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Circular Letter No.5025
11 July 2025

To: All IMO Members
United Nations and specialized agencies
Intergovernmental organizations
Non-governmental organizations in consultative status with IMO

Subject: **Twelfth session of the Sub-Committee on Human Element, Training and Watchkeeping (23 to 27 February 2026)**

1 The Secretary-General has the honour to invite representation at the twelfth session of the Sub-Committee on Human Element, Training and Watchkeeping (HTW 12), which has been scheduled to take place from Monday, 23 to Friday, 27 February 2026.

2 The provisional agenda for the twelfth session of the Sub-Committee (HTW 12/1) is attached to this circular letter. Further documentation, including an annotated agenda with a provisional timetable, will be issued in due course.

3 Working and drafting groups on subjects to be selected from the following, may be established during the session:

- .1 model courses;
- .2 comprehensive review of the 1978 STCW Convention and Code; and
- .3 development of training provisions for seafarers on ships using alternative fuels,

whereby the Chair, in consultation with the Secretariat, taking into account the submissions received on the respective subjects, will advise the Sub-Committee well in time before the session on the final selection of such groups.

4 The Secretary-General would appreciate being informed, in due course, of the names of representatives, delegates and observers, as appropriate, intending to participate in the forthcoming twelfth session of the Sub-Committee.

Use of hybrid meeting capability to complement in-person participation

5 The Council, at its 132nd session (C 132), agreed to permanently establish the utilization of hybrid capabilities to support in-person meetings and invited the other IMO organs to do the same. Information on hybrid meetings is provided in Circular Letter No.4627.

Submission of documents

6 In accordance with the *Organization and method of work of the Maritime Safety Committee and the Marine Environment Protection Committee and their subsidiary bodies* (MSC-MEPC.1/Circ.5/Rev.6), the deadlines for the submission of documents to the session and the method of submitting documents are specified in paragraph 1 of the notes to the provisional agenda for HTW 12 (HTW 12/1). A link to a template is available on the home page of the IMODOCS website for use in the preparation of meeting documents. Documents should be submitted through the Meeting Document Submission Portal, available on the IMODOCS homepage (<https://docs.imo.org>) under the "Submissions" tab, to help streamline and harmonize the process of submitting documents for consideration by the different IMO bodies (MSC-MEPC.1/Circ.5/Rev.6, paragraph 6.2).

7 Further to the decision taken by the Council, at its 120th regular session (C 120/D, paragraph 4.9), and by the Maritime Safety Committee at its 100th session (MSC 100/20, paragraphs 2.2 and 2.3), regarding the issue of access to information and transparency, submitters of meeting documents are invited to give their consent for their documents to be released to the public prior to the meeting by checking the "opt-in box" at the top right corner of the new document template provided on IMODOCS (pre-session public release). In the absence of explicit consent, submissions will not be released to the public prior to the meeting.

Template and additional information on the submission of proposals on draft amendments to chapters 2 and 3 of the 1978 STCW Convention and Code

8 In accordance with the work plan for phase 2 of the comprehensive review of the 1978 STCW Convention and Code, and the decision by HTW 11, the Secretariat has prepared a template for the submission of proposals for this phase of the work, as set out in document HTW 12/6, which can be found on IMODOCS.

9 In order to facilitate the submission of documents to HTW 12 in a harmonized manner, the following recommendations are provided:

- .1 documents should be strictly limited to addressing the gaps referred to in paragraph 5 of document HTW 12/6;
- .2 documents should avoid repetition of the background information of phase 1 and the draft amendments to the Convention and Code should be clear and concise in accordance with the template set out in annex 1 to document HTW 12/6;
- .3 each document, in principle, should address one gap at a time, however, if different gaps could be addressed through one set of amendments (e.g. the same paragraph of the Convention and Code), practical arrangements should be considered;
- .4 gap No.11 should be taken into account for proposals on draft amendments to the Code, i.e. appendix 4 (action verb taxonomy for IMO model courses) to the revised *Guidelines for the development, review and validation of model courses* (MSC-MEPC.2/Circ.15/Rev.2), with a view to a harmonized use of action verbs;
- .5 noting the anticipated volume of documents on proposals for phase 2, the submission of these documents (agenda item 6) should only be subject to the 13-week deadline, as set out in paragraph 6.12.3 of the Committees'

method of work (no later than 21 November 2025); and the 7-week deadline for commenting documents, as set out in paragraph 6.12.5 of the Committees' method of work (no later than 2 January 2026), in order to ensure their timely processing, translation and publication; and

- .6 tracked changes should be used based on the existing provisions and practice, i.e. "strikeout" for deleted text and "grey shading" to highlight all modifications and new insertions, including deleted text (i.e. not using the track changes function of Microsoft Word), in order to ensure that such changes are not lost during further editorial work (e.g. cut and paste).

ANNEX 1

REGISTRATION, ACCREDITATION AND CODE OF CONDUCT

Registration

Member Governments, UN agencies, IGOs and NGOs are required to provide, prior to the meeting date, the names of all the members of their delegations including Permanent Representatives, Assistant Permanent Representatives and Members of Permanent Missions attending the meeting via the Online Meeting Registration System (OMRS), as advised in Circular Letter No.4336 of 5 November 2020.

Active participants are those registered as either *physical* (attending meetings at IMO Headquarters in person) or *remote-active*. They are authorized to take the floor and make interventions. Passive participants are those only able to follow proceedings remotely via live-streaming.

Remote-active participants will receive a personalized joining link via email daily before each session starts at approximately 08.30 UTC/UTC+1. The Zoom link is unique to the recipient and should not be shared with anyone. Accuracy of the registered email address in OMRS is crucial.

Remote-passive participants automatically receive a link, once their registration is approved, to a web stream of the session (live streaming), which will be broadcast via the IMODOCS page. It is important to note that the option for remote-passive participation is available only if the meeting is livestreamed.

In-person participants should not join the Zoom meeting when physically present in the Main Hall or Committee Rooms, as this will have a detrimental impact on the hybrid system and reduce the number of licences available for those joining remotely.

Delegates wishing to change their participation status from in-person to remote-active or vice versa must do so in the OMRS through their respective OMRS Delegation Coordinator(s). Subsequently, they will receive a joining link for the meeting.

Delegates attending the meeting in person who have completed the registration procedure will be issued with an electronic access card at IMO to pass through the security barrier in the IMO Headquarters.

Issue of the access card will require photographic proof of identity, e.g. passport, identity card or driving licence. Delegates may also be required to show proof of identity at any time while they are in the IMO Headquarters if requested by IMO Security. In view of the significant costs incurred in producing access cards, delegates who have previously been issued with one are kindly requested to bring it with them for reactivation.

Any matters relating to the use of the OMRS and participation in the forthcoming meetings of HTW 12 should be communicated to:

Registration Unit
Meeting Services, Meeting Support Section
Email: onlineregistration@imo.org

Members of delegations will not be registered to attend the meeting without authorization from their respective OMRS Delegation Coordinator(s). Delegates whose names do not appear on the OMRS list will be asked to contact their OMRS Delegation Coordinator in order to process their authorization to attend the meeting.

Delegates are advised that the Registration Desk will be open from 07.30 UTC/UTC+1 on Monday, 23 February 2026, when early arrival would be appreciated.

Remote or hybrid participation

Delegates joining the meeting remotely are urged to use appropriate equipment, and are kindly requested to wait a few seconds before starting to speak and to endeavour to speak slowly and clearly, to facilitate interpretation in other languages.

Statements

To facilitate the interpretation of interventions during the session, delegations are encouraged to provide advance copies of statements to the Secretariat by email to statements@imo.org.

Code of Conduct

Delegates, participants, attendees and guests are subject to the Code of Conduct for Delegates, Observers and Other Participants at IMO Meetings, Events and Activities to Prevent Harassment including Sexual Harassment (Circular Letter No.4908).

ANNEX 2

PROCEDURES GOVERNING THE SUPPORT BY IMO OF VISA APPLICATIONS

As established in article 7.2 of part III on Access and communications of the Headquarters agreement, delegates are entitled to have their entry into the United Kingdom authorized without delay and without charge.

All delegates who are travelling to participate in this meeting will require an entry visa for the United Kingdom. Delegates should **not** apply for an electronic travel authorisation (ETA), but instead apply for an **"EXEMPT"** visa at www.gov.uk/exempt-vignette, note the reference numbers and follow the online instructions to attend either the nominated Visa Application Centre or the United Kingdom Embassy or High Commission. Those delegates travelling to the United Kingdom on a regular basis may apply for a multi-entry exempt visa. United Kingdom visa applications should be accompanied by the following documentation:

- i. a copy of this circular letter (numbered CL.5025), to be used as the official letter of invitation;
- ii. the nomination letter; and
- iii. a note verbale from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Delegates must be nominated by their competent ministry (usually the Ministry of Transport or the National Maritime Administration). The nomination letter should be accompanied by a note verbale issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

If, after following the above-mentioned procedure, delegates still encounter visa problems, either the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Transport, the National Maritime Administration or the competent ministry should request visa assistance in writing to the Head of the IMO External Relations Office, on paper bearing the official letterhead. The letter should state the reasons given by the British Embassy/High Commission as to why visas have been or may be refused and contain the following details:

- i. First name
Family name
Profession
Date of birth
Type of passport
Passport no.
Place of issue
Date of issue
Valid until
Visa reference number
Date and place of visa application
- ii. Purpose of visit
- iii. Duration of anticipated stay in the United Kingdom

This **exercise must be undertaken at least six weeks before the date on which the session begins, to** enable the Organization to support the visa application accordingly and to enable the visa to be issued in good time.

Any requests for visa assistance should be communicated to visa@imo.org.

SUB-COMMITTEE ON HUMAN ELEMENT,
TRAINING AND WATCHKEEPING
12th session
Agenda item 1

HTW 12/1
11 July 2025
Original: ENGLISH
Pre-session public release:

PROVISIONAL AGENDA

**for the twelfth session of the Sub-Committee to be held at IMO Headquarters,
4 Albert Embankment, London, SE1 7SR,
from Monday, 23 February to Friday, 27 February 2026**

(Session commences at 09.30 a.m. (UTC) on Monday, 23 February 2026)

Opening of the session

- 1 Adoption of the agenda
- 2 Decisions of other IMO bodies
- 3 Validated model training courses (6.2)
- 4 Role of the human element (6.1)
- 5 Reports on unlawful practices associated with certificates of competency (6.3)
- 6 Comprehensive review of the 1978 STCW Convention and Code (6.17)¹
- 7 Development of a safety regulatory framework to support the reduction of GHG emissions from ships using new technologies and alternative fuels (3.8)
- 8 Scoping exercise and enhancement of the effectiveness of provisions on fatigue and seafarers' hours of work and rest (6.9)
- 9 Biennial status report and provisional agenda for HTW 13
- 10 Election of Chair and Vice-Chair for 2027
- 11 Any other business
- 12 Report to the Maritime Safety Committee

¹ Additional information regarding the submission deadline for this item is set out in paragraph 1.1.1 of the Notes below.

Notes:

1 In accordance with the *Organization and method of work of the Maritime Safety Committee and the Marine Environment Protection Committee and their subsidiary bodies* (MSC-MEPC.1/Circ.5/Rev.6):

- .1 documents should be received by the Secretariat in accordance with paragraph 6.12 of the annex to MSC-MEPC.1/Circ.5/Rev.6, as follows²:
 - .1 documents (including information documents) containing more than six pages of text (bulky documents²³), as well as all documents on proposals for phase 2 submitted under agenda item 6, by **21 November 2025** (13-week deadline);
 - .2 non-bulky documents including information documents (six pages or fewer), with the exception of documents submitted under agenda item 6, which are subject to sub-paragraph .1, and bulky information documents submitted in electronic format, by **19 December 2025** (nine-week deadline); and
 - .3 documents (four pages or fewer) commenting on those referred to in subparagraphs .1 and .2 above, by **2 January 2026** (seven-week deadline). These documents should start with a paragraph clearly indicating the document on which comments are made and stating that the document is submitted in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 6.12.5 of MSC-MEPC.1/Circ.5/Rev.6;
- .2 for reasons of economy, documents should be submitted in single spacing and be as concise as possible, and:
 - .1 all documents should include a brief summary prepared in accordance with section 6 of the annex to MSC-MEPC.1/Circ.5/Rev.6;
 - .2 substantive documents should conclude with a summary of the action that the Sub-Committee is invited to take; and
 - .3 information documents should conclude with a summary of the information contained therein; and
- .3 the following word-processing format should be observed in order to standardize the presentation of documents:
 - font: Arial;
 - font size: 11;
 - justification: full;
 - margins: 2 cm top, 2.5 cm bottom, left and right.

² Documents other than information documents and reports from sub-committees, working, drafting, correspondence and other working groups and the Secretariat, which contain more than 20 pages, in line with paragraph 6.11 of the annex to MSC-MEPC.1/Circ.5/Rev.6, will not be translated in their entirety. Such documents should include, for translation purposes, a summary not longer than four pages, with the technical content submitted as an annex in the language needed by working groups (i.e. English).

³ In case documents contain more than 50 pages, the provisions of paragraph 6.12.1 of the annex to MSC-MEPC.1/Circ.5/Rev.6 are to be applied.

A template is available on the IMODOCS website for use in the preparation of documents.

To facilitate processing, documents should be submitted via the new **Meeting Document Submission Portal on IMODOCS** (Submission Portal) in DOCX format, as set out in Circular Letter No.4662. To submit any electronic files for processing by the Secretariat, submitters should click on the tab and use the templates available for submissions. Detailed information on how to use the Portal is set out in the annex to Circular Letter No.4662. All submissions will be acknowledged via notification sent from the Submission Portal. The status of a submitted document can be checked on the Submission Portal. For any queries relating to the Submission Portal, please email the Secretariat at team@imo.org.

2 The Maritime Safety Committee has recommended that the sub-committees should strictly observe the provisions in the annex to MSC-MEPC.1/Circ.5/Rev.6, which, inter alia, provide that the Secretariat should strictly apply the rules concerning the submission of documents and not accept late submissions from Member States or international organizations.

3 In order to improve access to information and increase transparency, submitters of meeting documents are invited to give their consent for their documents to be released to the public prior to the meeting by checking the "opt-in box" at the top right corner of the new document template provided on IMODOCS (pre-session public release). In the absence of explicit consent, submissions will not be released to the public prior to the meeting.
