



SUB-COMMITTEE ON STANDARDS OF
TRAINING AND WATCHKEEPING
34th session
Agenda item 5

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UNLAWFUL PRACTICES ASSOCIATED WITH CERTIFICATES OF COMPETENCY

Anti-fraud measures for ancillary certificates

Submitted by the Republic of Croatia

SUMMARY

Executive summary: This document provides information on procedure of issuance, format and anti-fraud measures applied in issuance of ancillary certificates in the Republic of Croatia

Action to be taken: Paragraph 5

Related documents: STW 33/6, STW 33/17

Introduction

1 The issue of unlawful practices associated with certificates (main and ancillary) and identifying actions and additional measures that need to be taken in compliance with best effective practices places a high priority effort in the Republic of Croatia. This document presents some of the measures currently in place in the Republic of Croatia and provides suggestions for future work in the line with the conclusions from previous session of the Sub-Committee on Standards of Training and Watchkeeping (STW 33).

Certificates issued by training establishments

2 While considering issues in relation to the procedure for the issuance and verification of the certificates issued by the training establishments worldwide we have discovered issues in relation to the process of monitoring and control which could ultimately result in problems related to response on request for verification of authenticity. Therefore the Government of the Republic of Croatia has decided to continue with the practice of full control, issuance and monitoring of all certificates related to the seafarers (main and ancillary issued by training establishments) including the examination of all seafarers, which have successfully passed training courses at the training establishments.

Anti-fraud measures in the certificates

3 Based on previous conclusions the Government of the Republic of Croatia has decided to implement the same level of anti fraud measures in the certificates issued after completion of the training courses at the training establishments and in the main certificates (Certificates of Competency – COC). Such measures include inter alias the following:

- i. use of special inks;
- ii. gradient colours;
- iii. watermarks visible when the document is held at the angle against the light;
- iv. fluorescent ink visible with ultraviolet light;
- v. special thermal coverage of the photo.

Format of the ancillary certificates

4 The format of the ancillary certificates issued by the Administration after successfully passed training courses at the training establishments is the one prescribed by Regulation I/2 of the amended STCW Convention 1978 and Section A- I/2 of the STCW Code including the photo of the seafarer. It should be emphasized that the format of the document which has been issued by the training establishment to the seafarer before issuing of the certificate by the Government is also prescribed and monitored.

E-prevention of fraud and forgery

5 Beside legislative and other efforts on implementation of the amended STCW Convention 1978 the Government of the Republic of Croatia has developed the register of certificates, endorsements and other documents issued by the Maritime Administration of the Republic of Croatia which is maintained by electronic means. This register is a basis for reducing and preventing unlawful practices referring to proliferation of fraudulent STCW certificates. The said register contains as of 19 December 2002 140 005 Croatian certificates readily available for verification by electronic means including not only certificates of competency but all documents issued to one seaman related to education, training, sea service and medical fitness. We believe that such system is the only measure which can ensure rapid response to requests for verification of certificate validity. Further more it also provides very cost effective solution for the issuance of all certificates. With the same e-procedure of issuance and anti fraud standards for all certificates the burden of cost for development of such activities is low, specially if compared with the benefits of having the same anti fraud standards introduced in all certificates.

Action requested of the Sub-Committee

6 The Sub-Committee is invited to consider this document under agenda item 5 as the proposal which should facilitate progress on this important issue and assist the development of guidelines to combat the problem on an international basis.