

Translation

Local Vessels Advisory Committee
Joint Sub-committee on Class I and Class IV Vessels
Minutes of the 13th Meeting

Date : 28 August 2014 (Thursday)
Time : 10:07 a.m.
Place : Conference Room A, 24/F, Harbour Building, Central

Present

Mr. LI Yiu-kwong (Chairman)	Marine Department (MD)
Mr. NG Siu-yuen, Nelson	Hong Kong & Kowloon Ferry Ltd. (HKKF)
Mr. Ken WONG	HKKF
Mr. WU Ka-shun	South China Towing Co. Ltd.
Mr. CHEUNG Kwok-wai	New World First Ferry Services Ltd. (First Ferry)
Mr. P.M. LEE, Alfred	First Ferry
Mr. LI Kin-wah	First Ferry
Mr. CHOR Yee-on	The Hongkong and Yaumati Ferry Co. Ltd. (HYF)
Mr. Bill CHAN	Discovery Bay Transportation Services Ltd. (DBTPL)
Mr. WONG Yiu-wah	Marine Excursion Association (MEA)
Mr. William LI	MEA
Ms. Tiffany LEE	MEA
Mr. Donald LEE	Hong Kong Water Ski Association
Mr. Roger EASTHAM	Royal Hong Kong Yacht Club (RHKYC)
Mr. SHEK Ale	Yachting & Boating Club
Mr. Warwick DOWNES	Hong Kong Sailing Federation
Mr. MA Chi-wai	HK Shipyard
Mr. WEN Tsz-kit	Hong Kong & Kowloon Motor Boats & Tug Boats Association Ltd. (MBTA)
Mr. KWOK Tak-kee	MBTA

Mr. PUI Chi-keung, Emil	MBTA
Mr. LEE Shing-hing	Sai Kung Kaito Association
Mr. Samson LEUNG	The “Star” Ferry Company, Limited (Star Ferry)
Mr. SO Yiu-fun	Star Ferry
Mr. FAN Keung	Harbour Transportation Workers General Union (HTWGU)
Mr. SIU Ping-wing	HTWGU
Mr. M.S. ON	HTWGU
Mr. CHAN Chi-ming	The Hong Kong Shipyard Limited (HK Shipyard)
Mr. KEUNG Siu-fai	Hong Kong & Kowloon Floating Fishermen Welfare Promotion Association (Floating Fishermen)
Mr. Donald K. P. CHEUNG	Park Island Transport Company Ltd.
Mr. YUEN Wing-cheong	Transport Department (TD)
Mr. Raymond CHAN	Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD)
Mr. CHEUNG Mei-hon, Barry	Hong Kong Police Force (HKPF)
Mr. WONG Wing-hang	MD
Mr. Ivan SHUEN	MD
Mr. Jerry TANG	MD
Mr. TANG Kwong-fai	MD
Mr. NG Ngai-wing	MD
Mr. HO Chi-ping	MD
Miss Jackie CHAN (Secretary)	MD

Absent with Apologies

Mr. Paul CHEUNG	Hong Kong Jet Sports Boating Association
Mr. CHEUNG Yat-leung, Jacky	Sai Kung Yacht Association
Dr. LAU Kwok-lam, Alan	Pleasure Boating Operations
Mr. Robert BLYTHE	Gold Coast Yacht and Country Club
Mr. Chris WONG	DBTPL
Mr. LO Ngok-yang	Cheoy Lee Shipyards Limited (Cheoy Lee)

I. Opening Remarks

The Chairman welcomed all industry representatives to the meeting.

II. Confirmation of Minutes of Previous Meeting

2. The minutes of the previous meeting would be confirmed later as members needed more time for their perusal.

(Post-meeting note: There being no amendments from members as at 30 October, the minutes of the previous meeting were confirmed.)

III. Discussion Items

1. Guideline on working/rest time and meal break arrangement for crew of local passenger carrying vessels

3. **The Chairman** invited members to give their views on the guideline on working/rest time and meal break arrangement for crew of local passenger carrying vessels. MD would also distribute questionnaires to the relevant shipping companies to gather information on existing duty shift of their crew.

4. **Mr. CHEUNG** (First Ferry) said the problems of insufficient new blood and shortage of manpower in the industry should be resolved first. **Mr. NG Siu-yuen, Nelson (HKKF)** added the duty roster arrangements for coxswains and crew in the ferry sector had been adjusted, adopting mostly the 24-hour-on and 24-hour-off system. He considered it inappropriate to discuss adjusting the working time and duty roster arrangements when there was a shortage of manpower. **Mr. FAN Keung (HTWGU)** said the 24-hour-on and 24-hour-off system was generally well received by coxswains and crew according to the survey conducted by their union.

5. **Mr. HO Chi-ping (MD)** replied that the Maritime Services Training Institute was organising a 10-day basic training course for crew to address the manpower shortage. **Mr. FAN (HTWGU)** said the union would endeavour to meet the needs of the industry and provide training for crew. **Mr. KEUNG Siu-fai (Floating Fishermen)** proposed that a training school for (crew of) local vessels be set up, taking reference from training arrangements of other countries.

6. **Mr. Roger EASTHAM (RHKYC)** proposed (1) negotiations over the standard working hours and on-the-job training arrangements among the industry and trade unions at the present stage, (2) implementation of the new measures by phases over five years, and (3) provision of training for crew by shipping companies with financial assistance from the government. **Mr. CHEUNG (First Ferry)** said, in view of the current ferry fares, the costs incurred from the on-the-job training were unaffordable.

7. **The Chairman** said MD attached great importance to marine safety and realised the problem of manpower shortage. However, there was a pressing need for a guideline on working hours as prolonged working hours for coxswains and crew had direct impact on marine safety. He reiterated that the actual situations of the industry would be taken into account when the guideline was mapped out.

2. Regular Medical Examination for Coxswains

8. **The Chairman** remarked that coxswains were not required to undergo regular medical examinations upon acquiring their certificates under the existing system. Paper No. 3/2014 set out the items of the medical examination for coxswains. Members were invited to comment on the paper.

9. **Mr. CHEUNG (First Ferry)** said items (a) to (f) were standard items of general medical examinations. He worried that medical practitioners tended to be conservative, and thus might give unfavourable reports and remarks on item (g). He added that the standards for passing the medical examination were far more important than the items of examination and should thus be set by professionals. **Mr. NG (HKKF)** worried that if the standards were set too high, crew with diseases commonly found in modern cities would all be categorised as substandard.

10. **Mr. CHEUNG (First Ferry)** said MD should ensure that coxswains had undergone medical examinations when they joined the industry. **Mr. WEN Tsz-kit (MBTA)** was not against the imposition of regular medical examinations for coxswains, but held that further discussions on the standards were required. He hoped that the government would consider rendering financial assistance to the trade for the medical examinations.

11. **The Chairman** thanked members for their comments. The items of medical examination set out in the paper were agreed and endorsed by members. It was agreed that further consultations on details of the standards were required and members were welcome to give their views in writing after the meeting.

3. Practical Operation Assessment

12. **The Chairman** invited members to comment on Paper No. 4/2014 and reiterated that what contained therein would only be applicable to certificates issued after the proposal came into effect.

13. **Mr. CHEUNG (First Ferry)** said reference should be made to the current passing rate of the practical operation assessment taken by holders of the certificate, while the paper should also set out the scope of examination and the syllabus for courses on the practical operation assessment. **Mr. HO (MD)** replied that the measure was introduced to assess the knowledge of coxswains/operators on local navigational channels and port facilities.

14. **Mr. FAN (HTWGU)** said fellow workers expressed interest in having the opportunity of practical operation, and the union was supportive in this regard.

15. **Mr. CHEUNG (First Ferry)** agreed on the purpose of the practical operation assessment, but opined that the assessment should only be taken as a reference, not an evaluation. **Mr. KEUNG (Floating Fishermen)** said candidates for certificates for coxswains of local vessels and pleasure vessel operators should be treated alike.

16. **Mr. NG (HKKF)** said a ship simulator-aided practical operation assessment might be more suitable for crew who lacked the experience of practical operation than candidates for the Coxswain Grade 1 Certificate. He agreed on the introduction of practical operation assessment for marine safety but the target participants required deliberations.

17. **Mr. WEN (MBTA)** hoped that MD could take into account the practice of a “Safety Card” system whereby candidates who had completed a course and passed the test would be certificated.

18. **The Chairman** noted members were concerned about the course curriculum. He thanked members for their comments and recognition of the need to introduce the practical operation assessment for navigational safety.

IV. Any Other Business and Details of the Next Meeting

19. The next meeting would be held on Thursday, 27 November 2014 at 10:00 a.m., in Conference Room A, 24/F, Harbour Building.

V. End of Meeting

20. There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:45 p.m.