



SUB-COMMITTEE ON STANDARDS OF  
TRAINING AND WATCHKEEPING  
41st session  
Agenda item 7.1

STW 41/7/43  
6 November 2009  
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## COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF THE STCW CONVENTION AND THE STCW CODE

### Chapter I of the STCW Convention and Code

#### Review of section A-I/9

**Submitted by the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF)  
and International Shipping Federation (ISF)**

#### SUMMARY

<i>Executive summary:</i>	This document proposes that the revised tables of minimum entry levels of medical standards remain as guidance and new generic standards be formulated which can be subject to discretion of an approved medical practitioner
<i>Strategic direction:</i>	5
<i>High-level action:</i>	5.2
<i>Planned output:</i>	5.2.2.1
<i>Action to be taken:</i>	Paragraph 6
<i>Related documents:</i>	STW 40/7/1 and STW 41/7/2

#### Background

1 The review of the STCW Convention and STCW Code agreed, at STW 38 in February 2007, to include the review of section A-I/9, Medical Standards. At STW 39 it was agreed that the ILO would initially review, with the WHO, the Guidelines for Conducting Pre-sea and Periodic Medical Fitness Examinations for Seafarers prior to finalizing any new standards in section A-I/9.

2 Unfortunately the review of these guidelines has not yet been carried out by the ILO/WHO, and the ITF and ISF are jointly of the opinion that the current proposal to move the revised guidance from section B-I/9 to the standard section A-I/9 will prohibit discretionary application by medical practitioners and will also inhibit the guideline review exercise.

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3 At the second *ad hoc* intersessional meeting of the STW Working Group on the comprehensive review of the STCW Convention and Code held from 7 to 11 September 2009, it was agreed that, whilst we should continue developing the standard, STW 41 may consider moving the table back to part B (STW 41/7/1, paragraph 2.58.1).

### **Proposal**

4 The ITF and ISF both consider it essential that seafarers' medicals should ensure medical standards appropriate for the duties that the seafarers are required to perform but believe this must be subject to the discretion of the approved medical practitioner following the ILO/WHO guidelines.

5 ITF and ISF propose that the revised tables for assessment of minimum entry levels in service eyesight standards and physical abilities, as specified in STW 41/7/2, be returned to Guidance in section B-I/9 and that new generic standards be inserted in section A-I/9 as set out in the annex.

### **Action requested of the Sub-Committee**

6 The Sub-Committee is requested to consider the suggestions outlined in paragraphs 4 and 5 and take action as appropriate.

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## ANNEX

## PROPOSED SECTION A-I/9

## Section A-I/9

*Medical standards*

1 Parties, when establishing standards of medical fitness for seafarers as required by regulation I/9, shall take into account the minimum in-service eyesight guidance set out in table B-I/9-1, the minimum physical abilities set out in table B-I/9-2 and the guidance given in section B-I/9 of this Code, bearing in mind the different duties of seafarers. These standards shall also take into account the need to screen for any impairment, or disease, that will limit the ability of the seafarer to effectively perform his/her duties during the validity period of the medical certificate.

2 The seafarer shall fulfil the following criteria for a pre-sea and periodic medical of fitness appropriate to their duties:

- .1 Have the physical ability to fulfil all the requirements of the basic safety training;
- .2 Dependent on the category of seafarer, demonstrate the minimum in-service eyesight standard;
- .3 Demonstrate adequate hearing and speech to communicate effectively and detect any alarms;
- .4 Exhibit physical capabilities, strength, dexterity and stamina appropriate for the function on board;
- .5 Have no medical condition, disorder or impairments that will prevent the efficient and safe conduct of duties on board; and
- .6 Be under no prescribed medication that has side effects that may impair the judgement, balance or any other requirement of this standard.

3 Medical fitness examinations of seafarers shall be conducted by appropriately qualified and experienced medical practitioners recognized by the Party.

4 Each Party shall establish provisions for recognizing medical practitioners. A register of recognized medical practitioners qualified to issue medical certificates shall be maintained by the Party and made available to other Parties, companies and seafarers on request.

5 Each Party shall provide guidance for the conduct of medical fitness examinations and issuing of medical certificates, taking into account provisions set out in section B-I/9 of this Code.

6 Each Party shall establish processes and procedures to enable seafarers who, after examination, do not meet the medical fitness standards or have had a limitation imposed on their ability to work, in particular with respect to time, field of work or trading area to have their case reviewed in line with that Party's provisions for appeal by another independent medical practitioner.

7 The medical certificate provided for in regulation I/9, paragraph 3 shall include the following information as a minimum:

- .1 Authorizing authority** and the requirements under which the document is issued
- .2 Seafarer information**
  - .2.1 Name: (last, first, middle)
  - .2.2 Date of birth: (day/month/year)
  - .2.3 Gender: (male/female)
  - .2.4 Category of seafarer
  - .2.5 Nationality
- .3 Declaration of the recognized medical practitioner**
  - .3.1 Confirmation that identification documents were checked at the point of examination
  - .3.2 Hearing meets the standards
  - .3.3 Unaided hearing satisfactory
  - .3.4 Visual acuity meets standards
  - .3.5 Unaided vision meets standards
  - .3.6 Colour vision meets standards
  - .3.7 Fit for look-out duties
  - .3.8 No limitations or restrictions on fitness  
Specify limitations or restrictions
  - .3.9 Is the seafarer fit for the duties required under the category of seafarer specified at 2.4 above?
  - .3.10 Date of examination
  - .3.11 Expiry date of certificate
- .4 Details of recognized medical practitioner**
  - .4.1 Official stamp of recognized medical practitioner (including name)
  - .4.2 Signature of recognized medical practitioner
- .5 Seafarer's signature** *confirming that the seafarer has been informed of the content of the certificate*

8 Medical certificates shall be in the official language of the issuing country. If the language used is not English, the text shall include a translation into that language.

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