

SUB-COMMITTEE ON HUMAN ELEMENT,
TRAINING AND WATCHKEEPING
6th session
Agenda item 3

HTW 6/3/5
8 March 2019
Original: ENGLISH
Pre-session public release:

VALIDATED MODEL TRAINING COURSES

Comments on document HTW 6/3

Submitted by ICS

SUMMARY

Executive summary: This document provides information on an industry initiative to develop a new international medical guide for ships

Strategic direction, if applicable: 1

Output: 1.3

Action to be taken: Paragraph 14

Related documents: HTW 5/3/14, HTW 5/16 and HTW 6/3

1 This document is submitted in accordance with paragraph 6.12.5 of the *Organization and method of work of the Maritime Safety Committee and the Marine Environment Protection Committee and their subsidiary bodies* (MSC-MEPC.1/Circ.5/Rev.1), and provides comments on the report on the model courses programme contained in document HTW 6/3 (Secretariat).

Background

2 The fifth session of the Sub-Committee on Human Element, Training and Watchkeeping (HTW 5) considered document HTW 5/3/14 (IMHA), which proposed to undertake the revision of IMO model courses 1.13 on *Elementary first aid*, 1.14 on *Medical first aid* and 1.15 on *Medical care*.

3 In the context of its consideration of the proposal from IMHA, HTW 5 recognized the need to revise the current International Medical Guide for Ships (IMGS) and requested the Secretariat to contact ILO with a view to providing information on how to proceed with the revision of IMGS to the next session of the Sub-Committee.

4 Since its first publication in 1967, IMGS has been a standard reference publication on the provision of medical first aid and care on board ships. It is referenced in the Maritime Labour Convention, 2006, as amended (MLC, 2006), and the 1978 STCW Convention, as

amended. The third edition of IMGS was published in 2007, as a result of collaboration between WHO, IMO, ILO, ICS (previously ISF), ITF and IMHA.

5 In document HTW 6/3 (Secretariat), the Secretariat provides the Sub-Committee with the information it requested on an approach to proceeding with an update of IMGS following contact with ILO and its tripartite constituents.

6 ICS has submitted this document to supplement the information provided in paragraphs 19 and 20 of document HTW 6/3 (Secretariat).

Discussion

7 ICS agrees with the conclusion of HTW 5 that the current edition of IMGS is in urgent need of an update. It provides information that may not be aligned with the latest practices and medical advice, it is too academic in terms of its contents, structure and presentation, and it does not sufficiently appreciate that the persons providing medical care or first aid on board ships are not usually qualified doctors or nurses. This has affected its reputation and use as the medical guide carried on board ships.

8 ICS considers that a medical guide for use on board ships should provide practical information and guidance on the provision of medical care and first aid in an easy-to-follow format, and that it should be supported, where appropriate, by photos, diagrams and videos. A widely recognized, international medical guide for ships can help ensure that seafarers are not faced with different medical guides on different ships.

9 Due to the urgent need for the update and with a view to expediting this work, ICS has decided to coordinate the development of a new international medical guide for ships.

10 ICS considers the industry is well-positioned to coordinate and undertake the development of such practical information and guidance. It may be more efficient to progress the work in this manner and it could also address some of the challenges associated with organizing the direct involvement of different industry stakeholders and multiple UN specialized agencies. ICS plans to work with medical experts, including "SeaHealth and Welfare", on the development of the new publication.

11 A steering group will be established to inform the development of the new international medical guide for ships. It is proposed to be composed of representatives of shipowners and seafarers, representatives from the IMO and ILO Secretariats, and several international medical experts.

12 With regard to possible follow-up work for the Sub-Committee, ICS would recommend that a review of the medical-related IMO model courses should be undertaken once the new international medical guide for ships is available. This would allow the review to take account of the relevant guidance and information contained in the publication.

Proposal

13 ICS invites the Sub-Committee to:

- .1 note the information provided on an industry initiative to develop a new international medical guide for ships;
- .2 note that the IMO Secretariat, amongst others, will be invited by ICS to participate in a steering group, and that the Organization will be informed

when the new international medical guide for ships is available, for action as appropriate; and

- .3 agree that a review of the medical-related IMO model courses should only be undertaken once the new international medical guide for ships is available.

Action requested of the Sub-Committee

14 The Sub-Committee is invited to note the information provided and consider the proposal in paragraph 13, and take action as appropriate.
