



Ref. T2/4.2.1

MSC/Circ.1032
23 May 2002

**INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION ON STANDARDS OF TRAINING,
CERTIFICATION AND WATCHKEEPING FOR
SEAFARERS (STCW), 1978,
AS AMENDED**

**Guidance for port State control officers on references
to STCW 95 in certificates, endorsements
and documentary evidence**

1 The normal practice within the International Maritime Organization is to refer to international conventions by an acronym of the title of the convention and the date on which it was made (e.g. SOLAS 1974). Where amendments are made to the original convention, the title is then amended to reflect the amendments (e.g. SOLAS 1974, as amended) but it is not normal practice to append the dates of the amendments to the title of the amended convention. In the case of the STCW Convention, which was subject to a major revision and expansion in 1995, the term "STCW 95 Convention" has been used as a convenient term and short title and the term 'as amended in 1995' has been included in the format of certificates and endorsements given in section A-I/2 of the STCW Code, notwithstanding the fact that the Convention and Code have been amended subsequently in 1997 and 1998.

2 The Maritime Safety Committee, at its seventy-fifth session (15 to 24 May 2002), noted that the use of the term "STCW 95" to mean the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers, 1978, as amended, had led to some confusion. In particular, confusion had arisen during port State control inspections of seafarers' certificates, endorsements and documentary evidence when documents attesting competency or training had been questioned or deemed invalid because they did not bear a reference to STCW 95 or the format of certificates and endorsements, as given in section A-I/2 of the STCW Code, had not included reference to the Convention "as amended in 1995".

3 The Committee therefore agreed that, notwithstanding the format given in section A-I/2 of the STCW Code which states that certificates or endorsements are issued "under the provisions of the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers, 1978, **as amended in 1995**", a more appropriate expression would be "under the provisions of the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers, 1978, **as amended**", to take into account the subsequent amendments. In addition, the Committee agreed that it was important that certificates and documentary evidence issued in respect of the training required in STCW chapters V and VI should include appropriate references to regulations in the Convention and sections of the Code but they need not necessarily include a reference to STCW 95, particularly as, in some cases, the training did not become a requirement until a subsequent amendment had entered into force.

4 In order to avoid confusion during port State control inspections of seafarers' certificates, endorsements and documentary evidence, the Committee recommended that port State control officers accept valid and authentic certificates and endorsements which include in their title that the certificate or endorsement has been issued either:

- 1 "under the provisions of the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers, 1978, **as amended in 1995**", as provided in section A-I/2 of the STCW Code; or
- 2 "under the provisions of the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers, 1978, **as amended**", which takes account of all the amendments made to the Convention subsequently.

5 The Committee also recommended that port State control officers should not, when undertaking inspections of certificates and documentary evidence issued in respect of the training required under STCW chapters V and VI, call for references to STCW 95 but ensure that appropriate references to regulations in the Convention and sections of the Code are given.

6 The Committee invited Member Governments to bring this information to the attention of all concerned, especially port State control officers.
