

SEAFARERS' ADVISORY BOARD

Review of the Implementation of the Occupational Safety and Health Protection and Accident Prevention on Hong Kong registered ships under the Maritime Labour Convention, 2006

Purpose

The Marine Department (“the MD”) provides members with the outcomes of a review on the implementation of occupational safety and health (OSH) protection and accident prevention on Hong Kong registered ships (“HK ships”) pursuant to Regulation 4.3.3 of the Maritime Labour Convention, 2006 (“the MLC”).

Background

2. In accordance with Standard A4.3.3 of the Code to the MLC, the Administration shall regularly review the laws and regulations and other measures referred to in Regulation 4.3.3 in consultation with shipowners’ and seafarers’ organizations and, if necessary, revise to take account of changes in technology and research in order to facilitate continuous improvement in OSH policies and programmes and to provide a safe occupational environment for seafarers on HK ships.

3. In order to ensure that seafarers’ occupational health and safety are well protected, the Merchant Shipping (Seafarers) (Code of Safe Working Practices) Regulation (Cap. 478M) stipulates that the UK’s “Code of Safe Working Practices for Merchant Seamen”¹ (“the Code”) is the mandatory

¹ The latest version 2020 is available via URL: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/code-of-safe-working-practices-for-merchant-seafarers-2020>

guidelines applicable to HK ships for meeting the MLC Regulation 4.3 relating to the issue of OSH and accident prevention.

The Review

4. Since the ratification of the MLC has extended to the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region in December 2018, the MD has not come across any cases of seafarers working on board HK ships and/or shipping companies operating/managing HK ships that have difficulties in implementing the OSH and accident prevention policies and programmes.

5. With respect to occupational accident investigation, the MD has conducted safety investigations into all very serious cases in order to identify the lessons learnt. All investigation reports and lessons learnt are published on the MD website for promoting seafarers' OSH and accident prevention.

6. Below tables show the statistics of the OSH protection status on HK ships outside HK waters. The statistical data indicated that the case number and injury to person in 2020 are decreased when compared with 2019 figures. However, the death and missing of person are increased mainly caused by slip or fall on ships and missing at sea :

Table 1-for all cases

Year	Cases	Death	Injury	Missing
2019	85	12	88	4
2020	70	17	49	8
Change rate	↓17.6%	↑41.6%	↓44.3%	↑100%

Table 2- for very serious cases

Accident Category	2019			2020		
	Deaths	Injuries	Missing	Deaths	Injuries	Missing
Electric Shock/ burn	1	1	0	2	0	0
Slip or fall on ship – different levels	3	2	0	7	0	0
Fall overboard	0	0	1	1	0	1
Enclosed Space	3	2	0	3	0	0

Involving Rope / hawser	1	0	0	0	0	0
Involving machinery / equipment / tools implements	1	0	0	0	0	0
Hit by moving / falling object	1	0	0	3	1	0
Exposure to fumes or inhalation, or skin contact with noxious substances	2	11	0	0	0	0
Missing at sea (MOB)	0	0	3	1	0	7
Total	12	16	4	17	1	8

Conclusion

7. The review concludes that the legislation and the measures applied to HK ships for the policies and programmes of OSH and accident prevention are effective and should be maintained. The MD will continuously cooperate with members to keep monitoring the development of any changes in technology and research for continuous improvement in OSH policies and programmes. If there is any revision required in future, the MD will consult members and bring to the attention of all concerned parties of HK ships without delay.

8. Members are invited to note and comment on the outcomes of the review.

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Multi-lateral Policy Division
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