

ILO seafarers' minimum wage to rise

Minimum basic wage to increase in three steps with first taking effect Jan. 1, 2012

The increase in the International Labour Organization (ILO) minimum basic wage for seafarers was agreed by the ILO's Joint Maritime Commission Subcommittee on Wages of Seafarers meeting in Geneva on 26-27 April.

Resolution concerning the ILO Minimum Monthly Basic Pay or Wage figure for Able Seafarers

The Subcommittee on Wages of Seafarers of the Joint Maritime Commission, having met in Geneva from 26 to 27 April 2011.

Having considered the report prepared by the International Labour Office on the updating of the minimum basic wage for able seafarers.

Having noted that the Subcommittee on Wages of Seafarers at its meeting on 24 to 25 February 2006 agreed the minimum basic wage figure of US\$545 as of 31 December 2008.

Recalling the Seafarers' Wages, Hours of Work and the Manning of Ships Recommendation 1996 (No. 187) referred to below as the Recommendation, and Guideline B 2.2 of the Maritime Labour Convention, 2006:

1. Agrees that the economic situation of the maritime industry in major flag States and labour supply States provides an indication of the necessity for updating the minimum basic wage figure.

2. Recalls that the main aim of the minimum basic pay or wage figure for the able

seafarer is to provide an international safety net for the protection of, and to contribute to, decent work for seafarers.

3. Recalls the relevant provisions of the code of the Maritime Labour

Convention, 2006 i.e. Guideline B2.2.4 and recalling the resolution concerning the ILO minimum wage for able seamen, adopted at the 26th Session of the Joint Maritime Commission (October 1991).

4. Notes that the Recommendation states that the number of normal hours per week covered by the minimum basic wage should not exceed 48 hours per week.

5. Notes that the agreed sum achieved at previous meetings has not always matched the figure indicated by the formula since the process took into account other factors.

6. Recalls that the Subcommittee, at its previous meeting in 2009, could not agree on a revised wage figure.

7. Notes that the current mechanism, including the formula, needs to be maintained until such time as an alternative is agreed.

8. Reaffirms support for the role of the Joint Maritime Commission and its Subcommittee on Wages of Seafarers and believes that its role and importance as the agenda-setting mechanism for the maritime industry will in-



The ILO logo (left) and a view of the meeting hall in Geneva where the labor organization's subcommittee agreed to increase seafarers' minimum basic wage. Photo and logo © ILO

crease.

9. Decides, regarding paragraph 10 of the Recommendation, to update the current ILO minimum basic wage for an able seafarer of US\$545 to US\$ 555 as of 1 January 2012; US\$568 as of 1 January 2013; and US\$585 as of 31 December 2013. Annex 1 to ITF E-Circular 114/E.102/S.46/SS.4/2011

10. Agrees that the amount of US\$585 as of 1 July 2011 should be used as the basis for recalculation purposes.

11. Recalls that the formula produced a figure of US\$710 as of 1 March 2011. This figure should be considered when determining any future increase.

12. Acknowledges that the agreed minimum wage figure in no way prejudices collective bargaining or the adoption of higher levels in other international wage-setting mechanisms.

13. Invites the Governing Body to convene a meeting of the Subcommittee in the first half of 2014 and every two years thereafter and, where appropriate, for the Subcommittee to report directly to the Governing Body.

Classification society updates ballast water treatment advisory

Classification society ABS has released an updated Ballast Water Treatment Advisory to assist industry in understanding and addressing the evolving regulatory regime of ballast water treatment (BWT). The publication provides practical guidance to shipowners, operators and builders as they make important investment decisions

concerning the best-suited technology to use in their operations.

The advisory summarizes the practical realities of shipboard BWT systems to assist operators in their evaluation of treatment technology options. Included are discussions of the key features of ships' ballast water handling systems and treatment technologies

that may have an important impact on the ship, crew ballast practices and operating costs.

"Ballast water exchange presents significant operational concerns and challenges and it may not provide a totally effective solution to reduce the spread of unwanted aquatic organisms and pathogens from ships' ballast water," says

Tikka. "Ballast water treatment is considered by many to be a necessary measure to meet the proposed standards."

The 56-page Advisory is divided into key sections covering regulatory developments, an overview of treatment technologies, considerations for systems selection, installation and operation, evaluation checklists and available sys-

tems. The evaluation checklists include details such as vessel ballast system particulars, ship and service characteristics that impact BWT selection, treatment technology factors, general treatment system considerations, and challenges for installation engineering. It contains checklists for both owners and vendors.

(Source: MarineLog)

'Save Our Seafarers' to launch public appeal

Shipping industry organizations believe it is now necessary to raise the Save Our Seafarers campaign's profile.

Anti-piracy campaign to step up pressure on governments to take action with graphic portrayals of victims' suffering

THE Save our Seafarers campaign plans to step up pressure on governments to take action against piracy by appealing directly to the public with advertising that graphically illustrates the human impact of piracy.

Save our Seafarers was started last year,

based on an idea from Intertanko and initially focused on highlighting the financial impact of piracy.

It has had some success with, for example, some 13,800 letters sent to governments through a link on the campaign's website. But the industry organisations believe it is now necessary to raise the campaign's profile in a hard-hitting way to convince governments that pirates' treatment of seafarers is unacceptable.

Leading industry organizations that have contributed an average BP10,000 (US\$16,500) to the campaign have estab-

lished a steering committee, which held its first meeting last week. The organizations include Intertanko, Intercargo, the International Chamber of Shipping, BIMCO, InterManager, the International Transport Workers Federation and the International Maritime Employers Committee.

IMEC secretary-general Giles Heimann has taken the chairmanship of the steering committee and Intertanko's Bill Box is secretary of the campaign organization.

He promised a hard-hitting campaign, showing the physical impact of piracy on seafarers, including the fact that some have

been murdered and tortured, and making people aware of the horrific conditions under which many captured seafarers are being held.

An idea being discussed is to rent a shop in central London later this month to publicize directly the scale and effect of piracy.

Mr Heimann acknowledged that it will be difficult to measure the campaign's success in terms of concrete changes, with any government response likely to be largely behind the scenes. "But we hope at least to raise awareness." (*Source: Lloyd's List*)

IMO agrees on steps for containerized cargo

To set rule on mandatory weighing

The International Maritime Organization (IMO) has agreed to examine how to solve the problem of mis-declared container weights.

At a meeting last week, the UN shipping body's Maritime Safety Committee agreed to a proposal from the Netherlands, Denmark and Australia to address the issue of incorrectly declared containerized cargo and to take other measures to improve the safety of container stowage and ship operations.

The news was welcomed by

the World Shipping Council (WSC), a carrier group that claims its members control 90% of international containerized trade, and the International Chamber of Shipping (ICS).

The groups said they hoped the IMO's decision would help save lives, reduce cargo losses and improve operational efficiency.

In a joint statement, the two groups said: "The WSC and ICS, along with many IMO member states and representative bodies for seafarers, dockworkers and

masters, support this initiative that demonstrates the compelling need to address the problem.

They added that they "looked forward to assisting the IMO" to create a new set of requirements to accomplish this as soon as possible.

"However, the problem will not be solved until there is a legal requirement to verify container weights before containers are loaded onto ships," they added.

"In countries that require loaded containers to be weighed before vessel stowage for export, the evidence overwhelmingly indicates that operations can proceed very efficiently without any

disruption to commerce.

The industry has been seeking a solution to the problem of mis-declared container weights for years and in 2008 a group of shipping organizations issued a paper entitled Safe Transport of Containers by Sea, Guidelines on Industry Best Practices.

But in December last year, the WSC dismissed the paper, claiming it had "little discernible effect on reducing the incidences of shippers' providing incorrect container weights, or on ensuring that marine terminals verify the weight of loaded containers upon receipt/prior to loading". (*Source: IFW*)

ITF supports USCG stance in 'Deepwater Horizon' tragedy

Following the release of a U.S. Coast Guard report on the *Deepwater Horizon* tragedy the association responsible for many of the world's merchant sailor's employment needs, the International Transport Workers Federation (ITF), has issued a statement supporting the Coast Guard's stance and adding its weight to the piracy debate. The union association says:

"The ITF applauds the Coast Guard's focus on what happens when a flag state fails to oversee that its vessels comply with ISM and other international minimum standards. When rules and regulations are or become lax, conditions can deteriorate into confusion and chaos. This was seen aboard the *Deepwater Horizon* when it was off the Gulf Coast of the United States last year. It was not registered in the United States, which has a rich maritime history, but instead with the Marshall Islands which lacks a strong regulatory regime.

"In addition, international maritime organizations such as the ITF see such dangerous examples daily off the coast of Somalia, the Gulf of Oman, where 40 percent of the world's oil supply originates, and in the Indian Ocean, as pirates count on such poor conditions to raid and capture under-crewed, under-prepared vessels and crews and poorly maintained vessels sailing under runaway flags. Piracy obviously pre-dates runaway-flag shipping, but the very same FOC system that arguably led to the *Deepwater Horizon* tragedy also is hampering international efforts to fight back against the modern version of at-sea terrorism. Without runaway flags, the vital task of ending piracy would be immeasurably easier as traditional maritime States would seek to protect their nation's respective assets."

There is nothing new in the arguments put forward by the IMF and others but the two differing scenarios, one a sudden and catastrophic loss, the other a slow but persistent and debilitating sickness, bring the inattention of states willing to profit from a cut price service into sharp focus. (*Source: Shiptalk*)

Shipping safety standards slipping, says DNV president

"A downward trend in safety statics creates concerns and it is now time to reinstall the balance between safety and environmental risk. A greater focus on the human elements and competence in the shipping industry is needed," says Tor Svensen, the President of DNV.

The positive trend in which the accident rate was decreasing has now stopped. In fact, it has been reversed, and navigational errors still play a dominant role. In addition, we are facing a future of more sea transportation, more ships and more technologically advanced ships.

Due to the combined efforts of the industry, including owners, charterers, classification societies and port state authorities, the accident rate decreased year by year for more than 20 years. This trend stopped almost a decade ago, and over the past few years an increased rate has been reported.

"The shipping industry is facing different

challenges. There is now a high focus on the environment, and this is leading to major changes.

"In my mind, it is now time to reinstall the balance between safety and environmental risk. Zero tolerance for loss of life is equally as important as zero environmental damage," Mr. Svensen said, talking to the press at Nor-Shipping yesterday.

"The industry will always have to balance safety and other priorities, but the negative trend in accident rates indicates that we are no longer managing to get the balance right," he said.

DNV has for years collected and analyzed data related to all aspects of safety at sea. Thousands of feedback forms have been addressed to major shipowners, and these have been completed and returned by all levels of these organizations - both onshore and on board vessels.

"We cannot design ourselves away from the

human elements," Tor Svensen commented. "Safety can never be completely regulated. Individual competence and behaviour will always be key elements in managing safety."

Three important areas require focus in order to achieve further safety improvements:

- Improving the safety culture
- More effective and targeted training
- Regular competence assessments of onboard personnel

"As in all industries, there are conflicting goals in shipping too. Recognizing this, I believe we first of all have to focus on improving the safety culture. Secondly, the quality of training and development of more tailor-made training modules based on actual experience and competence requirements are other key issues.

"Finally, training has to be followed up and regular competence assessments for at least all the main officer positions are needed," Mr. Svensen concluded. (*Source: MarineLog*)

EUNAVFOR develops monitoring service to track ships in High Risk Areas

EU Naval Force (EUNAVFOR) in conjunction with the European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA) have collaborated to develop an integrated maritime monitoring service (MARSURV) to allow EUNAVFOR to track merchant vessels in the High Risk Area off the coast of Somalia.

EMSA is the technical cooperation platform of the Commission and EU Member States in the field of maritime safety. This monitoring service has been designed to fuse multiple sources of ship specific information (MSCHOA registration and UKMTO reporting information) and positional data (Long Range Information Tracking - LRIT and SATELLITE AIS) in a real time environment.

MARSURV will greatly enhance the ability of counter-piracy forces to manage and risk

assess the thousands of merchant vessels transiting across this huge area. It will also assist in incident management and improve the ability to warn merchant ships in imminent danger of piracy; ultimately improving the protection from piracy provided to all merchant shipping.

In delivering this capability, EUNAVFOR would like to recognise the substantive efforts and contributions of EMSA and those of the Flag States who have provided the LRIT data of merchant vessels in the High Risk Area.

The provision of this data is critical to the effectiveness of the project. Unfortunately, ships registered to flags not providing this data will not benefit from the enhanced situational awareness that such a real time picture provides to counter-piracy forces as they may be unaware of their position.

EUNAVFOR and EMSA continue to work closely with the IMO whose efforts in establishing the 'IMO Anti-Piracy LRIT Distribution Facility' have been essential in developing this project and is the foundation on which this service has been built.

Commander of EUNAVFOR Major General Buster Howes OBE said:

"Through the commendable efforts of EMSA and the IMO, MARSURV represents a significant step forward in our ability to understand and support the massive volume of merchant traffic that transits the high risk area.

The next step is to encourage all flag states to provide LRIT data to counter-piracy forces through the IMO distribution facility; currently data is donated from only 66 flag states" (*Source: Shiptalk*)

VOICES from SEAFARERS



Officers & Crew of
M/V NSS GRANDEUR

We the officers and crew are extending our grateful thanks to JSU in protecting the welfare and rights of its members. The updates of information and brief explanation by your staff make us proud of being JSU members. Your staff had cleared our mind of doubts on compensations and benefits based on JSU agreements.



Officers & Crew of
M/V ATLANTIC DIANA

We would like to thank JSU for the efforts and support to the members. Our desire for communication with our families could be fulfilled if a separate PC exclusively for our use was fitted on board. Mabuhay.



Officers & Crew of
M/V OCEAN CLARION

We would like to thank JSU for the continuous support given to us. We don't have an exclusive crew PC at the moment but we are allowed to send some of our email thru our ship communication facility. It could be more convenient if our company would provide us email access without limits.



Officers & Crew of
M/V IKAN KURAU

As JSU members, we thank your staff for visiting us. We are hoping that an increase in our wages would be implemented by next month.



Officers & Crew of M/V AROMA

We thank JSU for the benefits given to its members. We are satisfied with our present salary, although our agreement is JSU Near Sea, it was leveled to JSU/AMOSUP CBA. With all these, may we request JSU IDs be issued to us.



Capt. Michael B. Quadra & Crew of
M/V HOEGH OCEANIA

We appreciate the favors and support given by JSU. Wherever we stay, your staff regularly visit us, doing the best they can to keep us updated of the latest maritime information. As we have known previously, AMOSUP and MAAP have an admission policy that prioritizes the members' relatives in applying to the said maritime institution. We suggest application forms for admission should be distributed to all concerned Philippine manning agencies to inform the members of the necessary documents required by MAAP/AMOSUP.



Officers & Crew of
M/V GRACIOUS SKY

Thanks to the present updates and explanations by JSU staff regarding the situations of radiation level at the northeastern Japan, war zone in Libya and High Risk Areas within the Gulf of Aden and Indian Ocean. They have also explained clearly that our membership fees to JSU are not refundable as it is used for the operational expenses of the union. God bless JSU.



Officers & Crew of
M/V PROMETHEUS

We appreciate the continuous ship visitations of JSU staff. Out of these, we have learned our rights and entitlements as special non-domiciled members. Rest assured we will remain loyal to our principal company and JSU. With your support, we will keep on encouraging more seafarers to join JSU.



Capt. Gerardo R. Cabral & Crew of
MV PANTERA ROSA

Your staff ship visitations and dissemination of information are enough proof that JSU is protecting our rights and welfare. We are grateful to JSU for the increase in our wages and we hope ratings salary will follow soon. Likewise, we have known of the recent inauguration of the new JSU Mariners' Home Annex, which proved JSU is really dedicated in rendering more decent shelter for its members. Thanks and Mabuhay to JSU.

IMO safety group agrees on lifeboat release, retrieval rules

International Maritime Organization (IMO)'s Maritime Safety Committee at its 89th session agreed 20 May 2011 upon several items concerning lifeboat release and retrieval systems covering these items:

1. Amendments to Regulation III/1 of SOLAS entering into force 1 July 2014. A new sub-paragraph 5 requires that for all ships, lifeboat on-load release mechanism shall meet new requirements of the amended LSA Code not later than the first scheduled dry-docking after 1 July 2014, but not later than 1 July 2019.

2. Amendments to LSA Code Chapter IV on design criteria of lifeboat release gear

mechanism will enter into force 1 January 2013. Three of the subparagraphs will also apply to existing ships, i.e. criteria of hook stability, locking devices and hydrostatic interlock (if provided).

3. Guidelines for evaluation and replacement of lifeboat release and retrieval systems. These guidelines states that an evaluation of existing lifeboat release and retrieval systems shall be completed not later than 1 July 2013.

The evaluation shall be conducted by the original manufacturer. Alternatively, the evaluation may be conducted by another manufacturer of lifeboat release and retrieval systems or any person who has

taken responsibility of the existing system when the original manufacturer no longer exists or supports the equipment.

4. Amendments to the Revised recommendation on testing of life-saving appliances (resolution MSC.81(70)) on prototype testing of life-saving appliances. The prototype testing of the release mechanism is more detailed and strict than the existing test requirements.

5. MSC/Circular on early implementation of new SOLAS regulation III/1.5 encouraging all parties concerned to evaluate existing lifeboat release and retrieval systems at the earliest opportunity. Also, the parties concerned are for new ships con-

structed after 20 May 2011, but before 1 July 2014, encouraged to initiate, at the earliest opportunity, approval processes for new on-load release and retrieval systems.

Immediate actions to be taken:

All existing lifeboat release and retrieval systems shall be evaluated before 1 July 2013 according to guidelines mentioned in paragraph 2 above. Failing so, the release and retrieval system shall be considered as non-compliant with the new requirements. Hence, the owners are encouraged to as soon as possible to contact the maker of the systems to initiate the evaluation according to the amended guidelines.

(Source: *Shiptalk*)

Protections planned for warming Arctic

Arctic nations have reportedly agreed to take steps to protect the region as global warming opens up opportunities for shipping and offshore exploration.

The Arctic Council's eight member countries and representatives of indigenous groups signed a deal yesterday under which they would divide search-and-rescue responsibilities if shipwrecks or aircraft crashes occur, Reuters reported.

The "prevention, preparedness and response to oil spills" in the region was cited as particularly important by Swedish Foreign Minister Carl Bildt.

The council said it is putting pressure on the UN to establish a 'polar code' for ship designs in the Arctic, according to Reuters.

The group also wants steps in place to control short-lived pollutants such as soot and methane, which can be particularly damaging in the Arctic, the news agency said.

There are now plans for a permanent council to be established and located in Tromsø, Norway, it added.

(Source: *Fairplay*)

IMO's MSC issues guidelines on private security guards boarding ships

IMO's Maritime Safety Committee (MSC), which met in London May 11-20, has approved an MSC Circular providing interim guidance to shipowners, ship operators, and shipmasters on the use of privately contracted armed security personnel on board ships in the High Risk piracy area off the coast of Somalia and in the Gulf of Aden and the wider Indian Ocean, and Interim recommendations for flag States on the use of privately contracted armed security personnel on board ships in the High Risk Area. Both sets of guidance are aimed at addressing the complex issue of the employment of private, armed security on board ships.

The guidance to shipowners notes that flag state jurisdiction and any laws and regulations imposed by the flag state concerning the use of private security companies apply to their vessels, port and coastal states' laws may also apply to such vessels.

The guidance notes that the use of private armed security personnel should not be considered an alternative to the Best Management Practices to Deter Piracy off the Coast of Somalia and in the Arabian Sea area (BMP) and other protective measures.

Placing armed guards on board a vessel should only be considered after a risk assessment has been carried out. It is also important to involve the Master in the decision

making process. The guidance includes sections on risk assessment, selection criteria, insurance cover, command and control, management and use of weapons and ammunition at all times when on board and rules for the use of force as agreed between the shipowner, the private maritime security company and the Master.

Flag states are recommended to have in place a policy on whether or not the use of private security contractors will be authorized and, if so, under which conditions. A flag state should take into account the possible escalation of violence which could result from the use of firearms and carriage of armed personnel on board ships when deciding on its policy. The recommendations are not intended to endorse or institutionalize the use of private security contractors and do not address all the legal issues that might be associated with their use onboard ships.

An intersessional meeting of the Working Group on Maritime Security and Piracy will meet in the week commencing September 12, 2011 to develop recommendations to governments on the use of private security contractors; review the interim guidance and generally push these sorts of issues along the IMO pipeline.

The MSC also adopted an MSC resolution on Implementation of Best Management Practice guidance, urging better

implementation of these important measures.

The resolution strongly urges all those concerned to take action to ensure that as a minimum and as recommended in the Best Management Practices: ships' masters receive updated information before and during sailing through the defined High Risk Area; ships register with the Maritime Security Centre Horn of Africa and report to United Kingdom Maritime Trade Operations (UKMTO) Dubai; and ships effectively implement all recommended preventive, evasive and defensive measures.

The MSC also agreed guidelines to assist in the investigation of the crimes of piracy and armed robbery against ships, which are intended to be used in conjunction with resolution A.1025(26) Code of Practice for the Investigation of the Crimes of Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships. The guidelines are intended to assist an investigator to collect evidence, including forensic evidence, to support the submission of written reports which may assist in the subsequent identification, arrest and prosecution of the pirates that held the vessel and crew captive. Formats for crew statements and logging of evidence are included, as well as guidelines on recovery and packaging of exhibits such as blood, clothing and weapons.

(Source: *MarineLog*)

Reminder against dumping in WCR

The Gard P&I Club has reminded shipowners that May 1, 2011 saw the entry into force of the Wider Caribbean Region (WCR)—Special Area under MARPOL Annex V: Regulations for the Prevention of Pollution by Garbage.

Under MARPOL Annex, V Regulation 5(1)(h), the WCR is defined as: "The Gulf of Mexico and Caribbean Sea proper including the bays and seas therein and that portion of the Atlantic Ocean within the boundary constituted by the 30° N parallel from Florida eastward to 77°30' W meridian, thence a rhumb line to the intersection of 20° N parallel and 59° W meridian, thence a rhumb line to the intersection of 7°20' N parallel and 50° W meridian, thence a rhumb line drawn south westerly to the eastern boundary of French Guiana."

Vessels operating within the WCR are now prohibited from discharging any garbage into the sea, except food wastes which may be discharged if the vessel is at least 12 nautical miles from the nearest land and comminuted or ground food wastes that are capable of passing through a screen with openings no greater than 25 mm may be discharged if the vessel is at least 3 nautical miles from the nearest land.

Vessels should be aware of the implementation of the regulation, and are suitably prepared to comply with the more stringent garbage disposal regulations, e.g., onboard placards and garbage management plans should be updated if required. It should also note that Port State Control Officers in the region may perform checks to ensure that vessels are adhering to the new requirements. (Source: *MARINELOG*)

Port of Antwerp cuts tonnage dues for clean ships

To further reduce emissions of pollutants such as NOx and SOx, the Port of Antwerp, Belgium, is to reward "clean ships." From July 1, the most environment-friendly ships calling at the port will be granted a discount of 10 percent on tonnage dues.

The move follows on from an initiative by the International Association of Ports and Harbours (IAPH), in which the port authorities of Le Havre, Bremen, Hamburg, Rotterdam, Amsterdam and Antwerp introduced the Environmental Ship Index (ESI). Shipping companies can register their ships for this index at <http://www.environmentalshipindex.org>.

On the basis of the data entered, such as fuel consumption and emissions, each ship is given a score on a scale from 0 to 100 (from highly polluting to emission-free). So far more than 250 ships have been given a score. The ports themselves decide what advantages to offer participating ships.

In the case of Antwerp, seagoing ships with a score of 31 or more will be granted a discount of 10% on the tonnage dues.

The Port Authority will guarantee this discount for a period of at least three years, so offering continuity for shipping

companies that invest in improving the ESI score of their ships.

If fewer than 25 seagoing ships qualify for the discount, then the Port Authority will reward the 25 vessels with the highest ESI score. This latter measure applies until the end of 2011 and has been introduced to encourage shipping companies to register their vessels for the index. The ships that qualify for a discount will be determined every three months on the basis of an update of the ESI. The Port Authority will then make the discount available retroactively for the past quarter. For exam-

ple, the ESI for seagoing ships calling at Antwerp during the period April 1 to 30 June will be determined on 1 July.

The introduction of the ESI forms part of the Port Authority's policy of sustainable development of the port. This new international standard is a useful tool for port authorities to promote investments in more environment-friendly ships. Antwerp Port Authority uses low-sulfur fuel for its own fleet. In addition, ships and barges are able to use onshore power supplies at various locations in the port, so they do not have to run their engines while at berth.

(Source: *MarineLog*)

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