



SUB-COMMITTEE ON STANDARDS OF
TRAINING AND WATCHKEEPING
32nd session
Agenda item 6

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UNLAWFUL PRACTICES ASSOCIATED WITH CERTIFICATES OF COMPETENCY

Preventive measures related to certificates of competency

Submitted by Spain

SUMMARY

- Executive summary:** This document contains proposals for the use of paper comprising certain security measures for the issue of certificates and endorsements under the STCW Convention, with a view to preventing falsification of such documents
- Action to be taken:** See paragraphs 5 and 6
- Related documents:** Documents STW 31/6/2 and STW 32/6/1

1 This document sets out, in conformity with the provisions of paragraph 46.5 of the Guidelines on organization and methods of work of the MSC and MEPC and their auxiliary organs, certain preventive measures to prevent the fraudulent practices referred to in the documents submitted by India and Vanuatu to this session of the Sub-Committee.

2 As clearly emerged from various sessions and documents issued by the International Maritime Organization (in particular documents STW 31/2, 31/17, 32/6/1 and 32/6/2), some Member States have detected the existence of fraudulent certificates, which may consequently have an impact on maritime safety.

3 Because of this, a number of different lines of research and investigation were initiated, and Governments were urged to continue with monitoring and examine proposals for the thirty-second session of the STW Sub-Committee or, in the longer term, up to 2002.

4 Regulation I/9 of the Annex to the Training Convention contains measures aimed at establishing systems for registering certificates and providing information to other States on the authenticity and validity of such certificates. Logically, as recognized in the thirty-first session of the STW Sub-Committee, the ideal situation would be to establish national electronic registers of certificates and facilitate access to such registries by Maritime Administrations. However, this

measure is rather far from becoming reality because of economic and other repercussions for some Member Governments.

5 While it is considered appropriate to continue to perfect such systems, with the object of achieving better information, it really is possible to establish preventive or dissuasive measures to make it difficult to falsify certificates and/or endorsements, by means of security measures in the material on which the documents are printed, similar to that envisaged for use by the Government of Spain.

Action requested of the Sub-Committee

6 The Sub-Committee is invited to examine the specimen paper in the annex, as an example or model for the issue of certificates and endorsements. Specifically, the type of printing has similar characteristics and security measures to that used for banknotes, as follows:

- (a) Banknote type paper with watermarks visible against the light.
- (b) Links or weave visible only under ultraviolet light.
- (c) Lines of micro text, alternately visible with a normal magnifying glass and an image-distorting magnifying glass.
- (d) The above-mentioned lines cause coloration of the paper and make it difficult to falsify them by means of colour photocopying.

It should be noted that this paper, as well as providing adequate security, is very cheap.

7 The Sub-Committee is further invited to facilitate exchange of information on the characteristics of certificates and endorsements, in cases where Maritime Administrations adopt types of paper containing security measures.