



SUB-COMMITTEE ON STANDARDS OF
TRAINING AND WATCHKEEPING
34th session
Agenda item 4

STW 34/4/4
17 December 2002
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FOLLOW-UP ACTION TO THE 1995 STCW CONFERENCE

Watchkeeping at anchor

Submitted by Denmark

SUMMARY

<i>Executive summary:</i>	This note comments that the Master still should be able to decide whether or not to keep a continuous navigational watch while at anchor.
<i>Action to be taken:</i>	Paragraph 11
<i>Related documents:</i>	STW 33/5/5

1 At STW 33 the Sub-Committee agreed that the issue of a possible ambiguity in the Code concerning anchor watch raised by Australia, Singapore and others (STW 33/5/5) needed further consideration.

2 STW 33 invited Parties to submit comments and proposals to STW 34 (STW 33/17, paragraph 5.55).

3 The amended annex to the 1978 Convention, Regulation VIII/2 paragraph 2.4 requires “an appropriate and effective watch or watches are maintained for the purpose of safety at all times, while the ship is at anchor or moored.”

4 The standards in the STCW Code, Section A/VIII/2 part 3-1, paragraph 51 states that the master can decide, whether he considers it necessary to maintain a continuous navigational watch. Taking regulation VIII/2, paragraph 2.4, into consideration the decision making in the first sentence in paragraph 51 – “If the Master considers it necessary, a continuous watch shall be maintained at anchor” – must be made on the basis of qualitative information.

5 It seems to this delegation that the issue raised by Australia *et al* - concerning Masters who permits the officer on the watch to leave the navigational bridge and ignore the specified duties - is an example of misuse of the provisions of the Convention and the Code.

6 The standards in the STCW Code, Section A/VIII/2 part 4, paragraph 90 states that on any ship “safely at anchor under normal circumstances in port, the Master shall arrange for an appropriate and effective watch to be maintained for the purpose of safety”.

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7 Paragraph 90 indicates that the Master has to make decisions each time the ship is going to anchor. In port the Master must decide whether the ship is safely at anchor or not. This decision is based on various information: Bottom conditions, weather conditions, current, the carried cargo, distance to shore and other vessels, danger of piracy, danger of boarding intruders etc.

8 When the ship is anchored at sea at a suitable and safe roadstead, the Master has to make parallel considerations when deciding if the ordinary navigational watch schedule used en route is to be discontinued and that another qualified officer is to be placed in charge of the watch at anchor.

9 In our opinion the Master should have the authority to decide whether the ordinary navigational watch kept en route should continue at anchor or whether other fully qualified officers could be in charge of the watch at anchor, ensuring that the requirements of section VIII/2, paragraph 51, of the STCW code are fully met.

10 The Masters decision will have to be made on various information, including, but not limited to:

- Conditions at the anchorage, for example bottom conditions and distance to shore and other vessels at anchor;
- Weather conditions;
- Current;
- Requirements of rest periods; and
- Dangers of piracy.

Action requested by the Sub-Committee

11 The Sub-Committee is invited to consider the above comments and take actions as appropriate.
