

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

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VALIDATED MODEL TRAINING COURSES

Upgrade model course 1.21 on Personal Safety and Social Responsibilities

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SUMMARY

Executive summary: To have an immediate effect on the necessary improvement of seafarers' psychological safety, mental and physical wellbeing, and consequently onboard operational safety, this document proposes an extension from four to eight hours for the delivery of *Personal Safety and Social Responsibility* training. This additional time will deliver content to establish behavioural norms that supports a psychologically safe and just culture in the maritime sector.

*Strategic direction,
if applicable:* 1

Output: 1.3

Action to be taken: Paragraph 11

Related documents: Resolutions A.1110(30), A.1147(31) and A.1110(32); HTW 8/3; MSC-MEPC.2/Circ.15/Rev.1

Introduction

1 IMO is the United Nations specialized agency with responsibility for the safety and security of shipping. People working within the shipping sector should be able to work safe and healthy, regardless of gender, age, cultural background or other differences.

"IMO, in all aspects of its work, will take into account the needs and well-being of seafarers and, in doing so, will always attach the utmost importance to education and training, as well as the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women."

This provision is included in the overarching principles of the *Strategic plan for the Organization for the six-year period 2018 to 2023* (resolution A.1110(30)).

2 Quantitative and qualitative research continues to identify concerning trends regarding feelings of isolation, uncertainty, bullying and victimization around the world as well as within the maritime industry specifically. The ongoing adverse impacts caused by the COVID-19 pandemic reinforced and magnified the ill effects on seafarers' mental health and wellbeing. Improvement of seafarers' psychological safety, mental health and physical well-being will consequently improve onboard operational safety.

3 Repeated issues of sexual assault and sexual harassment (SASH) occur in the maritime sector, across all cultures, demographics, socio-economic groups and ages, in the same way as they do in wider society. These illegal behaviours and trends affect seafarers' short- and long-term mental health, safety and well-being. This in turn affects recruitment and attrition rates of seafarers.

4 Significant industry events require amending the priority level attributed to IMO model course 1.21 from a priority 4 (model courses requiring no changes or published less than five years before the date of prioritization) to a priority 2 (existing model courses that required significant changes, either individual or cumulative, due to amendments to IMO instruments and/or significant industry/technological changes).

5 Human element aspects of diversity, equality, equity and inclusion are fundamental concepts that must be applied at all levels of shipboard operations and maritime training. The current version of the Personal Safety and Social Responsibility model course does not provide the scope or content to address these core issues.

6 The proposed extension is from four to eight hours for the delivery of Personal Safety and Social Responsibility (PSSR) training. This additional time will support the delivery content to establish behavioural norms to support a psychologically safe and just culture in the maritime sector.

Psychological Safety

7 Psychological safety is an integral element in workplace health and safety, and is an essential element in a safe working environment as it protects all workers, both afloat and ashore. It supports diversity, equality, equity and inclusion to enable the successful integration of vulnerable and marginalized groups. This can only be realized with commitment and support from everyone within the industry. Education and training are critical elements of a holistic framework of change and supports the significant actions already undertaken by the Organization.

8 Recognized approaches to create a psychologically safe working environment that should be considered for including in the PSSR model course include, but are not limited to:

- .1 promoting self-awareness and addressing personal biases;
- .2 supporting clear, consistent and open communications;
- .3 calling out inappropriate behaviour, including micro-aggressions and physical actions;
- .4 setting and respecting boundaries; and
- .5 providing multiple professional and confidential reporting routes.

9 Promoting education and training on psychological safety within the maritime environment is necessary to improve participation of women in the industry, including onboard vessels. The percentage of women as part of the global seafarer workforce on cargo ships remains in the vicinity of only 1%. Dominica shares a collective responsibility to address Goal 5 of the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): "Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls". Measures of success will be evidenced by increasing women's participation and advancement rates in the maritime industry.

Proposals

10 To create a framework that establishes behavioural norms and supports a psychologically safe and just culture in the maritime sector, as it provides for a safer working environment for all. IMO model course 1.21 on *Personal safety and social responsibilities* currently includes the need to observe safe working practices and the effect of management on human relationships on board ships. In order to meet these requirements, four additional hours are required to be provided in the IMO model course. The sponsor of this document proposes the following:

- .1 amending the priority level attributed to IMO model course 1.21 from priority 4 to priority 2;
- .2 bring forward the review of IMO model course 1.21 on *Personal safety and social responsibilities*, as presented in annex 1 to document HTW 8/3 and extend the training by four hours; and
- .3 create a working group to design the IMO model course 1.21 content to provide the specific education content that will establish appropriate maritime workplace behavioural norms, including the essential human elements of psychological safety.

Action requested of the Sub-Committee

- 11 The Sub-Committee is invited to consider the above information and, in particular, to:
- .1 note the fundamental importance of a psychologically safe and inclusive maritime workplace culture for all seafarers and maritime professionals that enhances operational safety and security while achieving a more sustainable and equitable maritime industry; and
 - .2 consider the proposals included in this document (as set out in paragraph 10) as appropriate to the work of the Organization.
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