Committee**

8 The Committee is asked to consider the broader requirements in any human element strategy and take appropriate action.

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