

# COMMERCIAL FISHING SAFETY ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CFSAC)

## Comprehensive Review and Amendment of the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Fishing Vessel Personnel (STCW-F)

### TASK STATEMENT 15-01 A

#### **I BACKGROUND**

STCW-F was adopted on 7 July 1995 and entered into force on 29 September 2012. It applies to crews of seagoing fishing vessels generally of 24 metres in length and above. Of particular interest to the United States is Article 8, paragraph 4 which states that “This article shall be applied as may be necessary to ensure that no more favourable treatment is given to a vessel entitled to fly the flag of a non-Party than is given to a vessel entitled to fly the flag of a Party.” Thus the general interpretation is that when a U.S. fishing vessel is within the jurisdiction of a signatory state, port state control will require that the training of the fishing vessel’s personnel meet the minimum standards of STCW-F.

During the 95th session of the IMO’s Maritime Safety Committee, (June 2015), Canada, Iceland, Japan, New Zealand and Norway submitted MSC 95/19/3, a paper proposing an unplanned output for inclusion in the agenda of the Sub-Committee for Human Element, Training and Watchkeeping (HTW) to conduct a comprehensive review of STCW-F with a view to encourage non-Parties to ratify and implement the Convention by updating and expanding it so that it is seen as being relevant to today’s fishing industry.. Seventeen years have passed since its adoption with no discussion on its amendment even though a number of requirements of the STCW-F may no longer be in line with current standards in the fishing industry and other related conventions that have been reviewed and amended in a comprehensive manner.

Citing estimates that during commercial fishing operations more than 24,000 lives are annually lost worldwide, the document’s sponsors stressed that there is a need to respond to the increasing safety crisis in the fishing industry and that STCW-F is one of a number of international instruments that have been developed to address this issue. The paper continues to stress that STCW-F is expected to bring considerable benefits and advantages to the fishing industry, improve the quality of education and training provided to fishing vessel personnel and contribute to the promotion of safety of life and property at sea.

The Maritime Safety Committee agreed to include the comprehensive review of STCW-F in the agenda of the HTW Sub-Committee beginning with HTW 3, which will meet in February 2016, with a target completion year of 2018.

#### **II GUIDANCE/PROBLEM STATEMENT**

Although the United States has not ratified STCW-F, it would be in the interest of the U.S. and its commercial fishing fleet to be involved in the STCW-F comprehensive review as U.S. fishing vessels may find themselves in areas of the world under the jurisdiction of nations that are signatory to STCW-F. Therefore, the Coast Guard seeks the input of industry, via CFSAC, regarding the development of U.S. STCW-F comprehensive review positions to be considered by the U.S. delegations to HTW.

**Flag States that have Ratified the STCW-F Convention**

Canada	Lithuania	Russian Federation
Congo	Mauritania	Sierra Leone
Denmark	Morocco	Spain
Iceland	Namibia	Syrian Arab Republic
Kiribati	Norway	Ukraine
Latvia	Palau	

**III TASK/DELIVERABLES**

Considering the information given above and other as may be available, provide input to the Coast Guard on both general positions to be taken into account by the U.S. HTW delegation regarding STCW-F, and more detailed positions as the STCW-F comprehensive review progresses.

**V. DUE DATE**

Provide comments and/or recommendations to the Coast Guard at this and subsequent committee meetings with the intent of completing this task statement by January 1, 2018, or a later date as may be determined by the progress of the STCW-F review.

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**Forwarded for Committee Consideration:** \_\_\_\_\_  
KYLE P. MCAVOY, Captain, USCG  
Designated Federal Officer (DFO)  
Date Forwarded: \_\_\_\_\_

**Committee Action:** \_\_\_\_\_  
  
Chairman, CFSAC  
Date Approved: \_\_\_\_\_

**Working Group Chair**

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Enclosure: 1) MSC 93/19/3, Proposal for a comprehensive review of the 1995 STCW-F Convention