

**Guidance to Hong Kong Registered Ships for preparing of the Concentrated
Inspection Campaign on STCW
(Period from 1 September to 30 November 2022)**

Introduction

The International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (STCW Convention) was adopted in 1978 and came into force in 1984. The latest Manila amendments to the STCW Convention and its Code (STCW Code) were adopted on 25 June 2010. In order to determine the level of compliance with the requirements of Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (STCW) on board, the Memorandum of Understanding on Port State Control in the Asia-Pacific Region (Tokyo MOU) and The Paris Memorandum of Understanding on Port State Control (Paris MOU) will jointly carry out a Concentrated Inspection Campaign (CIC) for STCW from 1 September to 30 November 2022.

A ship will be subjected to one inspection under this CIC (from each MOU) during the period of the campaign, and the inspection will be carried out in conjunction with the regular Port State Control (PSC) inspection. Hence, a copy of the PSC inspection report (Form A and B) with the completed CIC questionnaire shall be kept onboard for record.

Purpose

This CIC intends to understand better on the training and certification of crew members in each party to the STCW Convention and on board ships of various flag States. It aims to ensure the compliance of the arrangements to perform crews' duties and the implementation of relevant requirements on watchkeeping and rest on board.

Questionnaire Guidance

(Non-compliance with the requirements in questions marked with an asterisk (*) may be considered as a ground for detention.)

Question No.1*

Do the number of the seafarers serving on board conform with the Minimum Safe Manning requirement specified for the vessel?

1. Ship Manager, Master and responsible officer shall ensure that:

- (a) an adequate number of seafarers serving on board and their certificates are in conformity with the Minimum Safe Manning Certificate (MSMC) available on board; and
- (b) a valid MSMC is provided on board.

2. Requirements:

The Master shall verify the MSMC is complied:

- (a) by holding "appropriate certificate¹" or to have valid dispensation or to provide documentary proof that an application for an endorsement has been submitted to Hong Kong Marine Department (HKMD); and
- (b) including the special requirements or conditions on the second page of the MSMC issued by HKMD.

3. Convention Reference:

STCW Convention/Chapter I/Reg. I/4

4. Note:

Ship may be considered for detention if the answer is “No” for this question.

¹ HKMD accepts officers holding valid Hong Kong License to perform rating's duty without the Certificate of Proficiency in the same department.

Question No.2*

Do the Master and officers hold valid Certificates of Competency as required by the Minimum Safe Manning Document?

1. The Ship Manager, Master and responsible officer shall ensure that:

- (a) the Master and officers hold valid original Certificates of Competency (CoCs) issued by a party to the STCW Convention;
- (b) the Master and officers hold the endorsements which may be issued as a separate document set forth in section A-I/2 paragraph 1 of the STCW Code or incorporated document set forth in section A-I/2 paragraph 2 of the STCW Code with the CoCs;
- (c) at a minimum, the required information is provided in accordance with STCW Regulations (e.g. STCW Regulations II/2, II/1, II/5, II/4 and etc.), if the format of certificates and endorsements are different;
- (d) the text is in English or includes a translation into English; and
- (e) the capacity, functions and limitations of endorsements of the CoCs comply the relevant conventions, codes and guidelines.

2. Requirements:

- (a) The Ship Managers, Master and responsible officer shall ensure that the authenticity of certificates can be verified by QR code, e-mails, telephone call or any other means with the issuing parties. CoC issued by HKMD can be verified on the website of HKMD (https://www.mardep.gov.hk/en/ele_services/home.html) and relevant point of contact can be found on the website of IMO: (<https://www.imo.org/en/OurWork/HumanElement/Pages/CertificateVerification.aspx>)
- (b) The Ship Managers, Master and responsible officer shall ensure the up-to-date circular letters on COVID-19 notifications issued by CoC issuing Administration to be maintained onboard the ship. The latest HKMD notice and updated IMO circular letter on this issue can be found on the websites of HKMD (<https://www.mardep.gov.hk/en/news/COVID19.html>) and IMO (<https://www.imo.org/en/MediaCentre/HotTopics/Pages/COVID-19-Member-States-Communications.aspx>) respectively.
- (c) The Ship Managers, Master and responsible officer shall be aware of the IMO Circular STCW.7/Circ.24/Rev.1 (<https://www.mardep.gov.hk/en/msnote/pdf/msin1727anx1.pdf>) on the provision of document verification, reference to the STCW Convention, 1978, as amended, training for ECDIS and certification for ratings.

3. Convention Reference:

STCW Convention/Chapter I/Reg. I/2
STCW Code/Chapter I/Section A-I/2

4. Notes:

Ship may be considered for detention if the answer is “No” for this question.

Question No.3*

Do the master, officers and radio operators hold valid endorsements attesting the recognition of certificates or documentary proof of application?

1. The Ship Manager, Master and responsible officer shall ensure that:

- (a) there are valid original Hong Kong Licences² issued by HKMD or Consolidated Application for the Issuance of Hong Kong Licences; and
- (b) the validity of Hong Kong Licence issued is not more than 5 years.

2. Requirements:

- (a) The Ship Manager, Master and responsible officer should ensure that there is a valid original endorsement (Hong Kong Licence) or documentary proof of application for an endorsement attesting the recognition of a certificate (Consolidated Receipt of Application (CRA));
- (b) The Ship Managers, Master and responsible officer shall be aware that in accordance with STCW Code Chapter I Part B-I/11, if an application for revalidation of a certificate is made within 6 months before the expiry date of the certificate, the certificate may be revalidated until the fifth anniversary of the date of validity or extension of the validity of the certificate; and
- (c) The Master shall ensure that the period of validity of dispensation for any crew member on board the ship should not exceed 6 months and the conditions of the dispensation should be in accordance with Article VIII of the Convention.

3. Convention Reference:

STCW Convention/Chapter I/Reg. I/2
STCW Convention/Chapter I/Reg. I/10
STCW Code/Chapter I/Part B-I/11

4. Notes:

Ship may be considered for detention if the answer is “No” for this question.

² If CoCs for masters, officers and radio operators are issued by HKMD, Hong Kong Licence is not required and this question should be not applicable, i.e. “N/A”.

Question No.4*

Do seafarers hold relevant certificates of proficiency (COP) or documentary evidences?

1. The Ship Manager, Master and responsible officer shall ensure that:

- (a) the required training for personnel on board (all vessels) is completed. Seafarers serving on board shall hold the corresponding training certificates or documentary evidence listed in STCW Code/Part B/Table B-I/2; and
- (b) the required special training for personnel on board of Tankers (Oil Tankers, Chemical Tankers and Liquefied Gas Tankers), Passenger ships, ships subject to the International Code of Safety for Ship Using Gases or Other Low-flashpoint Fuels (IGF Code)³ and / or ships operating in polar water is completed. Seafarers serving on the aforementioned ships shall hold the corresponding training certificates listed in STCW Code/Part B/Table B-I/2.

2. Convention Reference:

STCW Convention/Chapter I/Reg. I/11

STCW Code/Part B/Section B-I/2

STCW Code/Part B/Table B-I/2

3. Note:

Ship may be considered for detention if the answer is “No” for this question.

³ IGF code shall apply to applicable ships using low-flashpoint fuels and shall not apply to gas carriers complying with the requirements of the International Code for the Construction and Equipment of Ships Carrying Liquefied Gases in Bulk (IGC Code).

Question No.5*

Do seafarers on board hold valid medical certificates?

1. The Ship Manager, Master and responsible officer shall ensure that:

- (a) the English language is used in the medical certificates. If not, the text shall include a translation into English;
- (b) the medical certificates of the seafarers are within the validity period and are in correspondence with their duties, for example, deck officer, engineer, lookout, etc.;
- (c) the physical constraints of individual seafarers are taken into account and that those seafarers are not assigned to perform work that conflicts with their restrictions; and
- (d) the medical certificates signed by the seafarer and flag State recognized medical practitioner.

2. Requirements:

- (a) The Master shall be aware that the maximum validity of the medical certificates is one year and two years for seafarers under 18 years of age and all other seafarers respectively;
- (b) The Master shall be aware that the maximum validity of a color vision assessment in the certificate is six years;
- (c) If the medical certificate is expired in the course of the voyage, the medical certificate shall continue to be valid until the next port of call where the seafarer can obtain a medical certificate from a non-recognized medical practitioner and the validity period shall not exceed three months; and
- (d) In urgent cases where the competent authority approves one of the crew members to work without a medical certificate or with an invalid medical certificate until the next port of call where the seafarer can obtain a medical certificate from a medical practitioner recognized by the Party, the approval shall be within the validity period (which is no longer than 3 months), and the concerned seafarer shall hold a recent expired medical certificate.
- (e) The HKMD requirements can be found on the websites of HKMD (<https://www.mardep.gov.hk/en/msnote/pdf/msin1674.pdf>), i.e. the Hong Kong Merchant Shipping Information Note (MSIN) No. 74/2016.

3. Convention Reference:

STCW Convention/Chapter I/Reg. I/9

STCW Code/Part A/Section A-I/9

4. Note:

Ship may be considered for detention if the answer is “No” for this question.

Question No.6

Do the records for hours of rest indicate compliance with the requirements?

1. The Ship Manager, Master and responsible officer shall ensure that:

- (a) the records of rest are in the ship's working language(s) and in English and established in a standardized format that is developed taking into account the IMO/ILO Guidelines⁴;
- (b) the records of rest are endorsed by the Master or by a person authorized by the Master and by the seafarers. The seafarers shall receive a copy of the records pertaining to them. In cases where electronic records are applied, the seafarers should have easy access to the computer-based software;
- (c) the rest hour records are accurately recorded and aligned with other records such as deck logbook, engine logbook, GMDSS radio logbook, drill record and oil record book etc.;
- (d) the seafarers are compensated with an adequate rest period if the normal period of rest was contributed by drills, unscheduled work or emergency; and
- (e) the hours of rest for crew members shall meet the following requirements (except in case of emergency or other overriding operational conditions):
 - i. A minimum of 10 hours of rest in any 24-hour period;
 - ii. A minimum of 77 hours of rest in any 7-day period;
 - iii. When a seafarer is on call, such as when a machinery space is unattended the seafarer shall have an adequate compensatory rest period if the normal period of rest is disturbed by call-outs to work; and
 - iv. Minimum hours of rest may be divided into no more than two periods in any 24-hour period, one of which must be at least six hours; the interval between consecutive periods of rest must not exceed 14 hours.

2. Requirements:

- (a) Records of daily hours of rest of seafarers be maintained in a standardized format, in the working language or languages of the ship and in English, to allow monitoring and verification of compliance with the provisions of this section. The seafarers shall receive a copy of the records pertaining to them, which shall be endorsed by the master or by a person authorized by the master and by the seafarers;
- (b) All persons who are assigned duty as officer in charge of a watch or as a rating forming part of a watch and those whose duties involve designated safety, prevention of pollution and security duties shall be provided with a rest period specified in 1(e)

⁴ Guidelines for the Development of Tables of Seafarers' Shipboard Working Arrangements and Formats of Records of Seafarers' Hours of Work or Hours of Rest

(c) Exceptions may be allowed to the hours of rest specified in 1(e) ii. and 1(e) iv. above, but the rest time shall not be less than 70 hours in any 7-day period. Such exceptions should not exceed two consecutive weeks. At the same time, if the 10-hour rest time within 24 hours is divided into no more than 3 periods, one of which shall be at least 6 hours and neither of the other 2 periods are less than one hour, then the above requirements 1(e) i. (ten hours in any 24-hour period) is exempted. However, in any 7-day period, this situation cannot occur in two 24-hour periods.

3. Convention reference:

STCW Code/Part A/Chapter VIII/Section A-VIII/1

Question No.7

Do the watch schedules comply with the provisions of STCW?

1. The Ship Manager, Master and responsible officer shall ensure that:

- (a) the watch schedules are posted where they are easily accessible;
- (b) the watch schedules are established in a standardized format in the ship's working language(s) and in English, taking into account the IMO/ILO Guidelines⁵;
- (c) the watch schedules are updated, taking account of crew changes and following his/her routine work arrangements;
- (d) the designated watchkeeping personnel on the watch schedules are qualified to take charge in or form a part of a watch; and
- (e) an engineer to be in charge of the engineering watch or on UMS duties whilst the vessel is in port for vessels with the engine power of 3000kW or more.

2. Requirements:

- (a) Watch schedules be posted where they are easily accessible. The schedules shall be established in a standardized format in the working language or languages of the ship and in English;
- (b) Officers in charge of the navigational watch and engineering watch appreciate that the efficient performance of their duties is necessary in the interests of the safety of life, security and property at sea and of preventing pollution of the marine environment;
- (c) The chief engineer officer, in consultation with the master, shall ensure that engineering watchkeeping arrangements are adequate to maintain a safe engineering watch.

3. Convention reference:

STCW Code/Part A/Section A-VIII/1/Para.5

STCW Code/Part A/Section A-VIII/2/Para.95

⁵ Guidelines for the Development of Tables of Seafarers' Shipboard Working Arrangements and Formats of Records of Seafarers' Hours of Work or Hours of Rest

Question No.8*

Are seafarers newly joined the vessel familiar with their specific duties that are relevant to their routine or emergency duties?

1. The Ship Manager, Master and responsible officer shall ensure that:

- (a) there are written instructions provided by the company to the Master, setting forth the policies and procedures to ensure newly employed seafarers become familiar with the shipboard equipment, operating procedures and other arrangements needed for the proper performance of their duties, before being assigned to those duties;
- (b) a knowledgeable crew member has been designated for ensuring that an opportunity is provided to each newly employed seafarer to receive essential information in a language the seafarers understands; and
- (c) newly joined seafarers are acquainted with ship-specific equipment, watchkeeping, safety, environmental protection, security and emergency procedures and arrangements in a reasonable period of time. For seafarers arriving on board for the first time, special attention should be paid to their familiarization with the ship's environment and responsibilities assigned in the Muster list and Contingency plan.

2. Requirements

- (a) each crew member can make a knowledgeable and informed contribution to the safe operation of the ship in connection to 1(a) & 1(b) above.
- (b) ro-ro passenger ships' masters, officers and other personnel assigned specific duties and responsibilities on board, shall have completed familiarization training to attain the abilities that are appropriate to the capacity to be filled and duties and responsibilities to be taken up, taking into account the guidance given in section B-I/14 of the STCW Code.
- (c) passenger ships' masters and officers on board, shall have completed familiarization training to attain the abilities that are appropriate to the capacity to be filled and duties and responsibilities to be taken up, taking into account the guidance given in section B-I/14, paragraph 3 of the STCW Code.

3. Convention reference:

STCW Code/Part A/Chapter I/Section A-I/14

4. Note:

Ship may be considered for detention if the answer is "No" for this question.

Question No.9*

Can the seafarers on board the vessel communicate effectively with each other in the working language of the vessel?

1. The Ship Manager, Master and responsible officer shall ensure that:

- (a) the working language of the vessel is established and recorded in the ship's logbook;
- (b) each seafarer can understand and, where appropriate, give orders and instructions and report back in the working language recorded in the ship's logbook;
- (c) the relevant personnel can communicate effectively in the working language of the ship;

2. Requirements:

- (a) The Master shall ensure that the crew can be effective oral communication in accordance with chapter V, regulation 14, paragraphs 3 and 4 of the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea, 1974 (SOLAS), as amended;
- (b) The Master shall ensure that the crew can communicate effectively when the functional test or the operational control is carried out.

3. Convention reference:

STCW Convention/Chapter I/Reg. I/14

4. Note:

Ship may be considered for detention if the answer is "No" for this question.

Question No.10

Do the voyage plans cover the whole route from berth to berth?

1. The Ship Manager, Master and responsible officer shall ensure that:

- (a) Voyage plans covering the scheduled route should be set before each departure of the vessel from a port;
- (b) there is a procedure for voyage planning and that it includes the route from berth to berth, when there is no voyage plan available for the forthcoming voyage; and
- (c) the preparation of voyage plan is taking the ship's condition, characteristics of the cargo and safe manning into consideration.

2. The requirements:

- (a) The Master shall ensure that the voyage plan covers the whole route between the port of departure and the first port of arrival from berth to berth;
- (b) the voyage plan is approved by the master;
- (c) [the officers on watch shall acknowledge the approved voyage plan;]
- (d) the voyage plan is well implemented;
- (e) the specific location method and frequency of positioning are included in the voyage plan when navigating in restricted or confined waters such as narrow waterway, coastal or port waters;
- (f) the voyage plan contains all the information needed for the intended voyage (including nautical charts, other navigation publications) and identifies potential difficulties or risks on the proposed voyage;
- (g) the planned routes are clearly marked on the related nautical charts;
- (h) the passage plan and monitoring have been done on the ECDIS when the ECDIS is the primary means of navigation;
- (i) senior officers responsible for navigation duties have clearly marked and recorded any modification about the voyage plan; and
- (j) the newly employed watchkeeping officers are familiar with the navigational equipment and ECDIS.

3. Convention reference:

STCW Convention/Part A/Section A-VIII/2

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