



SUB-COMMITTEE ON STANDARDS OF
TRAINING AND WATCHKEEPING
36th session
Agenda item 16

STW 36/16/2
9 August 2004
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ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Performance of GMDSS operator's certificate holders

Note by the Secretariat

SUMMARY

Executive summary: This document provides the information on the request by COMSAR 8 to review revalidation procedures for GMDSS operator's certificate holders.

Action to be taken: Paragraph 6

Related documents: MSC 75/24, MSC 78/26, STW 33/17 and STW 34/14

1 The Maritime Safety Committee, at its seventy-eighth session (12 to 21 May 2004), noted COMSAR 8's concern on the performance of GMDSS operator's certificate holders on board ships and, in this context, requested the STW Sub-Committee to further consider revalidation matters in line with the existing provisions of the STCW Code (MSC 78/26, paragraph 16.30).

2 The Sub-Committee may recall in this context, that Norway (STW 33/5/3) had informed STW 33 (21 to 25 January 2002), that on the basis of information gained from radio surveys, they considered that there was a serious lack of competence in knowledge and operation of GMDSS equipment and advised the Sub-Committee that they were therefore considering mandatory examinations for renewal or endorsement of GMDSS certificates every five years. The Russian Federation (STW 33/5/6) had identified similar problems and noted that practical GMDSS implementation constantly required changes in regulatory documents, both nationally and internationally, including amendments to ITU Radio Regulations, IAMSAR manual, etc. and proposed an amendment to section A-IV/2.4 of the STCW Code to require examination every five years.

3 A number of delegations, at STW 33, had supported the proposal to amend the STCW Code, but the majority of delegations had expressed the view that such a requirement could equally apply to other competences in the Convention and the Sub-Committee concurred with this view.

4 STW 33 had noted that the proposed amendment duplicated to some extent the requirements of regulation I/11 - Revalidation of certificates, where radio operators holding certificates are required to establish continued professional competence in accordance with section A-I/11 of the STCW Code, which includes the options of passing an approved test or successfully completing an approved course, and Administrations could therefore require a mandatory examination if they so decided.

5 Noting the options available to Administrations under STCW regulation I/11, STW 33 had agreed that an amendment to the STCW Code to make examinations mandatory for renewal or endorsement of GMDSS certificates every five years was unnecessary (STW 33/17, paragraph 5.17). MSC 75 had noted the STW 33 decision (MSC 75, paragraph 9.12).

Action requested of the Sub-Committee

6 The Sub-Committee is invited to note the above information and to take action as appropriate.
