



Maritime Labour Convention, 2006

Access to shore-based welfare facilities

Notice to all Shipowners, masters and seafarers

Summary

The Maritime Labour Convention, 2006 requires Members to ensure that shore-based welfare facilities are easily accessible and to promote the development of appropriate welfare facilities in designated ports.

The Merchant Navy Welfare Board is the umbrella charity for the welfare of seafarers and their dependents in the UK, including supporting the Port Welfare Committees which promote welfare activities locally.

The MCA is represented on most Port Welfare Committees and takes an active interest in the work of the welfare sector.

1. Introduction

1.1 The purpose of Regulation 4.4 of the Maritime Labour Convention, 2006 is to ensure that seafarers working on board a ship have access to shore-based facilities and services to secure their health and well-being.

1.2 This Marine Guidance Notice sets out the arrangements in place in the UK and the support that MCA gives to this work.

2. Merchant Navy Welfare Board

2.1 The Merchant Navy Welfare Board is the umbrella charity for the maritime charity sector, promoting co-operation between organisations that provide welfare services to merchant seafarers and their dependants within the UK.



2.2 The Board has over forty Constituent Member Charities and maintains fifteen Port Welfare Committees throughout the UK and one in Gibraltar. The Board is governed by its Council, which includes both its directors and trustees.

2.3 The Mission Statement of the MNWB is –

“Supporting the provision of quality welfare services for seafarers and their dependants”

2.4 The key objectives of the MNWB are to -

- Help improve the effectiveness of all those charities caring for merchant seafarers, fishermen and their dependants and this is done irrespective of nationality, religion or ethnic background.
- Strive to ensure that all welfare needs are met through the most effective deployment of resources.
- Facilitate the work of Constituent organisations through the provision of grants and specialist support services.
- Provide a dedicated welfare support and referral service for UK seafarers and their dependants.
- Manage and support Port Welfare Committees to develop local welfare services.
- Encourage and enable closer collaboration amongst both Constituent organisations and Port Welfare Committees.
- Represent and raise awareness of seafarers' welfare issues at national level.

2.5 The MNWB provides a training course for ship welfare visitors, on MLC awareness, to which MCA contributed to the development.

3. Port Welfare Committees (PWCs)

3.1 Port Welfare Committees provide a forum where all those involved in seafarers' welfare can meet regularly, share information, provide mutual support and generally network. They also provide an opportunity to brief members on wider issues that may affect seafarers and their families visiting or resident around their ports. The Merchant Navy Welfare Board (MNWB), as the independent co-ordinator for the maritime charities in the United Kingdom and Gibraltar, is responsible for all administrative aspects.

3.2 There are 16 PWCs in total spread throughout the UK and Gibraltar and currently the MCA is represented by either surveyors or coastguards on 13 committees. A surveyor from the Gibraltar Maritime Administration is a member of the Gibraltar PWC.

3.3 Members include:

- Government Agencies
- Maritime Charities
- Maritime Trade Unions
- Port Authorities
- Port Health Authorities



- Ship Owners (commonly represented by the shipping agents)

3.4 MCA representation has increased over the last three years mainly because of the adoption of the MLC, 2006. Regulation 4.4 and associated standards and guidelines of the MLC, 2006 set out the requirements for access to shore based welfare facilities. Flag States have an obligation to promote the development of welfare facilities and encourage the establishment of welfare boards. Much of the content of this regulation follows closely the UK system which is seen as being best practice.

4. Other support for welfare work for seafarers

4.1 The MCA Chief Executive and Chief Medical Adviser have attended meetings of the Maritime Charities Funding Group. The Chief Medical Adviser and Medical Administration Team have provided advice and support to the Seafarer Hospital on projects to promote seafarer health.

4.2 MCA surveyors often play a co-ordinating role in supporting distressed seafarers, ensuring that they have access to pastoral support and welfare facilities.

More Information

ISM/ISO Policy Branch
Maritime and Coastguard Agency
Bay 2/20
Spring Place
105 Commercial Road
Southampton
SO15 1EG

Tel : +44 (0) 23 8032 9549
Fax : +44 (0) 23 8032 9251
e-mail: mlc@mca.gov.uk

General Inquiries: info@mca.gov.uk

MCA Website Address: www.dft.gov.uk/mca

File Ref: MC 18/1/41

Published: Printers to Insert [Month Year]
Please note that all addresses and telephone numbers are correct at time of publishing



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