

Translation

**Local Vessels Advisory Committee**  
**Joint Sub-committee on Class I and Class IV Vessels**  
**Minutes of the 15th Meeting**

Date : 12 March 2015 (Thursday)

Time : 10:00 a.m.

Venue: Conference Room A, 24/F, Harbour Building, Central

**Present**

Mr. LI Yiu-kwong, Stephen (Chairman)	Marine Department
Mr. NG Siu-yuen, Nelson	Hong Kong & Kowloon Ferry Ltd.
Mr. C. M. WONG, Ken	Hong Kong & Kowloon Ferry Ltd.
Mr. CHOR Yee-on, Steve	The Hongkong and Yaumati Ferry Co. Ltd.
Mr. Samson LEUNG	The “Star” Ferry Company, Limited
Mr. Johnny LEUNG	The “Star” Ferry Company, Limited
Mr. CHEUNG Kwok-wai, Demen	New World First Ferry Services Ltd.
Mr. LI Kin-wah	New World First Ferry Services Ltd.
Mr. Chris WONG	Discovery Bay Transportation Services Ltd.
Mr. Bill CHAN	Discovery Bay Transportation Services Ltd.
Mr. Ben LO	Discovery Bay Transportation Services Ltd.
Mr. K. P. CHEUNG, Donald	Park Island Transport Company Ltd.
Mr. MA Chi-wai	The Hong Kong Shipyard Limited
Mr. C. M. CHAN	The Hong Kong Shipyard Limited
Mr. WU Ka-shun	South China Towing Co. Ltd.
Mr. Warwick DOWNES	Hong Kong Sailing Federation
Mr. Joe GODDARD	Royal Hong Kong Yacht Club
Mr. Kevin LEWIS	Aberdeen Boat Club
Mr. LAU Wai-kee	Aberdeen Boat Club
Mr. Ale SHEK	Hebe Haven Yacht Club

Mr. Paul Cheung	Hong Kong Jet Sports Boating Association
Mr. Donald LEE	Hong Kong Water Ski Association
Mr. KEUNG Siu-fai	Hong Kong & Kowloon Floating Fishermen Welfare Promotion Association
Mr. William LI	Marine Excursion Association
Ms. Tiffany LEE	Marine Excursion Association
Mr. WONG Yiu-wah	Marine Excursion Association
Mr. FAN Keung	Harbour Transportation Workers General Union
Mr. M. S. ON	Harbour Transportation Workers General Union
Mr. WEN Tsz-kit	Hong Kong & Kowloon Motor Boats & Tug Boats Association Ltd.
Mr. KWOK Tak-kee	Hong Kong & Kowloon Motor Boats & Tug Boats Association Ltd.
Mr. H. K. WONG	Hong Kong & Kowloon Motor Boats & Tug Boats Association Ltd.
Mr. PUI Chi-keung, Emil	Hong Kong & Kowloon Motor Boats & Tug Boats Association Ltd.
Mr. LI Chi-wai	Hong Kong Seamen's Union
Mr. LIN Wing-ho, Vico	Hong Kong Police Force
Mr. YUEN Wing-cheong	Transport Department
Ms. YAU Lai-sze, Lizzy	Leisure and Cultural Services Department
Mr. WONG Wing-hang	Marine Department
Mr. Jerry TANG	Marine Department
Mr. TANG Kwong-fai	Marine Department
Mr. Jammy NG	Marine Department
Miss Jennifer LAM (Secretary)	Marine Department

**Absent with Apologies**

Mr. P. M. LEE, Alfred	New World First Ferry Services Ltd.
Mr. CHEUNG Yat-leung, Jacky	Sai Kung Yacht Association
Ms. Sandy MAK	Tsui Wah Ferry Service (H.K.) Ltd.
Mr. LEE Shing-hing	Sai Kung Kaito Association
Mr. LO Ngok-yang	Cheoy Lee Shipyards Limited

Dr. LAU Kwok-lam, Alan	Pleasure Boating Operations
Mr. Simon PICKERING	Royal Hong Kong Yacht Club
Mr. Robert BLYTHE	Gold Coast Yacht and Country Club
Mr. Roger EASTHAM	Royal Hong Kong Yacht Club

## I. Opening Remarks

The Chairman welcomed all representatives from the industry to the meeting.

## II. Confirmation of Minutes of Previous Meeting

2. Mr. CHEUNG Kwok-wai, Demen proposed to amend the fourth paragraph of the minutes of the previous meeting as follows:

*The fourth paragraph of the minutes of the previous meeting: Mr. CHEUNG Kwok-wai, Demen was concerned about the passing standards for the various items under the medical examination. He objected to the requirement that the cost of the examination should be borne by employers because it would increase the operating cost, which would in turn be reflected in fares. He also enquired who should keep the original copy of the examination report, and opined that the arrangement for coxswains to undergo a medical examination every five years should be introduced to the industry as an advice only.*

3. After members' deliberation, the Chairman announced that the minutes of the previous meeting were confirmed. Moreover, as the Marine Department (MD) was still collecting data on the first discussion item in the minutes of the previous meeting, namely "Regular Medical Examination for Coxswains", discussion of the item would continue in due course.

## III. Discussion Items

- (i) Practical Operation Assessment (Paper No. 1/2015)

4. **The Chairman** briefed members on Paper No. 1/2015 and invited members to give their views.
  
5. **Mr. Johnny LEUNG** said that there had not been any stipulations in the international convention that required the inclusion of a practical operation assessment in the examination. The current examinations for coxswains were mainly conducted in the form of an oral examination and examiners could assess candidates' knowledge of marine safety by using props such as models. To enhance the overall operation skills of coxswains, he suggested that the incorporation of simulator-aided instruction in the preparatory course for examination or the refresher course be considered. Regarding pleasure vessels, there were quite a number of practical operation courses organised by local course providers for those who had taken examinations, which could serve the purpose of further raising candidates' safety awareness. He also remarked that as certificate holders were to be exempted from the assessment, it would be unfair to new candidates because they would be subject to a higher examination threshold in view of the mandatory inclusion of navigation simulation in the examination.

(Post-meeting note: There is no examination for Coxswain Grade 1 Certificate. Candidates who meet the eligibility criteria set out in Chapter 3 of the Examination Rules for Local Certificates of Competency and pass both Parts A and B of the Coxswain Grade 2 Examination will be issued with a Coxswain Grade 1 Certificate. The examination for Coxswain Grade 2 is in two parts: (1) a written examination, and (2) a practical chart work examination for Part A; and an oral examination for Part B.)

6. **The Chairman** opined that the safety strengthening measures should align with the priority of resource utilisation. The initiatives mentioned above targeted at high-risk vessels at the present stage. The way forward would be to strengthen training for (coxswains of) vessels of other grades.
  
7. **Mr. Jammy NG** said that examinations for seafarers had all along been adopting the standards of the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (STCW). The latest amendments in 2010 pointed out that seafaring training supported by simulation technology would be the future trend, and the use of a simulator had been included in a regulation of the Convention. Meanwhile, at the meeting of the Sub-committee on Human Element, Training and Watchkeeping of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) held in

February this year, the Secretary-General mentioned specifically that the numbers of passenger vessel accidents and casualties around the world over the past ten years were on the rise. IMO encouraged executive authorities to implement the international convention relating to training for the crew of passenger carrying vessels as appropriate through domestic legislation. To assess the response capabilities of candidates, simulating emergency scenarios by using a navigation simulator was easier than in a practical operation environment. Although the incorporation of navigation simulation into initial training would help enhance overall safety awareness, legislation should start with high-risk vessels and then other types of vessels in consideration of resources available.

8. **Mr. Johnny LEUNG** pointed out that the current STCW mainly set out the direction for training and did not require for the introduction of navigation simulation in the examination. **Mr. Jammy NG**, in response, said that training and examinations had to complement each other. To be eligible for a Coxswain Grade 1 Certificate, an applicant was required to complete a series of designated training courses beforehand. **The Chairman** added that the training should tie in with corresponding assessments to ensure thorough understanding of candidates.
9. **Mr. Johnny LEUNG** reiterated that he was in favour of introducing navigation simulation in training, but had reservations about its inclusion in the examination. He opined that the oral part of the examination could already assess the emergency preparedness of crew effectively.
10. **Mr. KEUNG Siu-fai** said that he had first-hand experience of operating a navigation simulator. As the simulated scenario was in two-dimensional images, it was difficult even for persons with navigational experience to make out the escape route. He remarked that because the technical requirements for operating a navigation simulator differed from that for practical navigation, introducing navigation simulation in the examination would not necessarily enhance the quality of crew. Regarding cultivation of safety awareness, he noted that quite a number of vessels deviated from their course for fishing. He urged MD to address the issue and promote public safety awareness.

11. **Mr. C. M. WONG, Ken** remarked that the performance, stability and mode of operation varied between different types of vessels. However, a navigation simulator could only simulate one scenario and a single type of vessel, limiting its applicability to the actual operation of all vessels. For holders of a Coxswain Grade 2 Certificate and an Engine Operator Certificate (without restriction), it is stipulated that MD shall recognise their qualifications as equivalent to a Pleasure Vessel Operator Grade 1 Certificate. Even after the enactment of the new legislation, they would still be exempted from the navigation simulation assessment, which would be unfair to other candidates. He suggested MD reinforce the basic training first. As applicants for the Coxswain Grade 3 Certificate were only required to pass the written examination and they might know nothing about practical operation, legislation should first deal with the examination for the Certificate. **Mr. KWOK Tak-kee** deemed it unnecessary for holders of the Coxswain Grade 2 Certificate to take a simulation assessment as most of them were engaged in the daily operation of trading vessels and were very familiar with the marine environment and topography. In response, **Mr. Jammy NG** said that the simulation assessment basically covered three areas, namely nautical knowledge, International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea and emergency response, and the main purpose of it was to enhance the basic safety awareness instead of vessel operation skills of crew.

(Post-meeting note: After the proposal has come into effect, applicants for the Pleasure Vessel Operator Grade 1 Certificate, including those who are holders of the Coxswain Grade 2 Certificate and the Engine Operator Certificate, are required to pass a practical operation assessment for operation of pleasure vessels let for hire or reward of more than 15 metres in length overall. Operation of pleasure vessels not let for hire or reward of more than 15 metres in length overall, however, is exempt from the assessment.)

12. **Mr. Johnny LEUNG** remarked that MD had considered revising the criteria for application of coxswain certificates to require applicants to submit sea service and lookout service records (prepared and countersigned by the employing shipping company or coxswains who were responsible for training). Nowadays most shipping companies offered training on safety and emergency response to their staff. If the training institutions could provide relevant qualification proof for the staff, candidates' practical operation skills could be assessed more effectively than by a simulation assessment.

13. **Mr. NG Siu-yuen, Nelson** agreed with Mr. LEUNG's view that a single examination might not be able to effectively assess candidates' knowledge of practical operation and emergency response. **Mr. CHEUNG Kwok-wai, Demen** opined that MD should take into account the manpower issue of the industry in considering the introduction of a simulation examination through legislation. Quite a number of shipping companies already had an ageing workforce. If MD further raised the threshold for application for the Coxswain Grade 1 Certificate, it would be even more difficult for shipping companies to recruit qualified persons into the industry.
14. **Mr. Jammy NG**, in response, said that the Transport and Housing Bureau (THB) had implemented various supportive policies for the maritime industry, including a 12-month full subsidy for the training of those who had been employed by shipping companies. **Mr. CHEUNG Kwok-wai, Demen** said that the subsidy initiative was not effective in attracting new blood to the industry. So far only two crew members had enrolled in the sailor training course of his company. **The Chairman** remarked that other teams under THB and MD would follow up the manpower issue in the industry, and that human resources should be discussed separately from safety awareness.
15. **Mr. WEN Tsz-kit** opined that simulation-based training was conducive to enhancing crew's response to unforeseen incidents at sea, but the main concern of the industry was whether it would be incorporated into examinations. He also pointed out that the simulated scenarios of the navigation simulator required improvement as it varied much from actual situations.
16. **Mr. Jammy NG** responded that the introduction of an assessment in the simulation-based training enabled effective assessment of trainees' knowledge of safety and emergency response. When a trainee was undergoing the training, the instructor could give appropriate assistance and comments while fellow trainees could observe and learn as well. Simulation-based training would be a continuous assessment, as distinct from one-off examination. **Mr. TANG Kwong-fai** remarked that the continuous assessment mode resembled that adopted in the confined space training course. The instructor gave comments to trainees on the spot for consolidation of what they had learnt.

17. **Mr. LI Chi-wai** said that the Hong Kong Seamen's Union (HKSU) offered various training courses for the new entrants of the industry for them to master navigation skills and knowledge. Besides examinations, HKSU put special emphasis on the design and practicality of the courses. Navigation simulation was not exactly the same as the actual situation, but it was more flexible in terms of simulating inclement weather and special circumstances. Furthermore, the cost of a simulation assessment was lower than that of a practical vessel operation assessment. He agreed that simulation-based navigation training should be introduced in coxswain grade 2 and grade 3 courses first. However, the overall training hours for the basic courses should be deliberated carefully for avoidance of impact on the daily operation and manpower deployment of shipping companies. As a representative of training institutes, he pointed out that even though the course could be conducted in the evening or in the form of accumulation of course hours, continuous learning was most desirable. He considered that the inclusion of navigation simulation in the examination might subject new entrants to greater pressure.

18. **The Chairman** concluded that the opinions on the introduction of an assessment in the form of navigation simulation would be recorded for further consideration.

*(ii) Standard of Lifejackets (Paper No. 2/2015)*

19. **The Chairman** asked **Mr. Jerry TANG** to brief members on Paper No. 2/2015 and invited members to give their views.

20. **Mr. DOWNES** agreed to the implementation of the proposal. Since the lifejacket currently approved by the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS) was rather bulky and inconvenient for seafarers to perform their duties, his organization provided two different sets of lifejackets for their seafarers, namely the SOLAS-approved lifejacket and the everyday lifejacket. **Mr. GODDARD** welcomed the proposal as well. He remarked that the lifejacket model approved by the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) was more practical, and that shipping companies could choose suitable lifejackets according to needs. **Mr. LEWIS** observed that the new revision offered one more choice to shipping companies without imposing extra costs on them.



21. **Mr. Johnny LEUNG** enquired whether the existing lifejackets on board vessels met the newly revised standards in the Codes of Practice. **Mr. Jerry TANG** replied that no immediate answer could be given since the models of the lifejackets on individual vessels might be different. According to the Paper, lifejackets which had passed inspection in accordance with the Code of Practice – Safety Standards for Class I, II and III Vessels or the Code of Practice – Safety Standards for Class IV Vessels would not be affected by the new requirement. **The Chairman** added that with the new revision, ISO-approved lifejacket standards would be included in the Codes of Practice, whereas the SOLAS requirements would remain unchanged.
22. **Mr. CHEUNG Kwok-wai, Demen** proposed amending the wordings of the Paper to state that the revision only involved introducing ISO-approved lifejacket standards into the Codes of Practice, and that the current approved models could still be used. **Mr. LI Kin-wah** enquired whether MD could circulate the standards of the ISO 100 and ISO 150 concerned to members. **Mr. Jerry TANG** said that MD had to think about it in view of copyright. Other members suggested that MD could show them samples of lifejackets approved by the Codes of Practice for reference by shipping companies. **Mr. TANG Kwong-fai** responded that there were various brands of lifejackets approved by ISO. Shipping companies could ask MD for advice on a particular lifejacket sample, if necessary.
23. **Mr. Paul Cheung** enquired whether jet skis should be equipped with lifejackets as required by the amended Codes of Practice. He pointed out that frequent contact with sea water in the operation of jet skis rendered inflatable lifejackets unsuitable. **Mr. Jerry TANG** responded that since lifejackets on jet skis were not for life saving in distress, the pilot boat should be equipped with approved lifejackets. **Mr. PUI Chi-keung, Emil** said that as jet skis required a separate licence, theoretically they had to comply with the requirements of the Codes of Practice. If the Codes of Practice confined the use of lifejackets for life saving in distress only, MD should explicitly state so in the Codes, and provided frontline staff with enforcement guidelines.
24. **The Chairman** concluded that members' discussion was noted, and that views of members on the Paper would be collected by 12 April 2015.

**IV. Any Other Business**

25. **Mr. DOWNES** enquired whether MD would convene regular meetings for Class IV vessels separately. **The Chairman**, in response, said that he would convey the opinion to the chairman of the Sub-committee on Class IV Vessels.

(Post-meeting note: The opinion was conveyed to the Sub-committee on Class IV Vessels on 13 March 2015.)

**V. Details of the Next Meeting**

26. The next meeting would be held on Thursday, 25 June 2015 at 10:00 a.m., in Conference Room A, 24/F, Harbour Building.

**VI. End of Meeting**

27. There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:45 a.m.

Marine Department  
March 2015