COMMONWEALTH OF DOMINICA

MARITIME ADMINISTRATION

Office of Maritime Affairs and Marine Personnel

MARITIME SAFETY CIRCULAR – CD-MSC 02-25

TO: ALL SHIPOWNERS, OPERATORS, MANAGERS, MASTERS, OFFICERS, SEAFARERS, RECOGNIZED ORGANIZATIONS AND MARITIME TRAINING PROVIDERS

Date: 30 January 2025

Subject: ***Amendments to STCW Basic Training Requirements for Personal Safety and Social Responsibilities (PSSR) – Prevention of Violence and Harassment, Including Sexual Harassment, Bullying and Sexual Assault***

1. Purpose

This Circular informs shipowners, operators, seafarers and training providers of the amendments to Table A-VI/1-4 of the STCW Code, Personal Safety and Social Responsibilities (PSSR), adopted by IMO resolution MSC.560(108). It sets out the requirements of the Commonwealth of Dominica Maritime Administration for seafarers serving on board Dominica-flagged ships.

2. Background

2.1 Regulation VI/1 of the STCW Convention requires seafarers employed or engaged on board ship on the business of that ship as part of the ship's complement with designated safety or pollution-prevention duties to complete basic training in accordance with Section A-VI/1 of the STCW Code. Basic training comprises Personal Survival Techniques, Fire Prevention and Fire Fighting, Elementary First Aid, and Personal Safety and Social Responsibilities.

2.2 On 23 May 2024, the IMO Maritime Safety Committee, at its 108th session, adopted resolution MSC.560(108). The resolution amends Table A-VI/1-4 of the STCW Code to add a new competence addressing the prevention of, and response to, violence and harassment, including sexual harassment, bullying and sexual assault. The amendments entered into force on 1 January 2026.

2.3 Beginning 1 January 2026, applicants for an original STCW Basic Training endorsement, and for renewal of an STCW Basic Training endorsement, must demonstrate the new competencies by

successfully completing a Coast Guard-approved course in Prevention of Violence and Harassment, including Sexual Harassment, Bullying and Sexual Assault;

2.4 Mariners currently holding an STCW Basic Training endorsement must complete the training on or before the first renewal of their Merchant Mariner Credential (MMC) that occurs after 1 January 2026.

3. Applicability

This Circular applies to:

- all seafarers serving on board Dominica-flagged ships who are required to hold basic training under STCW Regulation VI/1;
- shipowners, operators and Companies responsible for Dominica-flagged ships;
- training providers delivering basic training relied upon by seafarers serving on Dominica-flagged ships; and
- Recognized Organizations and Administration personnel processing applications for Dominica Certificates of Endorsement.

4. Requirements

4.1 New Basic Training

Basic training in Personal Safety and Social Responsibilities commencing on or after 1 January 2026 shall include the new competence introduced by resolution MSC.560(108). The documentary evidence of training should state that the training meets Table A-VI/1-4 of the STCW Code, as amended by resolution MSC.560(108).

4.2 Existing Certificates

Certificates and documentary evidence of basic training issued before 1 January 2026 remain valid until their expiry date and do not need to be replaced early.

4.3 Seafarers Holding Basic Training Completed Before 1 January 2026

Seafarers whose PSSR training was completed before 1 January 2026 shall provide evidence that they have completed training in the new competence no later than the first revalidation of their basic training that occurs on or after **1 January 2026**. A stand-alone course covering only the new competence, delivered by a training provider approved by a Party to the STCW Convention, is acceptable. The full PSSR course does not need to be repeated.

4.4 Certificates Issued by Other STCW Parties

Certificates issued by other Parties to the STCW Convention will be accepted where they are issued in accordance with that Party's implementation of resolution MSC.560(108). Where a Party's implementation schedule differs from this Circular, the Administration may request evidence of training in the new competence before issuing a Dominica Certificate of Endorsement.

4.5 Company Responsibilities

Companies shall ensure that:

- the Safety Management System includes a policy on the prevention of violence and harassment, including sexual harassment, bullying and sexual assault, together with procedures for reporting and responding to incidents without fear of retaliation;
- all seafarers joining a Dominica-flagged ship receive shipboard familiarization on the Company's policy and reporting procedures, and that records of this familiarization are kept on board; and
- seafarers' training records are reviewed so that each seafarer completes training in the new competence by the dates set out in this Circular.

4.6 Training Providers

Training providers delivering basic training or stand-alone courses relied upon under this Circular shall ensure that the course addresses the knowledge, understanding and proficiency set out in Table A-VI/1-4, as amended, and that the course is approved by the maritime administration of a Party to the STCW Convention.

5. Dominica Certificates of Endorsement

Applications for a Dominica Certificate of Endorsement submitted on or after the date of this Circular shall include evidence of basic training that meets the requirements of Section 4. Applications that do not include the required evidence may be returned for completion.

6. Port State Control

Port State Control officers may verify that seafarers hold valid evidence of basic training that meets the amended requirements. Masters and Companies should ensure that the relevant certificates and course completion records are available on board for inspection.

7. Contact

Questions regarding this Circular should be directed to:

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