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STRATEGY, PLANNING AND REFORM

(a) Strategy and planning

Proposal on a new strategic direction on the human element

Submitted by Canada, France, Indonesia, Philippines,
Russian Federation, Spain and ITF

SUMMARY

Executive summary: This document contains a proposal on the inclusion of a new strategic direction on the human element in the *Strategic Plan for the Organization for the six-year period 2018 to 2023*

Strategic direction, if applicable: 7

Output: 7.8

Action to be taken: Paragraph 12

Related documents: Resolutions A.1110(30), A.1111(30); MSC 103/21; HTW 7/16 and C/ES.32/4/13

Background

1 C/ES.32 had considered document C/ES.32/4/13 (Spain) highlighting that the Strategic Plan of the Organization should have a dedicated strategic direction for the human element, taking into account that strategic directions describe areas of special interest for a given period and, particularly, in the context of the global crisis stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic and the protection of seafarers. This will allow the Organization to meet its vision and mission. Consequently, Spain was invited to submit relevant proposals to the Council for further consideration and action.

2 HTW 7, in considering the matter, as the technical body responsible for the human element:

- .1 agreed on the need to include a specific strategic direction on the human element in the current Strategic Plan for the Organization at the earliest opportunity, taking into account the broad spectrum of areas that this concept embraces and its ongoing relevance, especially during the pandemic; and

.2 invited MSC 103 to take action accordingly.

3 Subsequently, based on the considerations of both the Council and the HTW Sub-Committee, MSC 103 agreed to request C 125 to include a specific strategic direction on the human element in the current Strategic Plan for the Organization at the earliest opportunity.

Discussion

4 As a matter of fact, the human element has always been recognized as a key element of the safety of life on board ships and a contributing factor to most of the casualties in the shipping sector. The scope and significance of the human element have been hugely amplified during the COVID-19 pandemic, where the human element has become vital in the management of causes and consequences emanating from this unprecedented situation.

5 The human element is currently included within the overarching principles of the *Strategic plan for the Organization for the six-year period 2018 to 2023* (resolution A.1110(30)). This approach of the thirtieth session of the Assembly was taken with the goal of considering the human element in all aspects of IMO's work whilst taking into account the needs of, and impact on, seafarers, due to the wide-ranging scope and importance of the human element. However, since the adoption of the Strategic Plan concerns have been repeatedly expressed with regard to the achievement of the stated goal, which have been aggravated by the pandemic.

6 A 30 decided that the strategic directions of the Strategic Plan were established for the six-year period 2018 to 2023 and that the Council would bring to the attention of the Assembly proposed amendments to the Strategic Plan on which it has had an agreement.

7 It should be noted that the Strategic Plan for the Organization is based on the trends, developments and challenges of the sector and, since its adoption, it is undeniable that, if there is an area in the maritime sector that has faced challenges and developments, this is the human element.

8 Moreover, the lack of a strategic direction on the human element has caused fundamental work over the current biennium related to the human element emanating from the pandemic that has had to be undertaken under "Any other business" by the Maritime Safety Committee.

9 As a result of the above, the already heavy workload on the human element has become not only an even more cross-cutting area of work in the Organization (see paragraphs 11 to 13 of document HTW 7/4 (Secretariat)), but also a subject for intense partnership with the UN and UN sister organizations such as ILO, ICAO and WHO as reflected by the numerous joint statements, resolutions, guidance and other provisions that have been produced in recent times.

Proposal

10 Based on the ever-increasing relevance of the human element and, in particular, as a result of the pandemic, a new specific strategic direction on the human element in the current Strategic Plan for the Organization is proposed, as set out in the annex.

11 This new strategic direction might be accompanied by a review of outputs for their rearrangement, as may be necessary.

Action requested of the Council

12 The Council is invited to consider the information provided above, together with the request by MSC 103 to include a specific strategic direction on the human element in the current Strategic Plan for the Organization at the earliest opportunity, and agree to bring the proposed amendments, as set out in the annex, to the attention of A 32.

ANNEX

DRAFT STRATEGIC DIRECTION ON THE HUMAN ELEMENT

SD [...]: Address the human element

[...] The human element has always been recognized as a key element of the safety of life on board ships, playing a prominent role in the prevention of maritime casualties. Its ever-increasing scope and significance in the safe, secure and environmentally sound operation of ships have been exacerbated during the COVID-19 pandemic, where the human element has become vital in the management of causes and consequences emanating from that unprecedented situation.

[...] Additionally, the development of new and advancing technologies far from undermining the role of the human element in the shipping sector, is expected to reinforce its importance both on board and ashore.

[...] The heavy cross-cutting presence of the human element within the Organization, accompanied by an intensive partnership with the UN and UN sister organizations, have resulted in the need for increased focus on the human element in the rule-making process and the provision of machinery for cooperation among Governments on practices concerning shipping.

[...] As a key stakeholder for the effective and efficient response to the human element in shipping, IMO will not only take into account the human element in the review, development and implementation of new and existing requirements, but also in the delivery of cooperation mechanisms with Governments and other international organizations. For the purpose of significantly reducing maritime casualties and properly addressing other human element related issues, the Organization will develop sound provisions, as necessary, where the human element constitutes the core component, including but not limited to: training, certification and watchkeeping, including consideration of new technologies; human-centred design; safe manning; drills and exercises; fatigue management; operational safety, security, and environmental protection; and fair treatment of seafarers.

TABLE 1 – PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

SD	PI Index	PI name
SD [...] Address the human element	PI [...].1	# of reported casualties where the human element has been identified as the root cause
	PI [...].2	# of reported near misses where the human element is the primary cause
	PI [...].3	# of reported seafarers' abandonment cases
	PI [...].4	# of human element-related deficiencies reported by PSC regimes
