



Key Issues

Training and Watchkeeping

ICS is seeking to persuade IMO to conduct a comprehensive review of the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (STCW). In the meantime, ICS remains engaged in routine but nonetheless important discussions at IMO on improving seafarers' training.

Ballast water treatment systems, as required by the IMO Ballast Water Management Convention, are a significant new piece of complex ship's equipment that must be operated and maintained by shipboard personnel, adhering to new procedures to ensure compliance. ICS members have therefore identified an additional training need that may not be adequately addressed by STCW. However, an underlying principle for ICS is that training in the use of common ship systems or equipment should be covered under the core maritime education and training delivered in accordance with

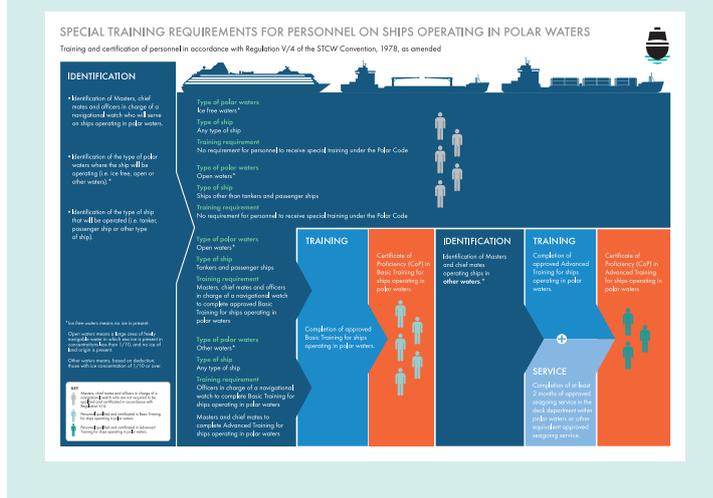
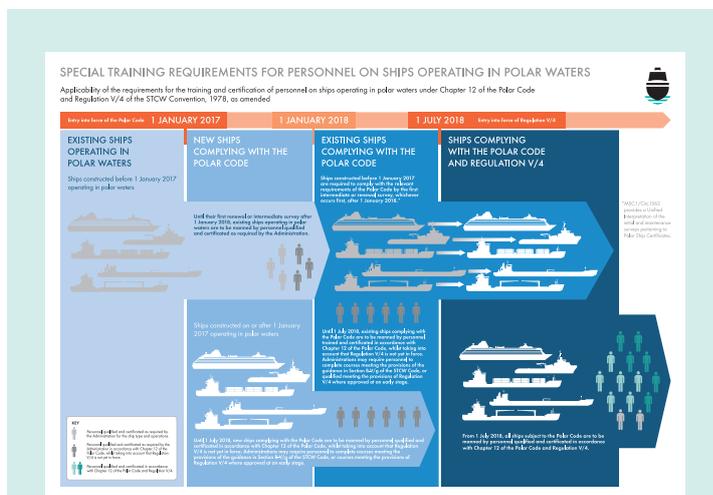
the STCW Convention. Following an ICS submission to the MEPC meeting in October 2018, IMO has agreed to add this matter to its work programme. ICS is examining the possibility of suggesting some amendments to Chapters II and III of the STCW Code to include generic training on ballast water management in an appropriate manner.

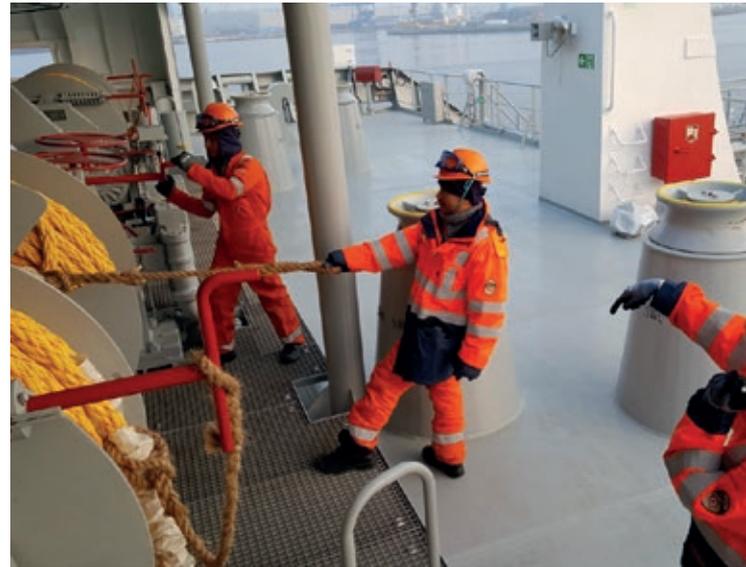
Meanwhile, on 1 July 2018 two new sets of amendments to the STCW Convention and Code entered into force: the requirement for training in the International Code for Ships Operating in Polar Waters (Polar Code); and new mandatory minimum requirements for the training and qualifications of personnel on passenger ships. To assist ship operators with compliance, ICS has developed infographic guidance on these new STCW training requirements which can be downloaded free of charge via the ICS website.

Following several fires on board ro-ro passenger ships in recent years, IMO has been conducting a review of SOLAS requirements to minimise the incidence and consequences of such fires. Some governments have suggested the development of new requirements for seafarer training or ship's drills. ICS, however, is seeking to highlight the extent and strength of existing requirements for fire-fighting training, familiarisation and drills, both in SOLAS and STCW, and the need to focus the discussion on ensuring proper implementation and compliance.

Minimum rest hour requirements also form part of the STCW Convention's watchkeeping provisions, compliance with which ICS continues to support through its successful ISF Watchkeeper seafarers' work hour record software, which is now used by around 10,000 ships.

In January 2019, following a long review process in which ICS was actively involved, IMO issued revised Guidelines on Fatigue, superseding those developed in 2001, to help all stakeholders better understand their roles and responsibilities in mitigating and managing the risk of fatigue among seafarers. ICS is now encouraging companies to take the revised Safety Management Systems under the ISM Code. As part of the IMO review, ICS successfully secured inclusion of important additional guidance for flag states and Port State Control authorities, providing some approaches for their role in helping to reduce fatigue on board ships, including when ships are subject to inspections in port.





Following the wider use and acceptance of electronic ship certificates, discussions have finally commenced at IMO about the extension of their potential benefits to STCW certificates and documentary evidence of ongoing competence. ICS is very supportive of any efforts to move towards the issuance and acceptance of electronic certificates and flag state endorsements under the STCW Convention. The availability and opportunities provided by electronic certification would greatly assist companies, which may be responsible for thousands of seafarers, of many different nationalities, who are currently required to hold a very large number of different certificates and documents. Work on developing possible IMO guidance on this issue under the STCW Convention will begin in 2019, in which ICS will be actively engaged to ensure an outcome that will contribute to reducing administrative burdens for ship operators and seafarers worldwide.

