

# R186 - Recruitment and Placement of Seafarers Recommendation, 1996 (No. 186)

*Recommendation concerning the Recruitment and Placement of Seafarers* Adoption: Geneva, 84th ILC session (22 Oct 1996) - Status: Up-to-date instrument (Technical Convention).

Display the document in: [French](#) - [Spanish](#) - [Arabic](#) - [German](#) - [Russian](#) - [Chinese](#)

## Preamble

The General Conference of the International Labour Organization,

Having been convened at Geneva by the Governing Body of the International Labour Office, and having met in its Eighty-fourth Session on 8 October 1996, and

Having decided upon the adoption of certain proposals with regard to the revision of the Placing of Seamen Convention, 1920, which is the third item on the agenda of the session, and

Having determined that these proposals shall take the form of a Recommendation supplementing the Recruitment and Placement of Seafarers Convention, 1996;

adopts, this twenty-second day of October of the year one thousand nine hundred and ninety-six, the following Recommendation, which may be cited as the Recruitment and Placement of Seafarers Recommendation, 1996:

- 1. The competent authority should:
  - (a) take the necessary measures to promote effective cooperation among recruitment and placement services, whether public or private;
  - (b) take account of the needs of the maritime industry at both the national and international levels, when developing training programmes for seafarers, with the participation of shipowners, seafarers and the relevant training institutions;

- (c) make suitable arrangements for the cooperation of representative organizations of shipowners and seafarers in the organization and operation of the public recruitment and placement services where they exist;
- (d) maintain an arrangement for the collection and analysis of all relevant information on the maritime labour market, including:
  - (i) the current and prospective supply of seafarers classified by age, sex, rank and qualifications and the industry's requirements, the collection of data on age and sex being admissible only for statistical purposes or if used in the framework of a programme to prevent discrimination based on age and sex;
  - (ii) the availability of employment on national and foreign ships;
  - (iii) continuity of employment;
  - (iv) the placement of apprentices, cadets and other trainees; and
  - (v) vocational guidance to prospective seafarers;
- (e) ensure that the staff responsible for the supervision of recruitment and placement services be adequately trained and have relevant knowledge of the maritime industry;
- (f) prescribe or approve operational standards and encourage the adoption of codes of conduct and ethical practices for these services; and
- (g) promote continued supervision on the basis of a system of quality standards.
- 2. The operational standards referred to in Paragraph 1(f) should include provisions dealing with:
  - (a) the qualifications and training required of the management and staff of recruitment and placement services, which should include knowledge of the maritime sector, particularly of relevant maritime international instruments on training, certification and labour standards;
  - (b) the keeping of a register of seafarers seeking employment at sea; and
  - (c) matters pertaining to medical examinations, vaccinations, seafarers' documents and such other items as may be required for the seafarer to gain employment.
- 3. In particular, the operational standards referred to in Paragraph 1(f) should provide that each recruitment and placement service:

- (a) maintain, with due regard to the right to privacy and the need to protect confidentiality, full and complete records of the seafarers covered by its recruitment and placement system, which should include but not be limited to:
      - (i) the seafarers' qualifications;
      - (ii) record of employment;
      - (iii) personal data relevant to employment;
      - (iv) medical data relevant to employment;
    - (b) maintain up-to-date crew lists of the vessels for which it provides crew and ensure that there is a means by which it can be contacted in an emergency at all hours;
    - (c) have formal procedures to ensure that seafarers are not subject to exploitation by the agency or its personnel with regard to the offer of engagement on particular ships or by particular companies;
    - (d) have formal procedures to prevent the opportunities for exploitation of seafarers arising from the issue of joining advances or any other financial transaction between the employer and the seafarer which are handled by it;
    - (e) clearly publicize costs which the seafarer will bear by way of medical or documentary clearance;
    - (f) ensure that seafarers are advised of any particular conditions applicable to the job for which they are to be engaged and of particular employers' policies relating to their employment;
    - (g) have formal procedures which are in accordance with the principles of natural justice for dealing with cases of incompetence or indiscipline consistent with national laws and practice and, where applicable, with collective agreements;
    - (h) have formal procedures to ensure, as far as practicable, that certificates of competency and medical certificates of seafarers submitted for employment are up-to-date and have not been fraudulently obtained and that employment references are verified;
    - (i) have formal procedures to ensure that requests for information or advice by families of seafarers while they are at sea are dealt with promptly and sympathetically and at no cost; and
    - (j) as a matter of policy, supply seafarers only to employers who offer terms and conditions of employment to seafarers which comply with applicable laws or regulations or collective agreements.
- 4. International cooperation should be encouraged between Members and relevant organizations and may include:

- (a) the systematic exchange of information on the maritime industry and labour market on a bilateral, regional and multilateral basis;
- (b) the exchange of information on maritime labour legislation;
- (c) the harmonization of policies, working methods and legislation governing recruitment and placement of seafarers;
- (d) the improvement of procedures and conditions for the international recruitment and placement of seafarers; and
- (e) workforce planning, taking account of the supply of and demand for seafarers and the requirements of the maritime industry.