



TECHNICAL CIRCULAR No. 130 of 17th May 2013

To:	All Surveyors/Auditors
Applicable to flag:	All Flags
Subject:	MLC 2006, Title 3&4, C3.2-C4.1 Food and Medical
Reference:	MLC, 2006 – Maritime Labour Convention, 2006

MLC, 2006, Title 3&4, C3.2-C4.1 **C3.2. Food and catering**

C3.2.a. Is there a minimum standard for the food served to seafarers on board ships? National laws or other measures would address the detail of what is required on board a ship. The MLC, 2006 provides some minimum standards for the food on board ship under Regulation 3.2. These standards cover the quantity, nutritional value, quality and variety of food and drinking water supplies, having regard to the number of seafarers on board, their religious requirements and cultural practices as they pertain to food, and the duration and nature of the voyage shall be suitable in respect of quantity, nutritional value, quality and variety.

C3.2.b. Can seafarers be charged for food on board ship?

Regulation 3.2, paragraph 2 of the MLC, 2006 provides that seafarers on board a ship shall be provided with food free of charge during the period of engagement.

C3.2.c. Must ships' cooks be certified?

The MLC, 2006 does not require that ships' cooks be certified. This would be a matter for national law. However ships' cooks must not be under 18 years of age and, in accordance with Regulation 3.2, paragraph 3 must be trained, qualified and found competent for the position in accordance with requirements set out in the laws and regulations of the country concerned.

C3.2.d. Must all ships have a full-time ships' cook?

Standard A3.2 does not require full-time cooks. The size of the vessel and the number of meals being served per day are the factors determining whether cooks are full-time or

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part-time. However, the requirement for training and qualifications applies to both fulltime and part-time cooks.

C4. Title 4 Health protection, medical care, welfare and social security Protection

C4.1. Medical care on board ship and ashore

C4.1.a. What kinds of treatment would be considered as medical care?

For the health protection and medical care, that shipowners are required to provide to seafarers on board their ship, in principle free of charge, in accordance with Regulation 4.1, the MLC, 2006 does not identify any particular treatment – other than ‘essential dental care – as this would be a matter for national laws or regulations. Flag States are required to ensure the application to the seafarers of any general national provisions on occupational health protection and medical care relevant to their duties, as well as of special provisions specific to work on board ship; the health protection and medical care must be as comparable as possible to that which is generally available to workers ashore, including prompt access to the necessary medicines, medical equipment and facilities for diagnosis and treatment and to medical information and expertise; it must include measures of a preventive character such as health promotion and health education programs. Seafarers have the right to visit a qualified medical doctor or dentist without delay in ports of call, where practicable.

C4.1.b. Must every ship have a ships’ doctor on board?

Under Standard A4.1, paragraphs 4(b) and (c) of the MLC, 2006, ships carrying 100 or more “persons” (i.e., who will not necessarily all be seafarers) and ordinarily engaged on international voyages of more than three days’ duration must carry a qualified medical doctor. National laws or regulations must also specify which other ships are required to carry a medical doctor, taking into account, inter alia, such factors as the duration, nature and conditions of the voyage and the number of seafarers on board. Ships which do not carry a medical doctor must have either at least one seafarer on board who is in charge of medical care and administering medicine as part of their regular duties or at least one seafarer on board competent to provide medical first aid; such persons must have satisfactorily completed training in medical care that meets the requirements of the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers, 1978, as amended (“STCW”).

C4.1.c. What should be in a medical chest?

Standard A4.1, paragraph 4(a) of the MLC, 2006 requires all ships to carry a medicine chest, medical equipment and a medical guide, the specifics of which shall be prescribed and subject to regular inspection by the competent authority; the national requirements must take into account the type of ship, the number of persons on board and the nature, destination and duration of voyages and relevant national and international

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recommended medical standards. As far as the content of the medical chest and many other related matters are concerned, Guideline B4.1. paragraph 4 [see A12. What is the status of the Guidelines in Part B of the Code?] refers to relevant international recommendations, including the latest edition of the *International Medical Guide for Ships*.

C4.1.d. Is there a standard ships' medical guide?

While a country may develop a national medical guide, to fulfill the requirement under Standard A4.1, paragraph 4(a), Guideline B4.1. paragraph 4 [see A12. What is the status of the Guidelines in Part B of the Code?] refers to relevant international recommendations, including the latest edition of the *International Medical Guide for Ships*. 28

C4.1.e. Does the MLC, 2006 contain a model form for the standard medical report form to be used on board ships?

No model is provided in the MLC, 2006 for the standard medical report form, which countries must adopt in accordance with Standard A4.1, paragraph 2, for use by the ships' masters and relevant onshore and on-board medical personnel. The purpose of the form is explained in Guideline B4.1.2, paragraph 1, namely to facilitate the exchange of medical and related information concerning individual seafarers between ship and shore in cases of illness or injury.

While no particular form is required under the MLC, 2006, the third edition of the *International Medical Guide for Ships*, 29 published in 2007 by the World Health Organization (WHO) on behalf of WHO, ILO and IMO, contains a form for this purpose in Annex A.

REFERENCES:

- **MLC, 2006 – Maritime Labour Convention, 2006**

ATTACHMENTS: No.

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