Past issues
IUMI Political Forum

Fatigue – IMO guidelines

Brief description

The IMO Maritime Safety Committee agreed in November 2014 to revise the "Guidelines of fatigue mitigation and management". A significant amount of information has become available about the causes and consequences of fatigue since the guidelines were published in 2002. However, they lack information about the holistic management of fatigue at sea.

IMO Secretary-General Kitack Lim has highlighted this revision as a main priority to the UN Organization:
"According to maritime casualty statistics, the overwhelming majority of the root causes of casualties is the Human Factor. In this regard, an important factor affecting seafarers is fatigue which has been increasingly recognized by the industry as a major human element hazard that affects most aspects of a seafarer's ability to perform effectively and safely. The effects of fatigue can lead to undesirable situations with devastating effects. I encourage you to revise and update the Guidelines on Fatigue to promote improved understanding of fatigue and fatigue risk management at sea, and to reflect current fatigue and sleep research and best practices of fatigue risk management at sea to support the well-being of seafarers, whilst enhancing safety at sea."

In January 2017, an international partnership of researchers and industry presented the final report of a research study on fatigue and related issues (Project MARTHA). The results indicate that fatigue and stress increase for most crew as the voyage length increases, and motivation decreases. Captains suffer more than their colleagues, and in particular port work is considered demanding.

In July 2018, the Sub-Committee on Human element, Training and Watchkeeping (HTW) agreed to forward a draft MSC Circular on the new guidelines for approval in the next Committee meeting.

Relevant authority / organisations and documents / links

- **IMO Maritime Safety Committee (MSC) & Sub-Committee on Human element, Training and Watchkeeping (HTW)**
  - MSC/Circ.1014: Guidance on fatigue mitigation and management, 12 June 2001.
  - MSC94/18/7: Proposal for a planned output on the revision of the Guidelines on Fatigue, submitted by Australia, Dominica, the Marshall Islands, Norway, IFSMA and the Nautical Institute, 15 August 2014.
  - MSC94/INF.6: Seafarer fatigue, minimum manning and the mitigation of fatigue, submitted by InterManager, ITF and the Nautical Institute, 2 September 2014.
  - HTW5/WP.3: Guidelines on fatigue – Report of Working Group, 19 July 2018.
- **InterManager, Warsash Maritime Academy, The Stress Research Institute, University of Stockholm, Dalian Maritime University, SOLENT University,**

University of Southern Denmark and University of Southampton: Project MARTHA, final report, January 2017.

- **Australian Maritime Safety Authority, The University of Queensland and the University of Western Australia**: Assessing the determinants and consequences of safety culture in the maritime industry, 9 March 2018.

Timeline / important dates

- MSC 94: 17-21 November 2014.
- Target completion year of the output "Revision of guidelines of fatigue": 2018.
- HTW 5: 16-20 July 2018.
- IUMI webinar: Fatigue's effect on seafarers, 11 October 2017.
- MSC 100: 3-7 December 2018.

IUMI will:

- Monitor and inform on IMO discussions and the revised guidelines in the IUMI Eye newsletter.

About IUMI The International Union of Marine Insurance e.V. (IUMI) is a non-profit association established for the purpose of protecting, safeguarding and advancing insurers' interests in marine and all types of transport insurance. It also provides an essential forum to discuss and exchange ideas, information and statistics of common interest for marine underwriters and in exchange with other marine professionals. IUMI currently represents 46 national and marine market insurance and reinsurance associations.

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– bring together marine insurance practitioners to facilitate the exchange of technical information and best practice, and
– provide information on positions taken by IUMI.

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