

R137 - Vocational Training (Seafarers) Recommendation, 1970 (No. 137)

Recommendation concerning Vocational Training of Seafarers Adoption: Geneva, 55th ILC session (28 Oct 1970) - Status: Request for information (Technical Convention).

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

Preamble

The General Conference of the International Labour Organisation,

Having been convened at Geneva by the Governing Body of the International Labour Office, and having met in its Fifty-fifth Session on 14 October 1970, and

Having decided upon the adoption of certain proposals with regard to the vocational training of seafarers, which is the sixth item on the agenda of the session, and

Having determined that these proposals shall take the form of a Recommendation,

adopts this twenty-eighth day of October of the year one thousand nine hundred and seventy, the following Recommendation, which may be cited as the Vocational Training (Seafarers) Recommendation, 1970:

I. Scope

- 1.
 - (1) This Recommendation applies to all training designed to prepare persons for work on board a publicly or privately owned seagoing ship engaged in the transport of cargo or passengers for the purpose of trade, engaged in training or engaged in scientific exploration. National laws or regulations, arbitration awards or collective agreements, as may be appropriate under national conditions, should determine when ships are to be regarded as seagoing ships.
 - (2) This Recommendation applies to training for the performance of the duties of persons in the deck, engine, radio or catering departments or of general purpose crews. It does not apply to fishermen.

II. Objectives of Training

- 2. The basic objectives of policy concerning vocational training of seafarers should be--
 - (a) to maintain and improve the efficiency of the shipping industry and the professional ability and potential of seafarers, with due regard to the educational needs of the latter and the economic and social interests of the country;
 - (b) to maintain and improve accident prevention standards on board merchant ships, both at sea and in port, in order to reduce the risk of injury;
 - (c) to encourage a sufficient number of suitable persons to make the merchant marine their career;
 - (d) to ensure that adequate induction training is given to all new recruits, ashore as far as possible, or on board ship;
 - (e) to provide training and retraining facilities commensurate with the current and projected manpower needs of the shipping industry for all the various categories and grades of seafarers;
 - (f) to provide the training facilities necessary in order that technical developments in the fields of operation, navigation and safety can be put into effect;
 - (g) to make training for upgrading and for promotion up to the highest ranks on board available to all seafarers with appropriate ability, and thereby to assist them to develop their efficiency, potential productivity and job satisfaction;
 - (h) to provide suitable practical training for the various categories and grades of seafarers;
 - (i) to ensure, as far as possible, the entry into employment of all trainees after completion of their courses.

III. National Planning and Administration

A. ORGANISATION AND CO-ORDINATION

- 3. In planning a national education and training policy, the competent authorities in countries possessing or intending to develop a shipping industry should ensure that adequate provision is made in the general network of training facilities for the training of seafarers in order to achieve the objectives set out in Paragraph 2 of this Recommendation.
- 4. Where national circumstances do not permit the development of facilities for the training of seafarers of all categories and grades required, collaboration with other countries, as well as with international organisations, in setting up joint maritime training schemes for such seafarers as cannot be covered by national programmes should be considered.

- 5.
 - (1) The training programmes of all public and private institutions engaged in the training of seafarers should be co-ordinated and developed in each country on the basis of approved national standards.
 - (2) Such programmes should be drawn up in co-operation with government departments, educational institutions and other bodies which have an intimate knowledge of the vocational training of seafarers, and should be so designed as to meet the operational requirements of the shipping industry, as established in consultation with shipowners' and seafarers' organisations.
- 6. Bodies which draw up such programmes should, in particular--
 - (a) maintain close contacts between the training institutions and all those concerned so as to keep training in line with the needs of the industry;
 - (b) make regular visits to the training schools with which they are concerned and be fully conversant with the programmes being carried out;
 - (c) ensure that information about available training opportunities is disseminated to all those concerned;
 - (d) co-operate in setting up and operating practical maritime training schemes;
 - (e) participate in establishing the general training standards provided for in Paragraph 11;
 - (f) participate in establishing such national certification standards as are appropriate for the various grades and categories of seafarers;
 - (g) promote direct co-operation between training institutions and those responsible for recruitment and employment.
- 7. The competent authorities and bodies, in co-operation with shipowners' and seafarers' organisations, should ensure that full information on public and private training schemes for seafarers and on conditions of entry into the shipping industry is available to those providing vocational guidance and employment counselling services, to public employment services and to vocational and technical training institutions.
- 8. The competent authorities and bodies should endeavour to ensure that--
 - (a) the facilities of shipyards, engineering workshops, manufacturers of equipment, naval installations, etc., are utilised where available and appropriate in training both officers and ratings;
 - (b) arrangements are made in order that, other things being equal, preference may be given in employment placement to persons who have received appropriate and recognised training.

- 9.
 - (1) Training programmes should be regularly reviewed and kept up to date in the light of the developing needs of the industry.
 - (2) In the review of training programmes, account should be taken of the Document for Guidance, 1968-- which was prepared jointly by the International Labour Organisation and the Inter-Governmental Maritime Consultative Organization and agreed by both organisations and which deals, in technical detail, with the subjects directly affecting the safety of life at sea-as well as of any subsequent amendments or additions thereto.

B. FINANCING

- 10.
 - (1) Seafarers' training schemes should be systematically organised and their financing should be on a regular and adequate basis, having regard to the present and planned requirements and development of the shipping industry.
 - (2) Where appropriate, the government should make financial contributions to training schemes carried on by local government or private bodies. These contributions may take the form of general subsidies, grants of land, buildings or demonstration material such as boats, engines, navigational equipment and other apparatus, the provision of instructors free of charge, payment of trainees' allowances or payment of fees for trainees in day or boarding schools or on training ships.
 - (3) Seafarers should not, through lack of financial resources or training opportunities, be denied the possibility of reaching the highest ranks on board. Therefore, it should be possible for seafarers to earn or receive sufficient financial resources to enable them to obtain appropriate training.
 - (4) Training in publicly run training centres for seafarers should, where possible, be given without charge to trainees.
 - (5) Retraining necessitated by the introduction of technical innovations should be provided free of charge to the seafarers concerned. During the period of such retraining, seafarers should receive adequate allowances; seafarers sent to courses of such retraining by a shipowner should receive their full basic wage.

C. TRAINING STANDARDS

- 11. Training standards should be laid down in conformity with national requirements for obtaining the various seafarers' certificates of competency. In particular, there should be laid down--

- (a) the nature of medical examinations, including chest X-rays and diabetic, hearing and sight tests, required for persons entering training schemes; the standards of such examinations, particularly of the hearing and sight tests, could differ according to the departments which the persons concerned are planning to enter, but should in no case be lower than the medical standards required for entry into employment in the shipping industry;
- (b) the level of general education required for admission to vocational training courses leading to certificates of competency;
- (c) the subjects, such as navigation, seamanship, radio, electronics, engineering, catering and human relations, that should be included in the training curricula;
- (d) the nature of any examination to be taken upon completion of training courses which are subject to examination;
- (e) a procedure whereby the authorities ensure that the teaching staff of training institutions have the requisite experience and qualifications, including adequate practical and theoretical knowledge of technical and operational developments.

IV. Training Programmes

- 12. The various training programmes should be realistically based on the work to be performed on board ship. They should be periodically reviewed and kept up to date in order to keep abreast of technical developments. They should include the following, as appropriate:
 - (a) training in navigation, seamanship, ship handling, signalling, cargo handling and storage, ship maintenance, and other matters relating to the operation of merchant ships;
 - (b) training in the use of electronic and mechanical aids, such as radio and radar installations, radio direction-finders and compasses;
 - (c) theoretical and practical instruction in the use of life-saving and fire-fighting equipment, survival at sea procedures, and other aspects of the safety of life at sea;
 - (d) theoretical and practical instruction in the operation, maintenance and repair of main propulsion installations and auxiliary machinery, with emphasis on the types of equipment, including electronic equipment, installed in ships of the country concerned;
 - (e) training for the catering department as appropriate for those to be employed as stewards, cooks, waiters and galley staff, account being taken of training requirements, for different categories of ships;

- (f) training in accident prevention on board ship, particularly as regards safe working practices in all departments, and including personal safety as part of training in professional subjects, training in first aid, medical care and other related matters and health and physical training, especially swimming; training in medical care and particularly special training for personnel placed in charge of medical care on board should in all cases be related to the content of medical guides compiled by competent authorities and to full utilisation of medical radio services;
 - (g) particularly in the case of trainees under 18 years of age, instruction in subjects of general educational value;
 - (h) instruction in elements of social and labour legislation related to merchant ship operations and to industrial relations, regulations concerning seafarers, transportation economics, maritime insurance, maritime law, etc.;
 - (i) instruction in management techniques, including such subjects as personnel relations and work study.
13. Training programmes should be designed, inter alia, to prepare trainees for certificates of competency and should be directly related, where appropriate, to national certification standards. They should include adequate practical training and take account of any minimum age and minimum working experience laid down by the competent authorities in respect of the various grades of certificates. Account should also be taken of other nationally recognised certificates.
14. The duration of the various training programmes should be sufficient to enable trainees to assimilate the teaching given and should be determined with reference to such matters as--
- (a) the level of training required for the shipboard occupation for which the course is designed;
 - (b) the general educational level and age required of trainees entering the course;
 - (c) the trainees' previous practical experience.

V. General Training Schemes for Seafarers

- 15. Induction training designed to introduce trainees to the shipboard environment and safe working practices on board ship or, where appropriate and practicable, pre-sea training courses which provide adequate training for the duties regularly assigned to ratings of the deck, engine and catering departments, develop character and inculcate a sense of self-discipline and responsibility should be available for young persons with no sea experience.

- 16. Suitable courses of instruction should also be provided to enable young persons of appropriate ability to prepare themselves for statutory certificates or diplomas currently in effect in the merchant navy of their country in respect of both officer and rating categories.
- 17. Training for upgrading and promotion should, among other means, be provided by short-term courses at nautical schools and technical institutions and correspondence courses specially adapted to the needs of specific categories of officers and ratings and to the grades to which they aspire.

VI. Advanced Training

- 18.
 - (1) Retraining, refresher, familiarisation and upgrading courses should be available as required for suitable officers and ratings to enable them to increase and widen their technical skills and knowledge, to keep abreast of technological changes, in particular in the development of automated ships, and to meet the requirements of new methods of operations on board ship.
 - (2) Such courses may be used, for instance, to complement general courses and provide advanced specialised training opening the way to promotion, as well as to provide advanced electronics courses for appropriate personnel.
 - (3) Special attention should be given to the ability of masters, other officers and ratings to navigate and handle new types of ships safely.
- 19. Where training would be facilitated thereby, shipowners should release suitable seafarers employed on board their ships for training periods ashore, at appropriate schools, to enable them to improve their skills, learn to use new techniques and equipment and qualify for promotion. Persons in a supervisory position on board ship should take an active part in encouraging such training.

VII. Training Methods

- 20. The training methods adopted should be the most effective possible, having regard to the nature of the instruction, the trainees' experience, general education and age, and the demonstration equipment and financial resources available.
- 21. Practical training, requiring active participation of the trainees themselves, should be an important part of all training programmes. It may be provided by assigning seafarers to merchant ships for periods of training at sea, to engineering workshops or shipyards or to shipping company offices.

- 22. Training vessels used by training institutions should provide practical instruction in navigation, seamanship, machinery operation and maintenance and other nautical subjects as well as comprehensive shipboard safety education.
- 23. Appropriate demonstration equipment such as simulators, engines, boat models, ship equipment, life-saving equipment, navigational aids and cargo gear should be used in training schemes. Such equipment should be selected with reference to the shipboard machinery and equipment which the trainee may be called upon to use.
- 24. Films and other audio-visual aids should be used, where appropriate--
 - (a) as a supplement to, but not a substitute for, demonstration equipment in the use of which trainees take an active part;
 - (b) as a primary training aid in special fields such as the teaching of languages.
- 25. Theoretical training and general education given as part of a training course should be related to the theoretical and practical knowledge required by seafarers.

VIII. International Co-operation

- 26. Countries should co-operate in promoting the vocational training of seafarers. In some cases it may be of particular value to do so on a regional basis.
- 27. In so doing they might collaborate with the International Labour Organisation and other international institutions, in particular the Inter-Governmental Maritime Consultative Organization, or other countries--
 - (a) in recruiting and training teaching staff;
 - (b) in setting up and improving training facilities for officers and ratings; (c) in setting up joint training facilities with other countries where necessary;
 - (d) in making training facilities available to selected trainees or instructor-trainees from other countries and in sending trainees or instructor-trainees to other countries;
 - (e) in organising international exchanges of personnel, information and teaching materials, as well as international seminars and working groups;
 - (f) in providing qualified and experienced instructors for maritime training schools in other countries.

IX. Effect on Earlier Recommendations

- 28. This Recommendation supersedes the Vocational Training (Seafarers) Recommendation, 1946.