

# Seafarers' Hours of Work and Hours of Rest

IMO/ILO Guidelines for the Development  
of Tables of Seafarers' Shipboard Working  
Arrangements and Formats of Records of  
Seafarers' Hours of Work or Hours of Rest

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## Foreword

In 1996, the Maritime Session of the International Labour Conference adopted a resolution requesting the International Labour Organization (ILO) to develop guidelines and standardized formats relating to shipboard working arrangements and hours of work and rest of seafarers, as referred to in articles 5 and 8 of the Seafarers' Hours of Work and the Manning of Ships Convention (Convention No. 180).

The International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (STCW), 1978, as amended in 1995, also contains provisions on hours of rest and the posting of watch schedules, so a joint International Maritime Organization (IMO)/ILO working group was established following consultations between the Secretary-General of IMO and the Director-General of ILO.

The working group was given the task of producing guidelines and standard formats so that those affected – the shipping industry and seafarers – might benefit from addressing the common issues in a common way, avoiding unnecessary duplication.

The group was asked to prepare:

- a standardized table showing shipboard working arrangements;
- a standard format for records of seafarers' daily hours of work and rest; and
- guidelines for monitoring compliance.

At its 69th session (May 1998), IMO's Maritime Safety Committee approved, and at its 273rd session (November 1998), the Governing Body of the International Labour Office took note of the report of the joint working group and authorized the Director-General of ILO to consult with the Secretary-General of IMO regarding the joint publication of this document.

The Guidelines for the Development of Tables of Seafarers' Shipboard Working Arrangements and Formats of Records of Seafarers' Hours of Work or Hours of Rest presented here are the result of the group's work. IMO and ILO are pleased to issue this joint publication, which is designed to assist Administrations, shipowners and seafarers in meeting their obligations under the IMO and ILO conventions.

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# Guidelines for the Development of Tables of Seafarers' Shipboard Working Arrangements and Formats of Records of Seafarers' Hours of Work or Hours of Rest

## Purpose

1 These Guidelines are intended to assist competent authorities\* to develop tables of shipboard working arrangements and records of seafarers' hours of work or hours of rest as required by the Seafarers' Hours of Work and the Manning of Ships Convention, 1996 (No. 180) (hereinafter referred to as Convention No. 180). They also take into account the provisions on establishment of rest periods for watchkeeping personnel contained in the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers, 1978, as amended (hereinafter referred to as the STCW Convention).

## Background

2 Convention No. 180, which was adopted by the 84th (Maritime) session of the International Labour Conference (Geneva, 1996), introduced for the first time comprehensive international provisions to establish limits on seafarers' maximum working hours or minimum rest periods so as to maintain safe ship operations and minimize fatigue. The Convention includes parts on Scope and Definitions (part I), Seafarers' Hours of Work and Hours of Rest (part II), Manning of Ships (part III), Responsibilities of Shipowners and Masters (part IV) and Application (part V). The substantive text of Convention No. 180, which has been included at appendix 1, should be read prior to using these Guidelines.

3 Article 5 of Convention No. 180 lays down, *inter alia*, the requirements concerning maximum hours of work or minimum hours of rest. According to article 5, paragraph 7:

The Member shall require the posting, in an easily accessible place, of a table with the shipboard working arrangements, which shall contain for every position at least (a) the schedule of service at sea and service in port, and (b) the maximum hours of work or the minimum hours of rest required by the laws, regulations and collective agreements in force in the flag State.

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\* ILO Convention No. 180 provides that the term *competent authority* means the minister, the governmental department or other authority having power to issue regulations, orders or other instructions having the force of law in respect of seafarers' hours of work or rest or the manning of ships.

Paragraph 8 further provides that:

The table referred to shall be established in a standardized format in the working language or languages of the ship and in English.

**4** According to article 8, paragraph 1:

The Member shall require that records of seafarers' daily hours of work or of their daily hours of rest be maintained to allow monitoring of compliance with the provisions set out in Article 5. The seafarer shall receive a copy of the records pertaining to him or her which shall be endorsed by the master, or a person authorized by the master, and by the seafarer.

Paragraph 2 further provides:

The competent authority shall establish the format of the records taking into account any available International Labour Organization guidelines or shall use any standard format prepared by the Organization. The format shall be established in the language or languages provided by Article 5, paragraph 8.

**5** Following the adoption of Convention No.180, the Maritime Conference also adopted a resolution on the application of the Convention in which it requested the International Labour Office, as a matter of priority, to develop the guidelines and standardized format referred to in articles 5 and 8, taking into account the texts and proposals made by the Conference Committee and the discussions thereon. It also recommended that a tripartite group of experts be convened by ILO to assist in this exercise. It also adopted a resolution which declared that nothing in Convention No. 180 was intended to enable Members ratifying the Convention which are also Parties to the STCW Convention to apply provisions to watchkeeping seafarers less favourable than those contained in the STCW Convention and are inconsistent with the minimum rest periods in that Convention.

**6** The STCW Convention requires in regulation VIII/1 that Administrations shall, for the purposes of preventing fatigue, establish and enforce rest periods for watchkeeping personnel. In addition, the regulation requires that watch systems are arranged such that the efficiency of watchkeeping personnel is not impaired by fatigue and that duties are organized so that the first watch at the commencement of a voyage and subsequent relieving watches are sufficiently rested and fit for duty.

**7** The related section of part A of the Seafarers' Training, Certification and Watchkeeping Code (STCW Code) sets minimum periods and frequency of rest and also requires that watch schedules be posted where they are easily accessible. Part B of the STCW Code provides guidance on the application of the provisions of regulation VIII/1, which includes the factors to be taken into account in the prevention of fatigue, including reference to the annex to resolution A.772(18), Fatigue factors in manning and safety. The texts of the regulation and of part A and part B of the Code are provided at appendix 2.

**8** In response to the ILO resolutions cited above in paragraph 5, and in keeping with decisions taken by the 267th session (November 1996) of ILO's Governing Body and of the 68th session (May 1997) of IMO's Maritime Safety Committee, a Joint IMO/ILO Working Group met in London from 19 to 23 January 1998 to consider, *inter alia*, the development of the guidelines and standardized table showing shipboard working arrangements and a standard format for records of seafarers' hours of work or hours of rest as required by Convention No. 180. The Joint Working Group produced these Guidelines which, while referring principally to ILO Convention No. 180, also may assist competent authorities to enforce the rest period requirements for watchkeepers in the STCW Convention.

**9** These Guidelines focus primarily on the requirements for the development of a table showing shipboard working arrangements and a format for the records of seafarers' hours of work or rest. When competent authorities develop these tables and formats, in fulfilment of their Convention No. 180 obligation, they shall take the Guidelines into account. Special attention is also drawn to the provisions of articles 9 and 10, which set forth the role of the competent authority in the examination and endorsement of records of hours of work or hours of rest, and the action to be taken when these records or other evidence indicate infringements of the requirements.

#### **Guidance on the development of a table of shipboard working arrangements**

**10** The table of shipboard working arrangements is intended to tabulate the anticipated daily work or rest periods scheduled for all seafarers on board a particular ship. The table will allow seafarers to be aware of the routine daily or weekly work periods normally expected of them at sea and in port. It may be subject to control to ensure that the shipboard working arrangements are in conformity with the requirements of Convention No. 180.

**11** However, given the nature of work at sea, the table of shipboard working arrangements can only be a guide to the anticipated normal working arrangements on a particular ship and some deviation from the contents of the table may occur. It should be stressed, therefore, that such deviations may not necessarily indicate non-compliance with the requirements of Convention No. 180; this will only be established by reference to detailed records of hours worked or periods of rest which also need to be maintained (see paragraphs 16–24).

**12** Convention No. 180 requires that the table of shipboard working arrangements is to be established “in a standardized format”, and this will facilitate understanding by seafarers and competent authorities. The table should:

- cover the anticipated schedule of service at sea and in port for each seafarer employed on board;