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TRAINING AND WATCHKEEPING  
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Agenda item 10

HTW 7/10/1  
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**DEVELOPMENT OF MEASURES TO ENSURE QUALITY OF ONBOARD  
TRAINING AS PART OF THE MANDATORY SEAGOING SERVICE REQUIRED BY  
THE STCW CONVENTION**

**Ensuring quality of Onboard Training (OBT) by upgrading the functional efficiency of  
the Training Record Book (TRB)**

**Submitted by Georgia, the Philippines and the International Association of Maritime  
Universities (IAMU)**

**SUMMARY**

*Executive summary:* The document discusses a proposal to upgrade the level of the functional efficiency of the TRB for the First Certificate of Competency (FCoC) by developing amendments to part B of the STCW Code

*Strategic direction, if applicable:* 6

*Output:* 6.16

*Action to be taken:* Paragraph 23

*Related documents:* STW 39/INF.2, STW 40/13/1, STW 41/7/11, STW 41/7/11; HTW 2/INF.2, HTW 4/INF.4, HTW 5/INF.5, HTW 5/5/1, HTW 6/12/5; MSC 85/23/6, MSC 100/10/4, MSC 100/10/4, MSC 101/21/1; C/ES.30/3(a)/1 and STCW.2/Circ.7

**Introduction**

1 The International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers, 1978, as amended (1978 STCW Convention, as amended) sets the qualification standards for seafarers, including standards for issuing the FCoC for deck officers, engineer officers and electro-technical officers. A significant part of these standards can be achieved through adequate Onboard Training (OBT) and Training Ashore (TAS), which are mandatory for the issuance of the FCoC to prospective officers by Administrations in accordance with the provisions of the STCW Convention.

2 Every candidate for certification shall have approved seagoing service in accordance with STCW regulations II/1, II/3, III/1 and III/6 as part of an approved training programme, which includes OBT that meets the requirements of sections A-II/1, A-II/3, A-III/1 and A-III/6 of the STCW Code and is documented in an approved TRB.

3 The aforementioned STCW regulations are mandatory for the issuance of the FCoC to prospective officers by Administrations. The quality of OBT is not the direct focus of these regulations and appropriate sections of part A of the STCW Code. Here, the term "quality" means a level of achievement of competencies by prospective officers on board ships during sea time, as per STCW standards. The completion of appropriate training standards is subject to registration in an approved TRB, which is to be available while the prospective officer is on board.

4 The approved TRB can be considered as a core link in the chain of the quality standards system in accordance with regulation I/8 (Quality standards), which should ensure the monitoring and feedback of OBT processes between prospective officers, training providers and appropriate parties concerned.

## **Background**

### **IAMU study on OBT by feedback questionnaires**

5 During the past years, IAMU has conducted a study on OBT for the FCoC by developing feedback questionnaires and collecting data and views from Maritime Education and Training (MET) institutions, shipping companies and seafarers (HTW 7/INF.6). Data was also collected from about 700 prospective officers has been partially presented in document HTW 4/INF.4.

6 A total number of 27 companies, based in Cyprus, Germany, Ghana, Greece, India, Japan, the Netherlands, the Philippines, Singapore, Sweden, United Arab Emirates and 44 Maritime Education and Training (MET) institutions from Australia, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Denmark, Egypt, Estonia, Finland, France, Italy, Japan, Myanmar, Norway, Peru, the Philippines, Poland, Republic of Korea Romania, Russian Federation, Turkey and the United States responded to questionnaires. The IAMU team also received 415 responses to questionnaires from seafarers during 2019. Some results from this study reflecting the OBT-for-FCoC organization are presented below.

### **Organization of OBT by ship personnel: summary of questionnaire responses**

7 About 37% (152 out of 415) of masters and ship officers indicated that a ship training officer (STO) was not appointed on board the ship; besides this, it should be noted that 56% of respondents stated that there were difficulties for STOs to organize practical training programmes at sea due to the involvement in other various professional ships' operations; 20% expressed a neutral position (NP), and about 48% indicated that there were difficulties for STOs in providing a supervisory function that the TRBs for prospective officers were properly maintained and that all other requirements were fulfilled (19% had NP).

8 About 42% of respondents agreed that there were difficulties in ensuring the appropriate efficiency of OBT time that the prospective officer spent on board was as useful as possible in terms of training and experience (19% had NP), and 29% agreed that masters had difficulties in being the link between STOs and company training officers (CTO) (32% had NP). It is vital to note that 52% confirmed that masters had difficulties in ensuring that all concerned were effectively monitoring the realization of OBT programmes assigned to prospective officers (15% had NP).

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### **Organization of OBT by shipping companies: summary of questionnaire responses**

9 All the companies confirmed that they had an approved training programme ensuring prospective officers received systematic practical training and experience in the tasks, duties and responsibilities of an officer in charge of navigational watch or an officer in charge of engineering watch on their vessels. All respondents confirmed that companies allocated and assigned qualified personnel both ashore and on board, to ensure quality of OBT.

10 Respondents from 14 companies out of 27 confirmed that there was a formal undertaking or contract duly accomplished between the company, the MET institution and the prospective officer stipulating obligations of parties concerned prior to OBT. Twenty-five of the respondents agreed that prospective officers were closely supervised, guided, and their progress monitored in TRB-related tasks by the STOs or qualified officers aboard their ships.

11 As indicated from the collected data, 23 respondents agreed that their companies' quality standards systems and training systems ensured the monitoring of all training and assessment of competence on board, especially in respect to the progress in TRB-related tasks, duties or practical OBT for the prospective officers. Fifteen representatives of companies stated that there were enough human and time resources allocated for supervised watchkeeping of prospective officers in order to ensure completion or achievement of OBT programmes within normal operational requirements of ships.

### **Organization of OBT by MET institutions: summary of questionnaire responses**

12 All 44 respondents agreed that prospective officers should be given adequate guidance in accomplishing the TRB such as recording the progress of his/her practical training and experiences in the tasks, duties and responsibilities of an officer in charge of a navigational or engineering watch prior to the start of OBT.

13 All respondents from MET institutions confirmed that prospective officers should be fully aware to diligently follow the training programme, TRB tasks and his/her responsibility to make the most of the training opportunities, like bridge or engine watchkeeping, both within and outside of working hours. Only 64% of MET institutions confirmed that they had a system in place for the monitoring of the progress of OBT for prospective officers while on board.

### **Post-OBT questionnaire feedback data from prospective officers**

14 Viewing results from the other side of the concerned parties (HTW 4/INF.4), only 28% of cadets out of a total number of 682 responded that they had had an opportunity to complete their programmes entirely within the OBT term, although in 90% of the cases all TRB tasks were filled and signed by an appropriate officer. This proves and confirms the observations made by MET institutions that in many cases, TRBs were filled on board ships, which demonstrates not real, but only examples of the "paper quality of OBT processes". The organization procedures of assessment in many cases leaves much to be desired.

15 Respondents have indicated that in 30% of cases, a training officer was not appointed on board the ship; only 48% of cadets had communicated with a CTO during OBT time.

### **Discussion**

16 The quality of OBT for prospective officers is extremely significant and should be carefully monitored by Administrations, MET institutions, companies and ships' personnel. This is especially sensitive, as it relates to bridge or engine-room watchkeeping duties (sections A-II/1.3, A-II/3.3 and A-III/1.3 of the STCW Code). All the foregoing covers the elements required to be documented in an approved TRB.

17 The co-sponsors draw attention to the fact that section B-II/1 of the STCW Code gives guidance regarding the certification of officers in charge of a navigational watch on ships of 500 gross tonnage or more. This guidance consists of a general part (Training) and special part (shipboard programme of training) intended for the deck department. In turn, there is no appropriate guidance in sections B-III/1 regarding the certification of officers in charge of an engineering watch in a manned engine-room or as designated duty engineers in a periodically unmanned engine-room and B-III/6 regarding training and certification for electro-technical officers, particularly for seagoing service which forms part of an approved training programme thereof. Appropriate links to general part of section B-II/1 do not exist either, except for section B-II/3. This can be considered as an inconsistency in the text of part B of the STCW Code.

18 Conceptually, the pre-sea theoretical and practical training of prospective officers provided by MET institutions and OBT conducted mainly by shipping companies are two critical components that together constitute a coherent and comprehensive training system. Proper theoretical and practical training ashore is a keystone to success in OBT of prospective officers and vice versa. This system is only effective when it is duly observable and controllable, and to achieve this, the appropriate efforts and resources need to be allocated among training providers to optimize and strengthen the system.

19 In accordance with regulations II/1, II/3, III/1 and III/6, every candidate for certification shall have approved seagoing service as part of an approved training programme which includes onboard training that meets the requirements of sections A-II/1, A-II/3, A-III/1 and A-III/6, respectively, of the STCW Code and is documented in an approved training record book. The co-sponsors believe that TRB, as a mandatory document for issuance of the FCoC, should be accorded official status of documentary evidence.

### **Proposal**

20 To assist Administrations with the implementation of OBT provisions for issuance of the FCoC by removing the inconsistency among sections B-II/1, B-III/1 and B-III/6 of the STCW Code, the co-sponsors propose to develop appropriate provisions in sections B-III/1 and B-III/6, which should be aligned with the text of section B-II/1 of the STCW Code.

21 To ensure the traceability, consistency and integration of OBT and TAS for the FCoC into an effective training system, the co-sponsors propose to develop appropriate provisions in sections B-II/1, B-III/1 and B-III/6 of the STCW Code, giving the concerned parties an opportunity to include in the TRB the applicable requirements of sections A-II/1, A-III/1 and A-III/6 that can be achieved by prospective officers and assessed ashore.

22 The co-sponsors propose to develop provisions for highlighting the functional significance of the TRB for the FCoC equivalent to any other mandatory documents required by Convention.

### **Action requested of the Sub-Committee**

23 The Sub-Committee is invited to consider the proposals as set out in paragraphs 20 to 22 and take action, as appropriate.