



FIFTH ITEM ON THE AGENDA

Maritime matters**(b) Report of the 83rd Session of the IMO Maritime Safety Committee concerning the establishment of a Joint ILO/IMO Ad Hoc Working Group on the Human Element**

1. The 94th (Maritime) Session of the International Labour Conference, on 22 February 2006, adopted a resolution (No. 10) concerning addressing the human element through international cooperation between United Nations specialized agencies. In particular, it invited the Governing Body of the International Labour Office to request the Director-General to give due priority in the use of resources to promote the role of the human element in shipping and to work with the International Maritime Organization to establish a Joint ILO/IMO Working Group on the Human Element.
2. As a consequence, the Office wrote a letter to the Secretary-General of the IMO dated 23 April 2007, proposing that the IMO and the ILO establish a Joint Working Group, with a view to making recommendations and providing advice to relevant committees and other bodies of both organizations, as well as to their secretariats, to enable them properly to address the human element in shipping when they are preparing or reviewing legal or technical texts or proposals on matters within the competence of both organizations, including seafarer training, hours of work and rest, manning level, seafarer fatigue, career and skill development, and opportunities for seafarers' employment.
3. At its 56th Session, the IMO Maritime Environment Protection Committee (MEPC) convened the Joint MSC/MEPC Working Group on the Human Element. This group considered the communication from the ILO in detail. Based on the recommendations of that group, MEPC 56 agreed that it was not appropriate to establish the proposed Joint ILO/IMO Working Group with such wide and open-ended terms of reference, and that, in future, when preparing or reviewing other technical texts or proposals on matters within the technical competence of both organizations, if considered necessary, an ad hoc Joint ILO/IMO Working Group with specific terms of reference on a case-by-case basis could be established to properly address the human element on a tripartite basis.

4. The IMO Maritime Safety Committee, at its 83rd Session (October 2007), having heard an oral report of the Chairperson of the MEPC in the terms of paragraph 3, concluded that the Joint MSC/MEPC Working Group on the Human Element should continue its work in accordance with the organizations' strategy to address the human element (MSC/MEPC.7/Circ. 4), that there was no compelling need to establish a Joint ILO/IMO Working Group at this stage to address issues relating to seafarers' training, hours of work and rest, manning levels, seafarers' fatigue, career and skill development, as these were already being addressed by the STW subcommittee on a regular basis, and that it was not appropriate to establish the proposed Joint ILO/IMO Working Group with such wide and open-ended terms of reference and that, in future, when preparing or reviewing other technical texts or proposals on matters within the technical competence of both organizations, if considered necessary, to establish an ad hoc Joint ILO/IMO Working Group on a case-by-case basis with specific terms of reference to properly address the human element on a tripartite basis.

5. ***The Committee is invited to take note of the information provided and to make a recommendation to the Governing Body to:***
 - (i) ***reiterate the request to the Director-General mentioned in paragraph 1; and***
 - (ii) ***request the Director-General to transmit these decisions to the Secretary-General of the IMO.***

Geneva, 19 February 2008.

Point for decision: Paragraph 5.