

RESOLUTION A.890(21)  
adopted on 25 November 1999  
PRINCIPLES OF SAFE MANNING



ASSEMBLY  
21st session  
Agenda item 9

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**RESOLUTION A.890(21)**  
**adopted on 25 November 1999**

**PRINCIPLES OF SAFE MANNING**

THE ASSEMBLY,

RECALLING Article 15(j) of the Convention on the International Maritime Organization concerning the functions of the Assembly in relation to regulations and guidelines concerning maritime safety and the prevention and control of marine pollution from ships,

RECALLING ALSO Article 28(a) of that Convention which requires the Maritime Safety Committee to consider, *inter alia*, the manning of seagoing ships from a safety standpoint,

NOTING that safe manning is a function of the number of qualified and experienced seafarers necessary for the safety of the ship, crew, passengers, cargo and property and for the protection of the marine environment,

RECOGNIZING the importance of the requirements of the pertinent IMO instruments as well as those adopted by ILO, ITU and WHO relevant to maritime safety and protection of the marine environment,

MINDFUL of the provisions of SOLAS regulation V/13 with respect to the issue of an appropriate safe manning document or equivalent as evidence of minimum safe manning,

BEING AWARE that the ability of seafarers to maintain observance of these requirements is dependent upon their continued efficiency through conditions relating to training, hours of work and rest, occupational safety, health and hygiene and the proper provision of food,

BELIEVING that international acceptance of broad principles as a framework for administrations to determine the safe manning of ships would materially enhance maritime safety and protection of the marine environment.

HAVING CONSIDERED the recommendation made by the Maritime Safety Committee at its seventy-first session,

For reasons of economy, this document is printed in a limited number. Delegates are kindly asked to bring their copies to meetings and not to request additional copies.

1. ADOPTS the Principles of safe manning, the Guidelines for the application of principles of safe manning and the Guidance on contents and model form of minimum safe manning document, set out respectively in Annexes 1, 2 and 3 to the present resolution;
2. RECOMMENDS that Governments, in establishing the minimum safe manning levels for ships flying their countries' flag, observe the Principles set out in Annex 1 and take into account the Guidelines set out in Annex 2;
3. URGES Governments to ensure that minimum safe manning documents contain, as a minimum, the information given in Annex 3;
4. URGES FURTHER Governments, when exercising port State control functions under international conventions in force with respect to foreign ships visiting their ports, to regard compliance with such documents as evidence that such ships are safely manned;
5. REQUESTS the Maritime Safety Committee to keep this resolution under review;
6. REVOKES resolution A.481(XII).

## ANNEX 1

### PRINCIPLES OF SAFE MANNING

1 The following principles should be observed in determining the minimum safe manning of a ship:

- .1 the capability to:
  - .1.1 maintain safe navigational, engineering and radio watches in accordance with regulation VIII/2 of the 1978 STCW Convention, as amended, and also maintain general surveillance of the ship;
  - .1.2 moor and unmoor the ship safely;
  - .1.3 manage the safety functions of the ship when employed in a stationary or near-stationary mode at sea;
  - .1.4 perform operations, as appropriate, for the prevention of damage to the marine environment;
  - .1.5 maintain the safety arrangements and the cleanliness of all accessible spaces to minimize the risk of fire;
  - .1.6 provide for medical care on board ship;
  - .1.7 ensure safe carriage of cargo during transit; and
  - .1.8 inspect and maintain, as appropriate, the structural integrity of the ship; and
- .2 the ability to:
  - .2.1 operate all watertight closing arrangements and maintain them in effective condition, and also deploy a competent damage control party;
  - .2.2 operate all on-board fire-fighting and emergency equipment and life-saving appliances, carry out such maintenance of this equipment as is required to be done at sea, and muster and disembark all persons on board; and
  - .2.3 operate the main propulsion and auxiliary machinery and maintain them in a safe condition to enable the ship to overcome the foreseeable perils of the voyage.

2 In applying such principles, Administrations should take proper account of existing IMO, ILO, ITU and WHO instruments in force which deal with:

- .1 watchkeeping;
  - .2 hours of work or rest;
  - .3 safety management;
  - .4 certification of seafarers;
  - .5 training of seafarers;
  - .6 occupational health and hygiene; and
  - .7 crew accommodation.
- 3 The following on-board functions, when applicable, should also be taken into account:
- .1 ongoing training requirements for all personnel, including the operation and use of fire-fighting and emergency equipment, life-saving appliances and watertight closing arrangements;
  - .2 specialized training requirements for particular types of ships;
  - .3 provision of proper food and drinking water;
  - .4 need to undertake emergency duties and responsibilities; and
  - .5 need to provide training opportunities for entrant seafarers to allow them to gain the training and experience needed.

## ANNEX 2

### **GUIDELINES FOR THE APPLICATION OF PRINCIPLES OF SAFE MANNING**

#### **1 Introduction**

1.1 These guidelines should be used in applying the principles of safe manning set out in Annex 1 to this resolution to ensure the safe operation of, and the prevention of pollution from, ships to which article III of the 1978 STCW Convention, as amended, applies.

1.2 The Administration may retain or adopt arrangements which differ from the provisions herein recommended and which are especially adapted to technical developments and to special types of ships and trades. However, at all times the Administration should satisfy itself that the detailed manning arrangements ensure a degree of safety at least equivalent to that established by these guidelines.

#### **2 Hours of work or rest**

2.1 Every company is obliged to ensure that the master, officers and ratings do not work more hours than is safe in relation to the performance of their duties and the safety of the ship. The same responsibility is placed on the master in relation to the members of the ship's complement. Manning levels should be such as to ensure that the time and place available for taking rest periods are appropriate for achieving a good quality of rest. Further guidance about fitness for duty is contained in section B-VIII/1 of the STCW Code.

2.2 A record of the actual hours of work performed by the individual seafarer should be maintained on board, in order to verify that the minimum periods of rest required under relevant and applicable international instruments in force have been complied with.

#### **3 Determination of minimum safe manning levels**

3.1 The purpose of determining the minimum safe manning level of a ship is to ensure that its complement includes the grades/capacities and number of persons required for the safe operation of the ship and the protection of the marine environment.

3.2 The minimum safe manning level of a ship should be established taking into account all relevant factors, including the following:

- .1 size and type of ship;
- .2 number, size and type of main propulsion units and auxiliaries;
- .3 construction and equipment of the ship;
- .4 method of maintenance used;
- .5 cargo to be carried;

- .6 frequency of port calls, length and nature of voyages to be undertaken;
- .7 trading area(s), waters and operations in which the ship is involved;
- .8 extent to which training activities are conducted on board; and
- .9 applicable work hour limits and/or rest requirements.

3.3 The determination of the minimum safe manning level of a ship should be based on performance of the functions at the appropriate level(s) of responsibility, as specified in the STCW Code, which include the following:

- .1 navigation, comprising the tasks, duties and responsibilities required to:
  - .1 plan and conduct safe navigation;
  - .2 maintain a safe navigational watch in accordance with the requirements of the STCW Code;
  - .3 manoeuvre and handle the ship in all conditions; and
  - .4 moor and unmoor the ship safely;
- .2 cargo handling and stowage, comprising the tasks, duties and responsibilities required to:
  - .1 plan, monitor and ensure safe loading, stowage, securing, care during the voyage and unloading of cargo to be carried on the ship;
- .3 operation of the ship and care for persons on board, comprising the tasks, duties and responsibilities required to:
  - .1 maintain the safety and security of all persons on board and keep life-saving, fire-fighting and other safety systems in operational condition;
  - .2 operate and maintain all watertight closing arrangements;
  - .3 perform operations, as appropriate, to muster and disembark all persons on board;
  - .4 perform operations, as appropriate, to ensure protection of the marine environment;
  - .5 provide for medical care on board the ship; and
  - .6 undertake administrative tasks required for the safe operation of the ship;
- .4 marine engineering, comprising the tasks, duties and responsibilities required to:

- .1 operate and monitor the ship's main propulsion and auxiliary machinery and evaluate the performance of such machinery;
- .2 maintain a safe engineering watch in accordance with the requirements of the STCW Code;
- .3 manage and perform fuel and ballast operations; and
- .4 maintain safety of the ship's engine equipment, systems and services;
- .5 electrical, electronic and control engineering, comprising the tasks, duties and responsibilities required to:
  - .1 operate the ship's electrical and electronic equipment; and
  - .2 maintain the safety of the ship's electrical and electronic systems;
- .6 radiocommunications, comprising the tasks, duties and responsibilities required to:
  - .1 transmit and receive information using the radio equipment of the ship;
  - .2 maintain a safe radio watch in accordance with the requirements of the ITU Radio Regulations and the 1974 SOLAS Convention, as amended; and
  - .3 provide radio services in emergencies;
- .7 maintenance and repair, comprising the tasks, duties and responsibilities required to:
  - .1 carry out maintenance and repair work to the ship and its machinery, equipment and systems, as appropriate to the method of maintenance and repair used.

3.4 In addition to the factors and functions in paragraphs 3.2 and 3.3, the determination of the minimum safe manning level should also take into account:

- .1 the management of the safety functions of a ship at sea when not under way;
- .2 except in ships of limited size, the provision of qualified deck officers to ensure that it is not necessary for the master to keep regular watches by adopting a three-watch system;
- .3 except in ships of limited propulsion power or operating under provisions for unattended machinery spaces, the provision of qualified engineer officers to ensure that it is not necessary for the chief engineer to keep regular watches by adopting a three-watch system;



- .4 the maintenance of applicable occupational health and hygiene standards on board; and
- .5 the provision of proper food and drinking water for all persons on board, as required.

3.5 In determining the minimum safe manning level of a ship, consideration should also be given to:

- .1 the number of qualified and other personnel required to meet peak workload situations and conditions, with due regard to the number of hours of shipboard duties and rest periods assigned to seafarers; and
- .2 the capability of the master and the ship's complement to co-ordinate the activities necessary for the safe operation of the ship and the protection of the marine environment.

#### **4 Responsibilities of companies**

4.1 The Administration may require the company responsible for the operation of the ship to prepare and submit its proposal for the minimum safe manning level of a ship in accordance with a form specified by the Administration.

4.2 In preparing a proposal for the minimum safe manning level of a ship, the company should apply the principles, recommendations and guidelines contained in this resolution and should be required to:

- .1 make an assessment of the tasks, duties and responsibilities of the ship's complement required for its safe operation, for protection of the marine environment, and for dealing with emergency situations;
- .2 make an assessment of numbers and grades/capacities in the ship's complement required for its safe operation, for protection of the marine environment, and for dealing with emergency situations;
- .3 prepare and submit to the Administration a proposal for the minimum safe manning level based upon the assessment of the numbers and grades/capacities in the ship's complement required for its safe operation and for protection of the marine environment, justifying the proposal by explaining how the proposed ship's complement will deal with emergency situations, including the evacuation of passengers, where necessary;
- .4 ensure that the minimum safe manning level is adequate at all times and in all respects, including meeting peak workload situations, conditions and requirements, and is in accordance with the principles, recommendations and guidelines contained in this resolution; and

- .5 prepare and submit to the Administration a new proposal for the minimum safe manning level of a ship in the case of changes in trading area(s), construction, machinery, equipment or operation and maintenance of the ship, which may affect the safe manning level.

## **5 Approval by the Administration**

5.1 A proposal for the minimum safe manning level of a ship submitted by a company to the Administration should be evaluated by the Administration to ensure that:

- .1 the proposed ship's complement contains the number and grades/capacities of personnel to fulfil the tasks, duties and responsibilities required for the safe operation of the ship, for protection of the marine environment and for dealing with emergency situations; and
- .2 the master, officers and other members of the ship's complement are not required to work more hours than is safe in relation to the performance of their duties and the safety of the ship and that the requirements for work and rest hours, in accordance with applicable national regulations, can be complied with.

5.2 The Administration should require a company to amend a proposal for the minimum safe manning level of a ship if, after evaluation of the original proposal submitted by the company, the Administration is unable to approve the proposed composition of the ship's complement.

5.3 The Administration should only approve a proposal for the minimum safe manning level of a ship and issue accordingly a minimum safe manning document if it is fully satisfied that the proposed ship's complement is established in accordance with the principles, recommendations and guidelines contained in this resolution, and is adequate in all respects for the safe operation of the ship and for the protection of the marine environment.

5.4 The Administration may withdraw the minimum safe manning document of a ship if the company fails to submit a new proposal for the ship's minimum safe manning level when changes in trading area(s), construction, machinery, equipment or operation and maintenance of the ship have taken place which affect the minimum safe manning level.

5.5 The Administration should review and may withdraw, as appropriate, the minimum safe manning document of a ship which persistently fails to be in compliance with rest hours requirements.

ANNEX 3

**GUIDANCE ON CONTENTS AND MODEL FORM OF  
MINIMUM SAFE MANNING DOCUMENT**

1 The following information should be included in the minimum safe manning document issued by the Administration specifying the minimum safe manning level:

- .1 a clear statement of the ship's name, port of registry, distinctive number or letters, IMO number, gross tonnage, main propulsion power, type and trading area and whether or not the machinery space is unattended;
- .2 a table showing the number and grades/capacities of the personnel required to be carried, together with any special conditions or other remarks;
- .3 a formal statement by the Administration that, in accordance with the principles and guidelines set out in Annexes 1 and 2, the ship named in the document is considered to be safely manned if, whenever it proceeds to sea, it carries not less than the number and grades/capacities of personnel shown in the document, subject to any special conditions stated therein;
- .4 a statement as to any limitations on the validity of the document by reference to particulars of the individual ship and the nature of service upon which it is engaged; and
- .5 the date of issue and any expiry date of the document together with a signature for and the seal of the Administration.

2 It is recommended that the minimum safe manning document be drawn up in the form corresponding to the model given in the appendix to this Annex. If the language used is not English, the information given should include a translation into English.

APPENDIX

MODEL FORM OF MINIMUM SAFE MANNING DOCUMENT

MINIMUM SAFE MANNING DOCUMENT

(Official seal)

(State)

Issued under the provisions of regulation V/13(b) of the  
INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION FOR THE SAFETY OF LIFE AT SEA, 1974, as amended

under the authority of the Government of

.....  
(name of the State)

by .....  
(Administration)

*Particulars of ship* \*

Name of ship .....

Distinctive number or letters .....

IMO number .....

Port of registry .....

Gross tonnage:

National .....

International Tonnage Convention, 1969 .....

Main propulsion power (kW) .....

Type of ship .....

Periodically unattended machinery space                      yes/no

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\* Alternatively the particulars of the ship may be placed horizontally.

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Trading area**
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The ship named in this document is considered to be safely manned if, when it proceeds to sea, it carries not less than the number and grades/capacities of personnel specified in the table(s) below.

Grade/capacity	Certificate (STCW regulation)	Number of persons

Special requirements or conditions, if any:
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Issued at ..... on the ..... day of .....  
(month and year)

Date of expiry (if any) .....

(Seal of the Administration)

.....  
 (Signature for and on behalf of the Administration)

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\*\* Where a trading area other than unlimited is shown, a clear description or map of the trading area should be included in the document.

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