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TRAINING AND WATCHKEEPING
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COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF THE 1978 STCW CONVENTION AND CODE

Proposal for aims and principles of the comprehensive review and revision of the STCW Convention and Code

Submitted by ICS

SUMMARY

Executive summary: This document outlines a proposal for aims and principles of the comprehensive review and revision of the STCW Convention and Code. It also provides some issues to be considered when developing a road map.

Strategic direction, if applicable: 6

Output: 6.17

Action to be taken: Paragraph 14

Related documents: HTW 6/12/3; MSC 104/15/5 and MSC 105/20

Introduction

1 This document is submitted in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 6.12 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.3) and provides a proposal for aims and principles of the comprehensive review and revision of the STCW Convention and Code.

Background

2 The International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (STCW), 1978, was adopted with the objective of promoting safety of life and property at sea and the protection of the marine environment by establishing international standards of training, certification and watchkeeping for seafarers.

3 The 1978 STCW Convention entered into force on 28 April 1984. Amendments thereto were adopted in 1991, 1994, 1995, 1997, 1998, 2004, 2006, 2010, 2014, 2015 and 2016. Major amendments were adopted in 1995 and 2010.

4 HTW 6 considered the document HTW 6/12/3 (ICS), which outlined some concerns of shipowners and operators regarding the 1978 STCW Convention and discussed its next comprehensive review by the Organization. Following discussions, HTW 6 invited interested Member States and international organizations to note the comments concerning the next comprehensive review and submit a proposal for a new output to the Maritime Safety Committee.

5 MSC 105 considered document MSC 104/15/5 (Australia et al.) which proposed a new output concerning a comprehensive review and revision of the STCW Convention and Code. Following consideration, MSC 105 (MSC 105/20, paragraph 18.13):

- .1 agreed to include in the biennial agenda of the HTW Sub-Committee for 2022-2023 and the provisional agenda for HTW 9 an output on "Comprehensive review of the 1978 STCW Convention and Code", with a target completion year of 2026;
- .2 recalled its earlier decision to prioritize the development and finalization of STCW training provisions on bullying and harassment in the maritime sector, including sexual assault and sexual harassment, as part of this output; and
- .3 instructed the Sub-Committee to start with a preliminary assessment of the scope of the work to be conducted, identifying specific areas to be reviewed, and to prepare a road map for approval by the Committee before initiating the development of draft amendments.

Discussion

6 A comprehensive review and revision of the STCW Convention and Code is a significant and labour-intensive undertaking which requires clear aims as well as clearly defined principles, which can be referenced and used to properly structure and guide the work.

7 ICS considers that, before any work commences on the comprehensive review and revision of the STCW Convention and Code, it is important there is clarity and agreement on its aims and principles.

8 For that reason, ICS has prepared proposed aims and principles for the consideration of the Sub-Committee, with a view to ensuring a clear and structured approach to the comprehensive review and revision of the STCW Convention and Code.

Aims

9 ICS proposes that the comprehensive review and revision of the STCW Convention and Code should aim to ensure that these instruments:

- .1 deliver seafarers who are competent to perform the functions required on board ships;
- .2 provide the internationally recognized standards for training and certification of seafarers;
- .3 are designed to respond or adapt to technological, regulatory and operational developments; and
- .4 are structured and organized in a manner facilitating harmonized and consistent implementation.

Principles

10 ICS proposes that the comprehensive review and revision of the STCW Convention and Code should be guided by the following principles:

- .1 the review and revision should consider all provisions of the STCW Convention and Code in order to be comprehensive;
- .2 the review and revision should address new competencies and skills required of seafarers;
- .3 the review and revision should address the possibilities for ship operations offered by digitalization and emerging technologies;
- .4 the review and revision should address the possibilities offered by digitalization and emerging technologies for seafarer education, training and certification;
- .5 the review and revision should give consideration to ensure sufficient flexibility in application of standards;
- .6 the review and revision should seek the reduction of unnecessary administrative burdens;
- .7 the review and revision should address unnecessary duplications;
- .8 the review and revision should seek to ensure alignment with other IMO instruments by reflecting the competencies and skills required for mandatory ship systems and equipment and addressing any training that may be obsolete;
- .9 the review and revision should address inconsistencies and interpretations, taking account of clarifications already issued (STCW.7 and MSC circulars); and
- .10 the review and revision should seek to use a consistent terminology and taxonomy throughout the STCW Convention and Code.

11 ICS further proposes that the following principles should be taken into account:

- .1 the STCW Convention and Code provide for international minimum standards for the training and certification of seafarers;
- .2 the STCW Convention and Code are not concerned with minimum safe manning levels which are regulated by the SOLAS Convention (regulation V/14);
- .3 the STCW Convention and Code should address training, in principle, solely related to safety of life and property at sea, security, and the protection of the environment;
- .4 the STCW Convention and Code should be fully aligned with the IMO standards on ship's operation, construction and equipment;

- .5 the STCW Convention and Code should be the sole IMO instrument addressing standards for training and certification of seafarers;
- .6 the standards within the STCW Convention and Code for training and certification should be generic to facilitate mobility of seafarers across a broad range of ship types and trades;
- .7 the STCW Convention and Code should take into account different approaches to organizing and structuring education, training and certification, including formats of delivery of training; and
- .8 the STCW Convention and Code should ensure that reporting and monitoring of implementation are appropriately transparent, robust and dynamic.

Road map

12 Noting that MSC 105 instructed the Sub-Committee to prepare a road map for approval by the Committee, ICS has prepared some considerations to take into account when preparing the road map:

- .1 Work should commence, as a first stage, with a structured review of the STCW Convention and Code to identify general and specific issues which may warrant consideration for revision, by:
 - .1 agreeing a methodology for the review, taking into account the aims and principles outlined above;
 - .2 inviting submissions to identify the issues that warrant consideration for revision;
 - .3 conducting the review of those issues to assess the need for revisions to address them; and
 - .4 agreeing on the issues requiring revision.
- .2 Work should continue, as a second stage, with the preparation of proposals for revision, as necessary, to address the issues identified during the review by:
 - .1 agreeing a methodology for the revision, taking into account the aims and principles outlined above;
 - .2 inviting submissions containing proposals for revision, including draft amendments;
 - .3 conducting an assessment of those proposals; and
 - .4 agreeing on proposed amendments.

Proposal

13 ICS proposes that the aims, principles and considerations in relation to the road map, as laid out in paragraphs 9, 10, 11 and 12 above, be taken into account when complying with the instructions of the Committee (in paragraph 18.13.3 of document MSC 105/20).

Action requested of the Sub-Committee

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