

Shipping Consultative Committee

Proposal for the amendments to the Minimum Safe Manning Certificate

Purpose

1. The purpose of this paper is to seek members' views on the proposal to revise the existing Minimum Safe Manning (MSM) Certificate issued to Hong Kong registered ships. The proposal has taken into consideration of the relevant regulations of STCW Convention and IMO Resolution A. 890(21) – "Principles of Safe Manning" as amended.

Background

2. Recently, there were a few cases that Hong Kong registered ships were alleged of having a deficiency because of their MSM Certificates during port State control (PSC) inspections in Belgium and Italy.

3. In these cases, it was alleged that qualifications of the officers and ratings under the STCW Convention had not been clearly specified in the MSM Certificates, and thus not conforming with the format provided in Annex 3 to IMO Resolution A. 890(21). Marine Department in response talked and explained to the concerned port States that the format of the MSM Certificate provided in the said Resolution was not a mandatory requirement and it was up to individual flag Administrations to decide the most appropriate format to suit its purpose. Besides, the required STCW qualifications of officers serving on Hong Kong ships are clearly shown on the certificates of competency/licenses issued by this Department which were all in line with the STCW Convention. Eventually, Belgium and Italy accepted our explanation and agreed to delete the concerned deficiencies from the PSC inspection reports.

The Proposal

4. Although the deficiencies have been lifted, it is considered necessary to revise the format of the existing MSM Certificate to indicate the required STCW qualifications for officers and ratings to keep in line with the format given in IMO Resolution A.890(21) to avoid similar inconvenience to Hong Kong registered ships in future PSC inspections.

5. Taking this opportunity, it is also suggested to state in the revised MSM Certificate the conditions under which dispensation may be granted in accordance with the STCW Convention for the absence of the master or the chief engineer.

Consultation

5. Members are invited to offer comments on the proposed changes, which are shaded in the attached draft revised MSM Certificate.

Marine Department
30 April 2007