

INTERNATIONAL TRANSPORT WORKERS' FEDERATION

IMO updates for maritime professionals



- Outcomes of the **Human element, Training and Watchkeeping 9th Session**, 6-10 February 2023
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* The purpose of this document is for international maritime professionals:

first, to have access to information on the work of high-level regulatory bodies in a user-friendly language;

second, to see how important the role that they have been playing is as a part of human element in 80 per cent of the world trades; and

third, to utilise information provided in pursuing the safety, security and environmental protection at sea.

The contents of this document have been selected by the interests and relevance of maritime professionals. Therefore, it should be noted that not all outcomes of the IMO meeting are addressed.



HTW 9

Decisions to note

Bullying and Harassment, including SASH, recognised as threats!

Bullying and harassment are threats to everyone's safety. Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment (SASH) are equal threats to the safety and security of maritime workers. In recognising the urgency, the HTW Sub-committee, as within its remit, has agreed to introduce a new competence "*Contribute to the prevention of and response to bullying and harassment, including sexual assault and sexual harassment*" in Specification of minimum standard of competence in personal safety and social responsibilities (STCW table A-VI/1-4).

It has to be taken into thorough consideration that in order to maximise the effectiveness of trainings, appropriate time allocation is crucial.

Mandating such training requirements should also require a seafarer to attend the training provided within sufficient and sensible time and capacity.

STCW comprehensive review kicked off: Goals, Aims and principles

Since the last comprehensive amendment to the International Convention and Code on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (the STCW Convention and Code) in 2010, ship operations have changed quite a lot from the differing types of navigating technology systems, energy sources for manoeuvre and propulsion, the manoeuvre ability and shaft thrust, piloting, cargo planning and stowage to information exchange methods with shore and other ships, etc.

The industry sees a compelling need for the comprehensive review of the STCW. In order for the review and possible amendments to be as effective and up-to-date as possible; goals, aims and principles for the next three years of the review process were agreed (the review is planned to be completed in 2026, see the annex of this report).

Until the end of 2023 – before the next session of this Sub-committee, a robust roadmap on the timeline of the review will be discussed.

Training, certification and watchkeeping must ensure the principle of safety at sea.

STCW-F comprehensive review done, with a new Code

In the fishing industry, a shortage of a competent workforce has been a serious issue. It has not been widely understood that a competent workforce ensures a safer, more secure and environmentally sound business in the industry. In this regard, high level international regulatory bodies produced legal instruments to support countries and the industry stakeholders to improve safety standards, such as the Cape Town Agreement, Torremolinos Protocol and International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Fishing Vessel Personnel (STCW-F), 1995.



At this session, the HTW Sub-committee completed the most comprehensive review since 1995. The amendments are to be adopted in 2024.

The revised Convention and new Codes categorise seven functions as competences:

1. Navigation
2. Catch handling and stowage
3. Controlling the operation of the vessel and care for persons on board
4. Marine engineering
5. Electrical, electronic and control engineering
6. Maintenance and repair
7. Radiocommunications

Familiarisation, training and drills for seafarers on ships using HFO as fuel in Arctic waters

The use and carriage of heavy fuel oil (HFO) will be prohibited from 1st July 2024, with the implementation window of five years – 1st July 2029. That is, those vessels which are not prepared for moving on to zero-HFO by mid-2024, can apply *the guidelines on mitigation measures to reduce risks of the use and carriage for use of heavy fuel oil (HFO) as fuel by ships in Arctic waters* and be ready for the complete ban in mid-2029.

HTW Sub-committee reviewed training provisions. Amongst all the provisions, the following should be empathised for seafarers on such ships:

- familiarisation is as important as training and drills for seafarers to comprehend the working environment for enhancing safety; and
- competent engineer crew should be in charge of handling and responding to HFO.

Fraudulent certificates

The IMO Secretariat notified that there were 145 cases of fraudulent seafarers' certificates reported from member States in between 2021 and 2022. All reported cases were from the STCW Certificates or Competency (CoC) and beyond, such as ships' cook, seafarer' ID document and medical certificate.

Flag and port States were called on to keep transparency in issuing and endorsing certificates.

It was also noted that STCW Certificates of Proficiency (CoP) should be monitored to keep the transparency across all levels of responsibilities.

Great efforts in seafarers' evacuation, but 60 ships still stranded in the Sea of Azov and the Black Sea

The war between Russia and Ukraine has been continuing since the 24th of February 2022. An emergency task force led by the IMO Secretariat informed that the endeavours to evacuate seafarers stranded in those regions have been successful. However, over 60 merchant vessels were still unable to depart the port of Ukraine although they are applicable for *the Black Sea Grain Initiative*. As the war was approaching nearly a year, simpler procedures to release those ships were imminent.





Contact for further information to Seafarers@itf.org.uk



Annex

AIMS OF THE COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF THE STCW CONVENTION AND CODE

Ensure that the Convention and Code:

- .1 continue to deliver seafarers who are competent and fit to perform the functions required on board ships;
- .2 provide the internationally recognized standards for training and certification of seafarers and standards for watchkeeping;
- .3 respond and adapt to technological, regulatory, operational and other related industry developments; and
- .4 are structured and organized in a manner facilitating harmonized and consistent implementation.

PRINCIPLES OF THE COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF THE STCW CONVENTION AND CODE

The review should:

- .1 consider all provisions of the Convention and Code in order to be comprehensive;
- .2 not downscale existing minimum standards of training, certification and watchkeeping;
- .3 address new and obsolete competencies and proficiencies, outdated requirements and unnecessary duplications;
- .4 address the impact and possibilities of digitalization and emerging technologies on ships and ship operations;
- .5 address the impact and possibilities from the implementation and use of digitalization and emerging technologies in seafarers' education, training and certification;
- .6 seek the reduction of unnecessary administrative burdens;
- .7 address inconsistencies and different interpretations within the Convention and Code, including clarifications already issued by relevant IMO bodies;
- .8 seek to use a consistent terminology and taxonomy throughout the Convention and Code;
- .9 not address minimum safe manning levels which are regulated by the SOLAS Convention (regulation V/14);
- .10 address training, in principle, related to safety of life and property at sea, security, and the protection of the marine environment;
- .11 ensure that the Convention and Code are fully aligned with the IMO standards on ship's operation, construction and equipment;
- .12 ensure that the Convention and Code remain the sole IMO instruments addressing standards for training and certification of seafarers;
- .13 take into account different approaches to organizing and structuring education, training and certification, including formats of delivery of training;



.14 ensure that reporting and monitoring of implementation under the Convention and Code are appropriately transparent, robust and dynamic;

.15 ensure that the standards within the Convention and Code for the training and certification of seafarers, to the extent possible, facilitate mobility of seafarers across different ship types and trades; and

.16 consider the cumulative impact of requirements for seafarer education, training and certification.



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**INTERNATIONAL
TRANSPORT
WORKERS'
FEDERATION**

**49-60 Borough Road
London SE11DR
+44 (0)20 7403 2733**