



## Maritime Labor Confab Adopted

By Katsuji Taki

Assistant General Secretary  
International Affairs & Seafarers'  
Section

Considerable difficulties have been highlighted with respect to complying with the requirements of out-of-date, complex, and inefficient conventions for the maritime industry – in particular, for seafarers.

Since 2001, the JSU has taken part in many meetings at the International Labor Organization (ILO) for the purpose of establishing a new maritime labor standard, and it has made a significant contribution to ensuring that seafarers have decent working conditions.

A new convention, the “Maritime Labor Convention of 2006,” was unanimously adopted on Feb. 23, 2006 as a new pillar supporting international legislation to regulate the shipping industry. This convention provides seafarers with significant rights and benefits covering their working and living conditions.

As determined in the resolution covering the promotion of the Maritime Labor Convention of 2006, the success of the convention will depend upon its being widely ratified and effectively implemented.

This convention aims:

- To ensure decent conditions for global competition

in the shipping industry;

Fair competition relative to working conditions has been established under International Labor standards.

- To develop a working environment for seafarers;

International standards have been established in respect to conditions of employment, accommodation, health and welfare and social security.

- To ensure the effectiveness of flag state inspections and port state control (PSC);

Maritime labor certificates should be issued only after flag states have conducted inspections to affirm a vessel's compliance with the requirements of this conven-



JSU president Capt. Sakae Idemoto (third from left) with other Japanese ILO conference attendees.

tion; PSC should also be implemented by port states with respect to the certification process.

- To implement PSC inspections of non-ratifying states;

The concept of “no more favorable treatment” has been introduced; this means that sub-standard vessels which fly the flag of any state that has not ratified

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## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

### Calculating the Value Of Your Retirement Plan

**Q1:** I have been working on board CA vessels for more than three years. Am I able to receive any interest on my RPP contributions?

**A1:** According to the RPP Rules and Regulations, the amount of retirement pay is determined as shown in the table below. (Ref.: JSU CA Retirement Pay Plan Instructions, Article 7. 2 b)

“Period of Affiliation” means the total amount of time spent in service onboard vessels that are party to the RPP system.

“Operating Profit” means the interest accrued from the invested contributions. (Expenses covering administration of the RPP are deducted from the profits)

“Gain” means the payment Ratio of the Operating Profit.

The profit ratio is calculated using the totals at the end of each fiscal year and is approved by the JSU CA RPP Administrative Committee. For the year 2006, the profit ratio has been calculated as 3.54%.

Operating profits paid to members are calculated as follows: (Member's contributions) x (profit ratio) x (payment ratio)

For example, if a member whose total period of contribution is three years and six months is going to apply for his retirement pay this year (2006), the total amount he can expect to receive will be:

(Member's contributions) + (Member's contributions) x (profit ratio) x (payment ratio)

(\$50 x 42 months, or \$2100) + (\$2100 x 3.54% x 30%)

\$2100 + \$22 = \$2122

Therefore, the total amount of the member's retirement pay would be \$2122. (By Yuki Okada, International Affairs & Seafarers' Section)

| Period of Affiliation | Contribution | Gain |
|-----------------------|--------------|------|
| Less than 2 years     | 100%         | 0%   |
| From 2-3 years        | 100%         | 20%  |
| From 3-4 years        | 100%         | 30%  |
| From 4-5 years        | 100%         | 40%  |
| From 5-6 years        | 100%         | 50%  |
| From 6-7 years        | 100%         | 60%  |
| From 7-8 years        | 100%         | 70%  |
| From 8-9 years        | 100%         | 80%  |
| From 9-10 years       | 100%         | 90%  |
| More than 10 years    | 100%         | 100% |

## Rules for Use of New Mariner's Home

**Q1:** Who is eligible to use Mariner's Home services?

**A1:** All seafarers regardless of nationality are eligible to avail themselves of the Mariner's Home services; however, priority will be given to JSU-AMOSUP and JSU-PSU member seafarers.

**Q2:** How can I reserve a room?

**A2:** You can make your reservation through your respective manning agent.

**Q3:** How do I get to the Mariner's Home?

**A3:** Please refer to the map.

**Q4:** What are the per-day room rates?

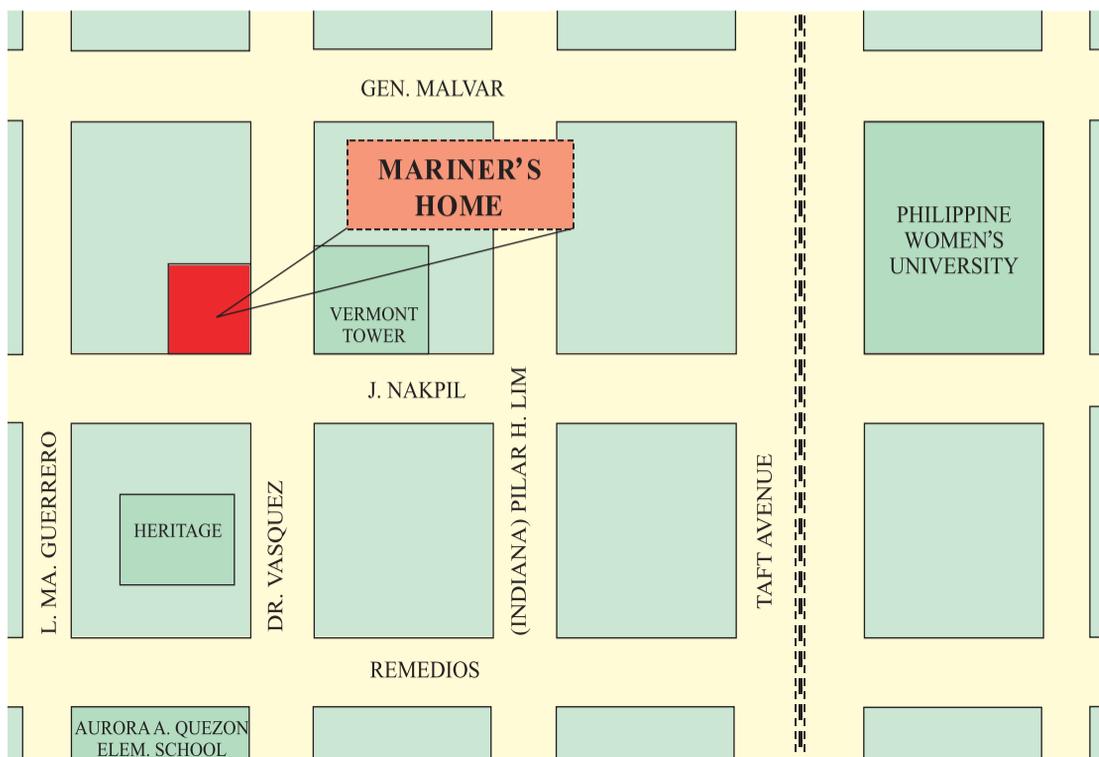
**A4:** Room rates, which are inclusive of breakfast (Php-30) for overnight guests, are as follows:

- **Dormitory Rate (3F&4F):** Php150/person per night
- **Dormitory Rate (5F):** Php800/person/night – 1 bed  
Php500/person/night – 2 beds (A)  
Php450/person/night – 2 beds (B)  
Php400/person/night – 2 beds (C)  
Php350/person/night – 3 beds  
Php300/person/night – 4 beds

(More information on the Mariner's Home will appear next issue)



Friendly staff waiting to serve you



## R.P. Hails Seafarer Bill Of Rights

The Philippine Government has welcomed the recent adoption of the Seafarers' Bill of Rights, which embodies the most sweeping and comprehensive global legal instrument that will govern shipowners, seafarers, and maritime nations around the world.

The Seafarers' Bill of Rights was adopted during the 10th maritime session of the 94th International Labor Conference (ILC) in Geneva.

The ILC's maritime sessions are held only once every 10 years. The delegates to this year's maritime session met in Geneva to consider the adoption of a draft convention that consolidates and updates more than 65 international maritime labor standards adopted since the International Labor Organization (ILO) was founded in 1919.

Philippines Labor Secretary Patricia Sto. Tomas said the new convention would provide for a more effective enforcement of maritime labor standards worldwide, stressing that it "would boost our efforts to protect the rights and promote the welfare of Filipino seafarers."

The labor secretary also pushed for the consolidation of legal instruments covering other sectors not just for effective enforcement but also to ensure continuing relevance of these instruments in the changing world.

## UN Urging Action on Piracy

Following the recent hijacking of a UN food ship off the Somali coast, the United Nations Security Council has urged UN member states to intensify their anti-piracy efforts.

In a March 15 statement, the council "encourages member states whose naval vessels and military aircraft operate in international waters and airspace adjacent to the coast of Somalia to be vigilant to any incident

of piracy therein and to take appropriate action to protect merchant shipping, in particular the transportation of humanitarian aid, against any such act, in line with relevant international law."

The International Maritime Organization (IMO) also released a resolution condemning all acts of piracy and armed robbery against ships.

In the said resolution, the IMO has appealed to all par-

ties, "which may be able to assist, to take action, within the provisions of international law, to ensure that all acts or attempted acts of piracy and armed robbery against ships are terminated forthwith; that plans for committing such acts are abandoned; and any hijacked ships are immediately and unconditionally released and that no harm is caused to seafarers serving in them."

## London P&I Warns Over Watchkeeping

The London P&I Club has warned against lone watchkeeping onboard ships as this "increases casualties."

The club notes that casualties occur when officers have been standing watches alone when they should have been assisted by at least a lookout – and probably another officer.

"Such lone watchkeepers have been involved in several recently reported collisions and groundings, and in a case in which a vessel caused very significant damage to chartered fish farms. This casualty occurred at night, while the vessel was on a coastal passage through an area in which the master expected to meet a high concentration of fishing vessels," the P&I club stated in its latest report.

The club refers its members to a Nautical Institute warning that, "It is very easy for the officer of the watch to fall into the mental trap that he is able to cope with anything that watchkeeping presents to him. This may be a result of misunderstanding; an assumption that it is quite normal for a watchkeeper to do it all himself; or even a fear that he may be seen to be inadequate by calling for assistance."

The London Club concludes by reminding its members that "careful passage planning may identify circumstances in which it is preferable to take a decision to augment the bridge team in advance, rather than rely on the officer of the watch to call for assistance."

## MOL, Vietnam Strengthen Ties, Training

Mitsui O.S.K. Lines (MOL)'s expansion strategy, which will see the current fleet of 663 ships grow to 900 by March 2010, will require a massive intake of seafarers. Accordingly, the company has focused on Vietnam and launched a recruiting and training program with the backing of both the Japanese and Vietnamese governments.

The first Vietnamese seafarers have already been assigned to MOL vessels.

The Japanese Government has responded to a request from Vietnam by lifting the suspension on seafarer training under the Official Development Assistance (ODA) scheme, and MOL will provide onboard practical training in October.

The company will also offer practical training on its ships for students at the Vietnam Maritime University and University of Transport in Ho Chi Minh City. (Lloyd's List/Fairplay)

## Cypriot Authorities Crack Down on Fake Papers

Following the discovery of a batch of seafarers with fake documents, port authorities in Cyprus and all Port State MOUs are intensifying their verification of employment papers.

Authorities discovered that the master and officers of *Carine K* – which was detained in Limassol – were using Georgian documents.

The ship's officers were reportedly Lebanese and Indian nationals.

At the Paris MOU committee meeting in May, Cyprus is to propose that the European Maritime Safety Agency investigate the matter, possibly by sending a mission to Georgia.

Andreas Constantinou of the Cyprus Department of Shipping said the incident was a serious issue because "apart from the obvious safety hazards, it also impedes the career development of young officers."

## Magsaysay Joins MOL in R.P. Venture

Mitsui O.S.K. Lines (MOL), in partnership with Magsaysay Maritime Corporation, is setting up a new shipmanagement venture in the Philippines.

Magsaysay-MOL (Mag-Mol) will initially manage

three 70,000-dwt bulkers that form part of MOL's 460-strong fleet of dry bulk ships.

MOL president Akimitsu Ashida on March 29 identified operational and technical skills of Filipino officers both onboard and ashore as a significant factor behind the new venture.

Aside from the Philippines, MOL has shipmanagement offices in Tokyo, Rotterdam, Singapore, and Hong Kong.

## Accidents Rise Along U.K. Coast

The U.K. Maritime and Coastguard Agency reported an increase in marine accidents around the U.K. coast last year.

Coast guard chief Peter Dymond said the small rise in maritime accident deaths from 96 in 2004 to 100 in 2005 was regrettable, but he vowed to work hard to reduce it.

"The agency is now much better at analyzing statistics, which enables us to target our safety messages more directly, working even more closely with other organizations to address specific areas of concern," he said. (MaritimeGlobal.net)

## Don't Mess With Child Pornography!

By Vincent P. Higoy

JSU International Service Staff

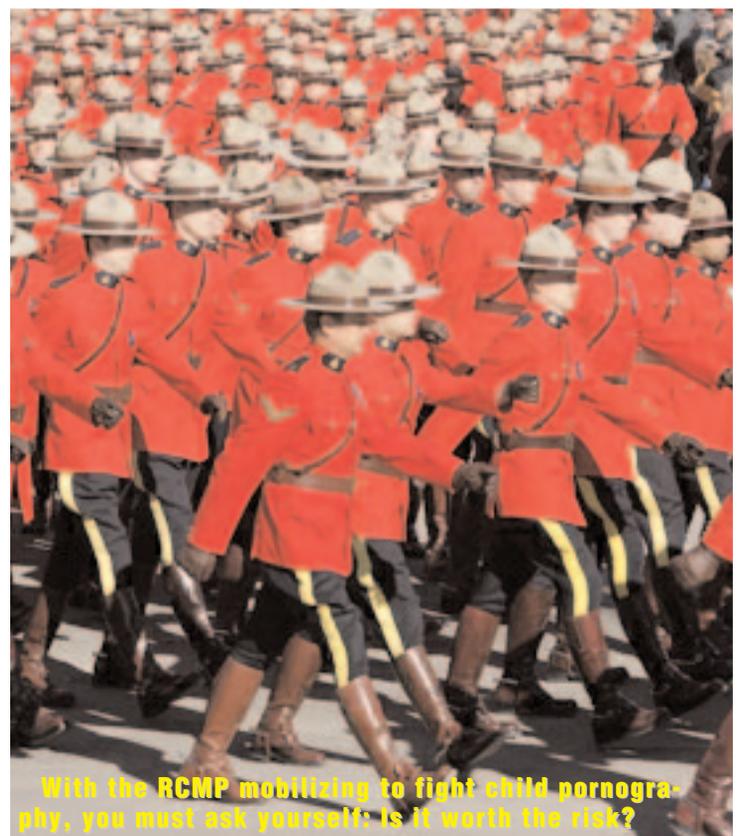
In the September/October 2005 issue of *JSU Maritime Journal*, we reported that two Filipino crewmembers of a non-JSU Panamanian-registered vessel had been arrested in June last year at the Port of Vancouver after Customs inspectors found child pornography stored in the seafarers' laptop computers.

These computers had been purchased secondhand in Japan.

Now we must report that another incident has taken place. A shipmanagement company has been fined C\$50,000 by the Canadian Customs Authority after it found child pornography inside the laptops of two crewmen.

It is essential that all seafarers pay take these incidents to heart. A simple mistake – purchasing a used computer on which has been stored child pornography – could ruin your career, not to mention your reputation among family members and your community.

Child pornography is a serious crime in Canada – and unbecoming of a JSU member.



With the RCMP mobilizing to fight child pornography, you must ask yourself: Is it worth the risk?

By Reydeluz D. Conferido  
Labor Attaché

Philippine Overseas Labor Office  
Philippine Embassy, Tokyo

## Put Time in Japan to Good Use

As labor attaché appointed to Japan, where the Philippines has been enjoying a significant share of the seafarers' market, it has been my privilege to join up with the All Japan Seamen's Union (JSU) in forming the "AB – Akyat Barko" team to visit our seafarers aboard ships, to find out their real terms and conditions of employment, and to give them information and advice on how to make the most from their stint aboard Japanese-owned oceangoing vessels. The experience has proved to be an eye-opener and an enriching one for me and hopefully also for those with whom we have interacted.

Filipino seafarers continue to be preferred by Japanese employers as evidenced by our significant share of the labor market. This trend is likely to continue especially because Filipino seafarers are proving more capable in delivering consistent, quality services, while rivals are showing signs of slipping performance. Among the members of the JSU, more

than 20,000 are Special Members from the Philippines. And this trend extends not only to job opportunities aboard ships, but also to land-based maritime-related positions. More and more Filipino marine officers are finding themselves in command, keeping and maintaining the ship's power plant, and feeding the hungry pack.

But while most of the signs concerning Filipino participation in the Japanese shipping industry are positive, not all are rosy. Just like other industries that evolve and mature, the shipping industry has its own share of business-, technology- and human resources-related problems.

Dwelling on the last area, we noticed that quite a number of accidents were experienced last year, and some of our seafarers were lost as a result. There were also cases where some of our seafarers were suspected of theft, trafficking in firearms or drugs, or responsible for accidents, due perhaps to neglect of safety regulations



CONFERIDO

or use of alcohol.

Some seafarers have expressed to me their worry about possible shortened work stints because of advancing age and the apparent adoption by some companies of earlier retirement ages, especially for ratings.

Fortunately most of these problems are within the power of the seafarers themselves to address and control. All it takes is the proper attitude, familiarization with the necessary information, and the healthy support of peers and family to overcome the problems.

The JSU, through its International Service Staff, is at hand, in partnership with the Labor Office of the Philippine Embassy, to help provide the information you need about your work and the terms and conditions of your employment.

We can listen to your problems and counsel you in areas where you are confused or have misgivings and even help you settle dis-

putes amicably, should any arise. You need not fret and get frustrated or keep problems to yourselves. Get in touch with us and we will be happy to help you.

We understand that work at sea can be more burdensome and stressful, especially these days, because the vessels often have smaller crews due to the automation, computerization, or use of modern technology. There are also fewer opportunities for rest and recreation or shore leave because of heightened security measures. And there are the perennial domestic or family problems and inter-personal problems with colleagues. But, again, all appear less daunting and more bearable when viewed from a broader perspective. When seafarers see them as part of an adjustment process related to the noble goal of providing a better and more secure future for themselves and their families, then the problems become more manageable.

The support of peers and professional counselors or union advisers can go a long way in helping steer the seafarer away from debilitating mistakes.

The problem of job security due to advancing age or early retirement policies may not seem as formidable if the seafarer understands that his employer's main concern is really his health and ability to do his duty. With many developed countries suffering from ageing populations and their young people's refusal to take on maritime careers, such earli-

er retirement policies may be reconsidered given the shrinking supply of able officers and crew.

The critical issue is whether the seafarer is able to maintain health and fitness despite advancing age. If our seafarers keep to sound and healthy habits, then they will most likely be rewarded with longer and more fruitful stints.

No matter how durable the seafarer, there will still come a time when the career at sea will end. We have to prepare our families and ourselves to invest our earnings wisely while we are still working. We should learn how to generate income through productive investments that can tide us over during retirement. Our families should be prepared to help us on this.

The Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA) has programs to help your families for this purpose. We hope you will encourage your family members to avail themselves of such programs.

Your labor office in Tokyo will continue to work with the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration, Professional Regulations Commission, Maritime Industry Authority, Philippine Coast Guard, and other relevant offices in the Philippines to address your needs for more efficient and responsive services.

We hope we can continue to work together in securing decent, productive, and rewarding overseas employment opportunities for you.

Your concerns are our interest. Contact us at tel.: (81-3) 5562-1573~74; fax: (81-3) 5545-3447; or e-mail: <polotky@inter.net>.



## Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA)

The Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA), formerly known as the Welfare Fund for Overseas Workers (Welfare Fund), is the lead government agency tasked to promote the welfare and well-being of Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) and their dependents.

It is attached to the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE).

The OWWA Fund is a single trust fund pooled from the US\$25 membership contributions of land- and sea-based workers, investment and interest income, and income from other sources.

### Education & Training Programs

1. Education for Development Scholarship Program

(EDSP): A scholarship grant offered to qualified beneficiaries/dependents of OWWA members who intend to enroll in any 4-5 year baccalaureate course.

2. Skills-for-Employment Scholarship Program (SE-SP): A qualified applicant may avail of either of the following: a) 1-year Technical course or b) 6-month Vocational course.

### Seafarers' Upgrading Program:

1. Seafarers' Upgrading Program (SUP): Intended to provide job-related training in priority maritime courses identified by the Maritime Training Council (MTC).

### Other Programs:

1. Tuloy Aral Project – Scholarship for qualified

children of OFW returnees.

2. Microsoft TULAY Program – IT training on basic computer applications.

3. Pre-Departure Orientation Seminar.

### Credit Programs:

1. Loans – Pre-Departure Loans (PDLs) and Family Assistance Loans (FALs).

### Self Insurance Coverage Program (SICP):

1. Insurance and Health Care Benefits – An OWWA member-OFW is entitled to services and benefits over and above the provisions of their contract, offer of employers, or the laws of the receiving country.

### Workers' Assistance:

The Workers' Assistance Unit extends assistance to

OFWs and their families.

### Reintegration Program:

Livelihood Development Program for OFWs (LDPO) – The program is a joint undertaking of OWWA and

NLSF (National Livelihood Support Fund). It provides entrepreneurial development services and credit facilities to OFWs and their families. (Contact the OWWA at 891-7601-24)



OWWA office in Manila

## LETTER from HEADQUARTERS

Currently, a significant number of seafarers are working on vessels flying Flags of Convenience (FOCs).

FOCs provide a means of avoiding labor regulation in the country of ownership, and become a vehicle for coercing seafarers into accepting low wages while being forced to bear long hours of work and unsafe working conditions.

Truth be told, FOC ships have no real nationality.

For the past 20 years, The All Japan Seamen's Union, as required, has continued to work very hard to protect your rights, and to provide welfare services that meet international standards.

The JSU recently renewed some agreements (IBF agreement, None-IBF agreement including agreements for Japanese flag and near-seas vessels), activity that has already been explained in a previous issue of JSU Maritime Journal.

The journal also informed you that the JSU would like to improve working conditions for Non-Domicile Special Members.

One manner by which the JSU reaches out to seafarers is through the International Service Staff (ISS) system which was adopted back till 1995.

The ISS shall be visiting JSU members working for Japanese shipping lines in order to deliver messages and information from us.

The ISS will follow this by providing feedback information, the main purpose of which is to ensure that the bridges between the JSU and the Special Member remain in good condition.

The JSU would be most grateful if you took the time to meet with us and share your honest opinions and concerns.

### All Japan Seamen's Union

15-26, Roppongi 7-Chome,  
Minato-Ku, Tokyo 106-0032

Tel.: 03-5410-8320

Fax: 03-5410-8336

E-Mail: iss@jsu.jp

Internet: <http://www.jsu.or.jp>

Publisher: Masaru Mio

Send inquiries to the attention  
of Mr. Masanobu Makizoe,  
Director, Foreign Trades Dept.

# PNB - The Bank for Seafarers in Japan

To be a Filipino working overseas means having to sacrifice time away from family and loved ones and foregoing a big part of one's earnings for the assurance of a better life for them. In plain and simple terms, to be an OFW is to be the country's hero.

No other institution realizes the substance of this as much as Philippine National Bank, which has established international banking services for the Filipino since 1917.

In Japan, PNB has been providing the Filipino worker his financial and banking needs for 10 years. This is why every Pinoy in Japan knows where to run to when sending his remittances to

his family in the Philippines.

PNB Japan remains committed to serving the Filipino people, and has come up with a special service matching the needs of sea-based OFWs.

For your banking needs, you may call 03-5401-3300 (PNB Tokyo Branch) or 052-968-1800 (PNB Nagoya Sub-branch). You can be assured of quality customer service distinctly and heartwarmingly Pinoy that you will instantly feel at home.

You may come and visit us also. We are happy to be of service to you. We are open from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Japanese holidays, and from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. every Sunday.

## Where, What, When and How

**Q1:** Where are the PNB branches in Japan?

**A1:** Tokyo and Nagoya. (Please see the maps)

**Q2:** How do we send money to the Philippines?

**A2:** For sea-based OFWs, we recommend Post Office Money envelopes (Genkin Kakitome).

But we have two other methods: Bank Transfer (Ginko Furikomi) or Walk-in (visit our branch).

**Q3:** How much is the remittance charge?

**A3:** To the Philippines (regardless of the amount): Credit to PNB accounts and other banks = JPY2,000; over the counter (advise and pay) = JPY2,000; door-to-door delivery = JPY2,500

To the U.S. (accredited banks) = JPY5,000.

To other countries (accredited banks) = JPY7,000.



## ILO-

(Continued From Page 1) this convention can also be eliminated by implementing PSC inspections.

Non-ratifying flag states should not receive treatment more favorable than that accorded to vessels flying the flags of states that have ratified the convention.

### Overview of Convention

Articles, Definition,  
Scope of Application,  
Entry Into Force, Etc.

**Title 1:** Minimum require-

ments for seafarers seeking employment on a ship:

- The minimum age is 16 years.

- Seafarers shall not work without a medical fitness certificate.

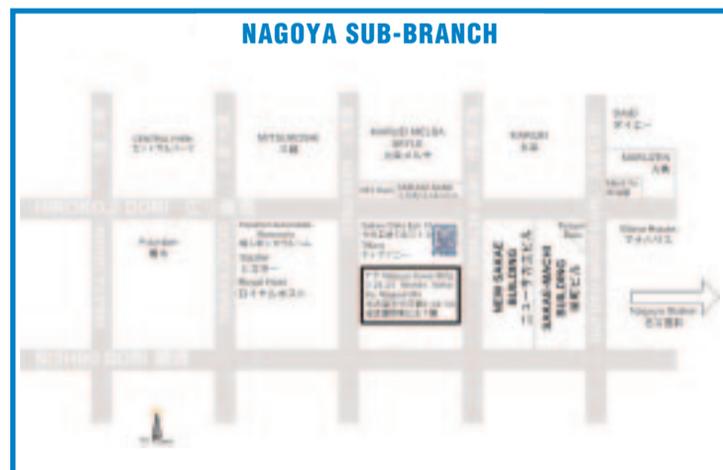
- Seafarers shall not work unless they are trained and qualified as competent.

**Title 2:** Conditions of employment:

- Regular payment of wages.

- Maximum hours of work shall not exceed 14 hours in any 24-hour period, 72 hours in any 7-day period.

**Title 3:** Accommodation, recreational facilities, food and catering:



**Q4:** When will the account be credited?

**A4:** Same day credit for PNB account in the Philippines; 3 or more for non-PNB accounts, advise & pay, door to door.

**Q5:** My family's account in the Philippines is not PNB. can I still remit money?

**A5:** Yes, but we can help your beneficiary get a Global Filipino ATM card.

**Q6:** What is required to send money using PNB Japan?

**A6:** Photo copies of the following:

- Crew landing permit
- Seaman's book (front page and address page);
- Or passport (front and back pages with your name

and Philippine address and contact numbers.)

**Q7:** How should I send my remittance?

**A7:** Send us your request for a Post Office envelope, by e-mail, 5 days before your arrival at any port in Japan. We will send you a Starter Kit to your designated address.

**Q8:** Any other services?

**A8:** Our branches offer a wide range of banking services, including remittances to the Philippines and other major countries; trade for houses and condominiums (in the Philippines),

**Q9:** How do I contact you?

**A9:** Call us at 03-5401-3300 or e-mail to <seafarers@pnbtokyo.co.jp>.

- The size of rooms and other accommodation spaces, heating and ventilation, noise and vibration, sanitary facilities, lighting, and hospital accommodation etc. shall be regulated.

- Seafarers shall be provided with good quality food free of charge.

**Title 4:** Health protection, medical care, welfare and social security protection:

- Shipowners shall provide financial security to assure compensation in the event of death or long-term disability, due to an occupational injury, illness or hazard.

- Each member state shall

ensure that seafarers who are subject to its social security legislation (and, to the extent provided for its national law, their dependants) are entitled to benefit from social security protection such as long-term security, e.g. pensions, etc.

**Title 5:** Compliance and enforcement:

- Maritime labor certificates shall be issued by implementing flag states, which will inspect the ships flying their flags to affirm compliance with the requirements of this convention.

- PSC should also be implemented by port states with respect to certification.