



IMO

E

SUB-COMMITTEE ON STANDARDS OF
TRAINING AND WATCHKEEPING
38th session
Agenda item 13

STW 38/13
29 August 2006
Original: ENGLISH

REVIEW OF THE PRINCIPLES FOR ESTABLISHING THE SAFE MANNING LEVELS OF SHIPS

Submitted by the International Chamber of Shipping (ICS) and the International Shipping
Federation (ISF)

SUMMARY

Executive summary: The industry is looking forward to working at STW 38 to review A.890(21) and possibly improve its effectiveness. However, bearing in mind that the current resolution was adopted as recently as 1999 following comprehensive consideration by the Organization, it would seem prudent to bear in mind the broader related issues during the review and further to recognize that the issue of fatigue cannot be dealt with by a revision of A.890(21) alone. This paper therefore invites the Sub-Committee to consider the questions outlined in paragraph 3 below when reviewing the resolution to ensure that any decisions take into account the broader issues relating to fatigue

Action to be taken: Paragraph 4

Related documents: MSC 81/23/3, MSC 81/23/21, MSC 81/25, MSC 81/25/Add.1, MSC 81/25/Add.2

1 ICS, ISF and BIMCO, who collectively represent over two-thirds of the world's merchant tonnage, have continued to give careful consideration to the important issues raised in MSC 81/23/3 (submitted by the United Kingdom, other administrations and the European Commission) including concerns about fatigue as a contributory factor in recent maritime incidents and the possible relationship between fatigue and manning levels on board ships. The industry notes that the Maritime Safety Committee agreed that the proposal should be taken up by IMO and instructed this sub-committee to review resolution A.890(21) (as amended by A.955(23)) on Principles of Minimum Safe Manning. The industry is looking forward to working at STW 38 to review A.890(21) and improve its effectiveness.

2 However, bearing in mind that the current resolution was adopted as recently as 1999 following comprehensive consideration by the Organization, it would seem prudent to take into account the broader related issues during the review and further to recognize that the issue of fatigue cannot be dealt with by a revision of A.890(21) alone.

3 ICS, ISF and BIMCO believe that fatigue is caused by many factors and that an holistic approach is required. Therefore, the industry recalls that at MSC 81, it had requested STW 38 to consider a number of related questions in its consideration of A.890(21):

- To what extent are the minimum rest requirements in STCW chapter VIII adequately enforced by flag States? At present there is no mandatory requirement in STCW for ships to maintain work hour records. (Although this is a mandatory requirement under ILO Convention No.180, this convention does not enjoy the same level of ratification as STCW). The industry is aware of the concerns in some quarters about manning levels on board certain ships, and the suspicion that a few flag Administrations may on occasion be ‘competing’ with regard to the manning levels which they are willing to approve. However, the industry suspects that, to the extent that such a problem exists, it is only possible because existing international rest or work hour rules and watchkeeping requirements are inadequately enforced. If a ship is insufficiently manned, this should be apparent from its inability to comply with rest or work hour requirements, which is one of the main factors which flag States are expected to take into account when issuing the Safe Manning Documents in accordance with A.890(21).
- To what extent is compliance with rest or work hour records adequately inspected by port State control? Rest or work hour records may only need to be examined in detail when there are clear grounds for doing so, but when there are clear grounds, the inspection may be limited to checking that such records are maintained, not to checking if they actually demonstrate compliance with the minimum rest hours required by STCW.
- Section A-VIII/1 paragraph 5 of the STCW Code requires the posting of a watch schedule on board. Are flag States verifying that watch schedules ensure compliance with the minimum rest requirements? When approving proposed minimum manning levels, are flag States verifying whether the levels proposed are sufficient to enable compliance with this schedule?
- Do rest or work hour records lend themselves to easy inspection by flag States and by port State control? Is there a need to review the IMO/ILO Guidelines¹ adopted in 1998, including the adequacy of “backing evidence” to show that rest or work hour records are correct and the possible need for greater harmonization of inspection requirements concerning rest or work hour records?
- Is there a need to realign the rest hour requirements of the STCW Convention with ILO requirements on seafarers’ rest hours, including the requirements recently adopted as part of the ILO Maritime Labour Convention 2006? Apart from the fact that the ILO requirements are broadly stricter than those required by STCW, do the differences between the IMO and ILO regimes complicate the process of enforcement?
- Does account need to be taken of the new requirements in the ILO Maritime Labour Convention 2006 for flag States to issue a Maritime Labour Certificate that demands inspection of all the requirements of the ILO Convention on

¹ IMO/ILO Guidelines for the Development of Seafarers’ Shipboard Working Arrangements and Formats of Records of Seafarers’ Hours of Work or Hours of Rest.

shipboard working and living conditions, including rest or work hours and manning levels?

- Is the increasing burden of documentation that seafarers are required to maintain also an issue?
- To what extent can the introduction of the IMO Member State Audit Scheme be expected to contribute to effective implementation by flag States of A.890(21)?
- Bearing in mind the recent discussion at STW 37 on a review of the STCW Convention, is the certification structure required by STCW sufficiently flexible to accommodate the types of shipboard organization that might mitigate fatigue?
- Should further consideration be given to advances in technology, and in particular to the integration of bridge systems and its possible effect on reducing fatigue? The Sub-Committee may wish to send any thoughts to the appropriate committees and/or sub-committees.

Action requested of the Sub-Committee

4 The Sub-Committee is requested to consider the questions outlined in paragraph 3 above when reviewing resolution A.890(21) to ensure that any decisions take into account the broader issues relating to fatigue.
