



AD HOC INTERSESSIONAL MEETING OF
THE STW WORKING GROUP RELATING
TO THE COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF
THE STCW CONVENTION AND CODE

1st session
Agenda item 5

STW/ISWG 1/5/8
8 August 2008
ENGLISH ONLY

REVIEW OF CHAPTER V OF THE STCW CONVENTION AND CODE

Tanker endorsements

Submitted by the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF)

SUMMARY

Executive summary:	The proposal at STW 39 to separate tanker endorsements is a source of concern to the ITF and it considers that greater consideration must be given to underlying problems as stated in this document
Strategic direction:	5
High-level action:	5.2
Planned output:	5.2.2.1
Action to be taken:	Paragraph 9
Related documents:	STW 39/WP.3; STW 39/7/15, STW 39/7/16 and STW 39/12

General

1 The Sub-Committee on Standards of Training and Watchkeeping, at its thirty-ninth session, agreed to convene an intersessional working group to further address a comprehensive review of the STCW Convention and Code. Outcomes of STW 39 were forwarded to the intersessional working group including a proposed revision of regulation V/1.

2 The Sub-Committee agreed that there should be two familiarization training requirements, one for oil and chemical tankers, and another for liquefied gas tankers, and separate more advanced requirements for personnel serving on oil tankers, on chemical tankers and on liquefied gas tankers respectively, to reflect the different types of tankers in operation (STW 39/12, paragraph 7.244).

3 The Sub-Committee also noted the need for an effective safety culture and the industry Human Factors Task Group's conclusion that the most significant contributory factors to incidents was a failure to follow or understand cargo operation guidelines and the matter was referred to the MEPC/MSC Working Group on the Human Element for detailed consideration.

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Considerations

4 The International Transport Workers Federation (ITF), whilst accepting the majority decision to move to separate endorsements for different tankers, would have preferred that there be one generic tanker endorsement with short specific courses (30 to 45 days) in each type. This, of course, would include the requirement for a minimum number of cargo movements. We believe that there is sufficient commonality for this to be viable and it would greatly facilitate the transfer of skills between tanker types.

5 We do, however, strongly oppose any increase in sea service as proposed by the industry from three months to 12 months. This move would only exacerbate the shortage of available manpower and extended sea service for endorsements is effectively only addressing a shortfall in underlying basic competencies.

6 It has been our consistent view that the primary problem is a failure of the safety culture both on board and ashore and a disregard for the proper implementation and auditing of the ISM Code. More specifically, there is a failure to ensure that the provisions in A-I/14 of the Code, "Responsibilities of Companies" with respect to onboard familiarization, are fully provided for.

7 One reason for this possible failure to fully familiarize crew on board is a confusion that exists between the use of the term for onboard familiarization in section A-I/14 and the same term used in regulation V/1 for shore training and the use of simulators. We believe the evidence of shore "familiarization" training is being taken as an acceptable alternative to onboard familiarization.

Conclusion

8 A proliferation of tanker endorsements with extensive sea service is not an acceptable alternative to the proper implementation of current Codes and Conventions or a total lack of a company safety culture. More emphasis should be given to retaining core experience crew with good basic competencies and full understanding of an established company safety culture. Where crews are transient sufficient time must be allowed for a comprehensive onboard familiarization.

Action requested of the Group

9 The Group is invited to note views above in its consideration of the proposed amendments to regulation V of the STCW Code and Convention.