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QUALITY OBT – QUALIFIED SEAFARERS

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Abstract. A rapid increase of number and tonnage of the certain type of the merchant vessels causes the vital problem for maritime safety because of the the lack of experienced seafarers, and especially officers for such types of the vessels.
One of the most important STCW Convention requirements for certification of the officers in charge of a navigational or an engineering watch is on-board training(OBT). (STCW Convention Regulation II/1 and Regulation III/1.)
The training record book is an objective evidence of the OBT for a future officer, but the quality of this OBT fully depends on the Company's Safety and Quality Management System procedure i.e. if the OBT control instrument is present in the SMS and QMS or not and if it is controlled by the third part – Port State Administration.

Key words: on-board training, STCW Convention and Code as Manila amendments, ISM code (Res. A 741(18)), Procedures for Port State Control (Res. A 1052(27), SMS and QMS training officer, training record book, company's responsibility, cadets program

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1 DEFINITIONS AND HISTORY OF THE PROBLEM

The Manila Amendments to the Annex to the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers, 1978 make many references to the on-board training. Whilst it is evident that the Convention requires the on-board training, it does not require parties or companies to employ officer trainees or provide the on board accommodation for officer trainees. However, the Convention stipulates the minimum amount of seagoing service which is required from an officer trainee before becoming eligible for a certificate of competency. It is axiomatic that if companies are not engaged in training or do not provide the on-board accommodation for officer trainees the provision of a well-skilled maritime workforce is endangered.

STCW Convention and Codes defined what "the on-board training" means:

– Chapter II/1 STCW Code:
Onboard training

Every candidate for certification as officer in charge of a navigational watch of ships of 500 gross tonnage or more whose seagoing service, in accordance with paragraph 2.2 of regulation II/1, forms part of a training programme approved as meeting the requirements of this section shall follow an approved programme of onboard training which:

1. ensures that during the required period of seagoing service the candidate receives systematic practical training and experience in the tasks, duties and responsibilities of an officer in charge of a navigational watch, taking into account the guidance given in section B-II/1 of this Code;

2. is closely supervised and monitored by qualified officers aboard the ships in which the approved seagoing service is performed; and

3. is adequately documented in a training record book or similar document.

– Chapter III/1 STCW Code:
Onboard training

Every candidate for certification as officer in charge of an engineering watch in a manned engine-room or as designated duty engineer in a periodically unmanned engine-room of ships powered by main propulsion machinery of 750 kW or more whose seagoing service, in accordance with paragraph 2.2 of regulation III/1, forms part of a training programme approved as meeting the requirements of this section shall follow an approved programme of onboard training which:

1. ensures that, during the required period of seagoing service, the candidate receives systematic practical training and experience in the tasks, duties and responsibilities of an officer in charge of an engine-

room watch, taking into account the guidance given in section B-III/1 of this Code;

2. is closely supervised and monitored by a qualified and certificated engineer officer aboard the ships in which the approved seagoing service is performed; and

3. is adequately documented in a training record book.

The Chapter 6 of the ISM Code(IMO Res. A.741(18)) requires that:

The Company should establish and maintain procedures for identifying any training which may be required in support of the safety management system and ensure that such training is provided for all personnel concerned.

IMO has been raising the on-board training problem since 2007 at MSC82 and STW38 in relation to a discussion of the general review of the STCW Convention. At the time, a number of opinions were expressed. The International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) was keen to ensure that the quality of officer's training was not compromised. Intermanager wanted the period of seagoing service to be increased and suggested a common requirement for ships in international trade to employ two or more trainee officers. ICS advocated for guidelines to be issued, rather than any mandatory requirements to carry trainees. But some Countries did not support the suggestion for a change in the sea service requirements or for trainees to be placed onboard as a requirement.

At MSC83, India submitted a proposal to ammend the relevant conventions to introduce a mandatory requirement for ships on international voyages to carry trainees. China (and other countries) expressed the opinion that provision of trainees would solve the problem of the manpower shortage, improve quality of seafarers' training and reduce accidents. Japan (and other countries) expressed the opinion that the proposal should not be supported and was insufficient to solve the global shortage. Singapore suggested that shipowners should be encouraged to provide berths and that non-binding guidelines should be issued. Intertanko supported the training proposal in general, but mentioned that introducing the mandatory requirements would be 'premature', and encouraged general measures to improve the on-board training to be considered. The issue was referred to STW.

At MSC85 India submitted another paper, which included a new agenda item for the SLF Sub-Committee 'on mandatory accommodation for training berths onboard all new ships'. This proposal was to require all new ships designed for international voyages to include dedicated accommodation slots for trainees. The proposal suggested amendments to the relevant IMO/ILO instruments to introduce the requirements. The paper was forwarded to SLF for consideration in the context of
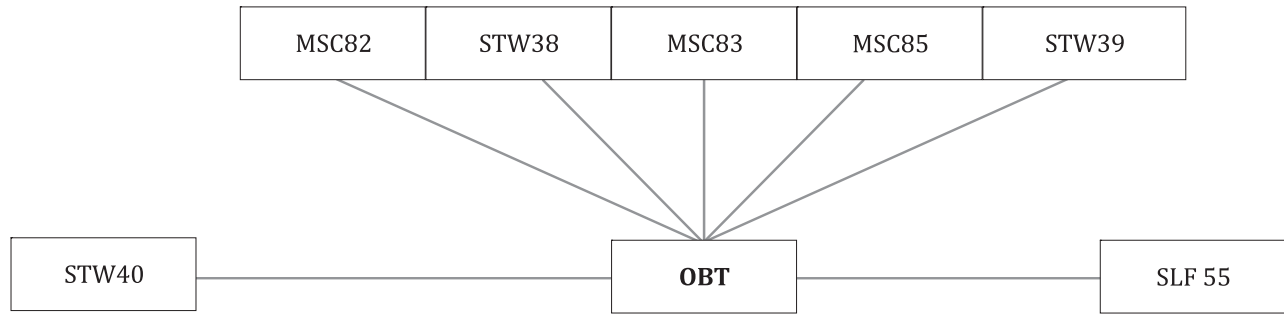
Figure 1 Historic review of OBT discusion

reforms to the Tonnage Measurement Convention and the STW Sub-Committee for consideration in the context of the review of the STCW Convention.

STW39 concluded that mandatory placement of cadets and provision of berths was not the appropriate way forward and it would be impractical and expensive for smaller shipping companies to implement such provisions. South Africa expressed support for the concept but raised doubts over administration and enforcement of the requirements. STW suggested non-binding recommendations on this issue with incentives offered to shipping companies to supply berths to trainees and cadets.

India submitted a new item to amend the 1969 Tonnage Convention to exempt accommodation of training berths from tonnage calculations in the work program of the SLF sub-committee for consideration by MSC85.

During STW40 Norway and others expressed concern as the tonnage of a ship is used for purposes relating to safety of life at sea and protection of the environment (as well as for calculating dues).

STW 40 agreed that one step forward could be the adoption of a resolution urging Member Governments to encourage shipowners to ensure that adequate certified accommodation for trainees/cadets was available on board ships, in particular, new-buildings at the Manila Diplomatic Conference. India prepared a draft resolution on accommodation for trainees, which was adopted in Resolutions 12 and 13 at the Manila diplomatic conference.

SLF55 recommended an Assembly resolution on 'Reduced gross tonnage for crew and trainee accommodation spaces' (SLF 55/INF.2, annex 5). This problem was not solved at the Assembly meeting. This issue is ongoing through SDC, and at SDC2 Germany submitted a draft resolution on this issue. SDC expressed concerns that the parameter may lower the safety requirements of ships which are just over 500 tons, and a recommendatory instrument wouldn't encourage the shipowners to improve seafarer's accommodation conditions onboard the ships and increase training accommodations.

2 REQUIREMENTS AND OBT NONCONFORMITY

STCW 95 introduced a compulsory 12-months seagoing service for every candidate for certification as deck officer of watch. A cadet must perform bridge watch keeping duties under the supervision of a qualified bridge watch keeping officer for at least six months of this period. The cadet's achievements during the on-board training must be documented and approved by the Administration's training record book.

There were two areas where Maritime Administrations rushed to implement the new STCW requirements: seagoing service periods and STCW compulsory courses. From the National Maritime Administration's point of view these were the easiest tasks to be accomplished, because they do not require manpower or logistic efforts from the Administration. This 12- months sea-service period for cadets created problems for maritime education and training establishments. The first one was a substantial reorganization of curricula, in order to allocate time for on-board training. The second main problem is finding owners and ships. This problem is a result of the lack of national flag ships and of the non-assistance of the National Maritime Administration in solving of this problem. Moreover, the students lose the contact with their university/college for several months, and they have major difficulties to re-enter in the studying programme.

There are only few large ship-owners having on-board training programmes with a serious involvement of the cadets in training activities.

For example NYK Cadetship Training Program:

Cadets in principle undergo a 12-month onboard training program (depends upon the nationality), the first three months of which will be spent on a training ship stuffed with specialized instructors to ensure that all cadets receive the same basic training. Upon completion of 3 months on training ship, they are transferred to other NYKSM managed vessels enable complete their remaining seatime required to appear for the competency exam.

The "learn-while-you-work" training programme has been designed based on a study made by *International Maritime Training Centre* (*IMTC*) (formerly the *Indian Maritime Training Centre*) faculty and feedback from managements of various companies, Masters, Company Training Officers (CTO) and cadets.

Many ship-owning and management companies have expressed the feeling that Ship's Officers have sound theoretical knowledge but lack in practical experience. The present educational system prepares a cadet well for theoretical studies, right from pre-sea training through to competency examinations. The Structured Shipboard Training Programme (SSTP) for Deck Cadets complements this with practical learning on board through a task-based curriculum, which enables effective application of theoretical knowledge.

From March 2015 Indian Government will provide financial suport and loans to the cadets to enable them complete the on-board training on foreign ships. This initiative will help over 10,000 students annually. The Indian government has launched this scheme due to the face that many cadets could not get on-board training due to lack of berths on Indian ships.

3 IAMU VISION

The IAMU was created in 1999 by a group of maritime universities from across the world

The role of the IAMUis to be the global leader in maritime society building through networking and excellence in MET.

One of the IAMU mission is to develop and support effective MET systems for passing on maritime skills and knowledge to future generations of global seafarers that ensure safety at sea, maritime security and the protection of the environment.(IAMU Basic Agreement, Article III)

The OBT is one of the main elements of the MET since the IAMU has concentrated on the problem of on-board training. The OBT was the key irem of the IAMU Papers and IAMU Projects for many times.

The IAMU Forum on Maritime Education and Training (MET) was held in Tokyo, in March, 2014. One of the question of the meeting agenda was submission to IMO HTW2 IAMU "IAMU understanding of some Human Element issues". This document provides the Sub-Committee with information on the outcome of the IAMU Forum on Maritime Education and Training (MET) in Higher Education, which was held in Tokyo in February, 2014. The Forum was devoted to the industry trends and implementation of a quality standards system (QSS) for on-board training (OBT), which is mandatory for the MET process in accordance with requirements of the STCW Convention, 1978, as amended, and the STCW Code.

This Paper (HTW 2/INF.2) was submitted to IMO during IMO HTW2 in February, 2015.

During the IAMU AGA 2014 in Tasmania, IEB Extraordinary Meeting in London, February, 2015 and 1st IEB in Croatia in April, 2015 the necessity to submit a new IAMU Paper "On-board Training" was discussed. The goal of the paper is demonstration IAMU vision of this problem to the Maritime Community and attempt to structure and organize not only the OBT, but the Control of the OBT implementation on board of the vessels.

1. OBT organization
2. STCW Requirements
   – Regulation I/14 – Responsibility of Companies
   – Regulation I/8 – Quality Standards – link between OBT and STCW
   – Regulation I/10 Recognition of Certificates
3. Safety at Sea – ISM Code and OBT (Chapter 6 of ISM Code)
4. Security at Sea – ISPS Code and OBT
5. Port State Control and OBT
6. .... etc.

Figure 2 IAMU OBT Scheme

1. Developing a MSC Circular with a title, for example, UNIFIED INTERPRETATION TO PROVISIONS of Manila Conference Resolution 13, STCW 78 and ISM Code related to the provision of suitable accommodation for trainees onboard their ships both existing and new, and/or

2. Using STCW Regulation I/8, Quality Standards, to develop the due interpretations, and/or Taking account of ILO MLC 2006 provisions related to accommodation of the seafarers (= cadets).

*3. Proposing amendments to ISM Code (para 6.5): "The Company should establish and maintain procedures for identifying **and planning** any training which may be required in support of the safety management system and ensure that such training is provided for all personnel concerned"*

4 CONCLUSION

The theme of the World Maritime Day 2015 is "Maritime education and training".

The theme was adopted to focus attention on the wide range of maritime education and training, in particular its adequacy and quality, as the bedrock of a safe and secure shipping industry, which needs to preserve the quality, practical skills and competence of qualified human resources, in order to ensure its sustainability.

The 1978 STCW Convention and Code, as amended, set the international creterion for the seafarers' training and education. While compliance with its standards is essential for serving on board ships, the skills and competence of seafarers, and indeed, the human element ashore, can only be adequately supported, updated and maintained through effective maritime education and training.

There is a good chance to erase OBT problem as 2015 is the Year of MET.

This problem can be solved by close collaboration of IAMU, ICS/ISF(Shipowners), ITF and ILO.

REFERENCES

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