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 increase.

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.

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, regulatory and environmental 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 systems. 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)
IMO agrees on steps for containerized cargo

To set rule on mandatory weighing

The International Maritime Organization (IMO) has agreed on a proposal to set a mandatory weighing requirement on all cargo containers to be loaded onto ships as of January 1, 2012. The move is aimed at improving the safety and security of cargo transportation, as well as reducing the risk of mis-declared container contents.

The new rule, which is part of the IMO’s safety management system, will require container stowage and ship operators to maintain records of all cargo containers loaded onto ships and to ensure that they are correctly declared. This information will be used by port state control officers to verify that all containers are properly declared.

The rule is expected to come into effect on January 1, 2012, and to be implemented in all member states of the IMO. The new rule is part of a broader effort to strengthen the safety and security of the global maritime transportation system, which is considered to be one of the most complex and vulnerable sectors of the global economy.

Shipping safety standards slipping, says DNV president

EUNAVFOR develops monitoring service to track ships in High Risk Areas

EU Naval Force (EUNAVFOR) in conjunction with the European Maritime Safety Agen- cy (EMSA) have established a monitoring service to track ships in High Risk Areas. The service is designed to improve the safety and security of ships and crew in high risk areas, where incidents such as piracy and smuggling are more likely to occur.

The service is based on the use of Automatic Identification System (AIS) data, which is transmitted by ships in real-time. The data is then processed to identify ships in high risk areas and to provide information on their movements and activities.

The service is intended to be used by national and international authorities to improve their situational awareness and to support decision-making. It is also expected to help reduce the number of incidents in high risk areas.

ITF supports USCG stance in ‘Deepwater Horizon’ tragedy

The International Transport Workers’ Federation (ITF) has called for a review of the US Coast Guard’s (USCG) response to the Deepwater Horizon oil spill in 2010.

The ITF said that the USCG’s response to the spill was inadequate and that it failed to provide adequate protection for workers and the environment. The ITF called for an independent investigation into the USCG’s response to the spill and for improvements to be made to the USCG’s protocols.

The ITF also called for improvements to be made to the oil spill response protocols of other countries, including those in the European Union. The ITF said that these protocols should be reviewed to ensure that they are effective and that they provide adequate protection for workers and the environment.

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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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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 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.
IOM safety group agrees on lifeboat release, retrieval rules

On the basis of the data entered, such as fuel consumption measured each day, and given a score on a scale from 0 to 100 (from highly polluting to environmentally sound), ships with more than 250 tons have been given a score. The ports themselves decide what advantages to offer participating companies.

In the case of Antwerp, sea-going ships with a score of 31 or more will be granted a discount of 10% on 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.

The IOM (International Maritime Organization) has today agreed on lifeboat release gear mechanism to enter force 1 January 2013. The new sub-paragraph will also apply to existing ships, i.e. criteria of hook stability, locking devices and hydrostatic test pressures. The IOM noted that vessels for which the implementation of existing lifeboat release and retrieval systems shall be completed not later than 1 July 2014. The evaluation shall be conducted by the original manufacturer. Alternatively, the ship owner, the private maritime security company and the Master.

The group also wants steps to be taken to protect the region as global warming creates new shipping routes and fishing opportunities.

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 the polar regions were to become economically valuable and nuclear submarines deploy to control potential 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 was putting pressure on the UN to establish a “polar code” for ship designs in the Arctic, according to Reuters.

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 armed security personnel, the interim guidance and generally all the legal issues that might be associated with the implementation of 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 encourage Governments to endorse or institutionalize the interim guidance and generally all the legal issues that might be associated with the implementation of the IMO pipeline.

The resolution is designed to end all forms 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 substantiation of claims for insurance and prosecution of the pirates that held the vessel and crew captive. Former means for the interpretation of issues along the IMO pipeline.

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 of Antwerp, Belgium, will enjoy a discount of 10 percent on tonnage dues. The move follows on from an initiative of 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.enviro- mentshipindex.org.

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