



FOURTH ITEM ON THE AGENDA

Maritime matters**Revision of the ILO/WHO Guidelines for Conducting Pre-sea and Periodic Medical Fitness Examinations for Seafarers**

1. The 94th (Maritime) Session of the International Labour Conference adopted a resolution concerning the development of international standards of medical fitness for crew members and other seafarers. This resolution, inter alia, notes that the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (STCW) 1978, as amended in 1995, invited the International Maritime Organization, in cooperation with the International Labour Organization and the World Health Organization, to develop international standards of medical fitness for seafarers, and that the WHO and the ILO had an existing set of Guidelines for Conducting Pre-sea and Periodic Medical Fitness Examinations for Seafarers (ILO/WHO/D.2/1997).¹
2. The resolution invited the Governing Body to request the Director-General, in cooperation with the IMO, WHO and any other appropriate expert organizations, to consider whether a review of the existing ILO/WHO Guidelines for Conducting Pre-Sea and Periodic Medical Fitness Examinations for Seafarers (ILO/WHO/D.2/1997) was necessary, taking into account that different standards are appropriate for seafarers according to the duties they have to perform on board, and to report their recommendations to the Organization for further consideration and action as appropriate.
3. The IMO is currently engaged in a revision of the STCW Convention. The first ad hoc intersessional meeting of a working group on the comprehensive review of the STCW Convention and Code was held at IMO headquarters from 8 to 12 September 2008. This group considered and has recommended the acceptance of a proposal from the International Maritime Health Association (IMHA) for the preparation of draft standards for the high-level functional criteria on medical fitness of seafarers that could be included in the STCW Convention. It is also intended that the new STCW Convention text would refer to a revised version of the ILO/WHO Guidelines for Conducting Pre-sea and Periodic Medical Fitness Examinations for Seafarers.

¹ See GB.295/4, appendix.

4. Considering the resolution adopted by the International Labour Conference referred to in paragraph 1 above, the Office has concluded that revised guidelines are needed and proposes that such revision be undertaken by the three organizations (ILO, IMO and WHO) with the assistance of the IMHA. The draft guidelines would be considered by an ILO/IMO/WHO tripartite meeting of experts before submission to the relevant bodies of all three organizations. The Office will make the appropriate proposals to the STM for the composition, dates and venue for the ILO/IMO/WHO tripartite meeting of experts in due course after the appropriate consultations. It is assumed that the meeting will not involve any additional budgetary implications for the Office.
5. *The Committee on Sectoral and Technical Meetings and Related Issues may wish to recommend that the Governing Body:*
- (a) request the Office to pursue the necessary arrangements with the IMO and the WHO for the preparation of draft guidelines on the medical fitness examinations of seafarers with the assistance of the IMHA; and*
 - (b) if agreed, convene an ILO/IMO/WHO tripartite meeting of experts to be held with no additional budgetary allocations from the ILO.*

Geneva, 7 October 2008.

Point for decision: Paragraph 5.