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| To: | All Surveyors/Auditors |
| Applicable to flag: | All Flags |
| Subject: | Decent living for efficient and safe ships |
| Reference | MLC |

Decent living for efficient and safe ships

The need for seafarers to have decent living conditions is enshrined in the new Maritime Labour Convention (MLC). But below it explains why habitability is important for reasons of efficiency and safety.

The MLC gives port state inspectors power to detain vessels that do not conform to decent habitability standards and provides a strict regulatory framework to ensure that seafarers live in decent conditions. Habitability is an important design criterion in modern ships, with the need to consider such matters as noise, vibration, the indoor climate and lighting in living and working spaces. The considerable scope of the MLC regulations as they apply to accommodation and recreational facilities is usefully summarized, along with plenty of guidance on the detailed regulations themselves.

Gone are the days when seafarers should just fit in where they can after the cargo, the engines and the passengers have been accommodated aboard a ship. Habitability matters and there is no reason why seafarers should not enjoy modern facilities that offer comfortable, clean and convivial accommodation aboard any ship on which they serve.

Habitability is about people and place and the need to ensure that working spaces, just as much as the accommodation, are properly designed for real people to work in. Human-centered ship design recognizes both human factors and ergonomics with the aim of providing facilities that are comfortable and promote efficiency. Indeed a ship in which habitability has been considered from the start will almost certainly be a more efficient place of work than one where the crew just fit in where they can.

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Noise and vibration has always been an issue aboard mechanically propelled ships, but completely new criteria could minimize structural noise. There are new ships design with exceptionally low levels of noise and vibration. The fortunate crew aboard this sophisticated new ship report that she is one of the best ships in the fleet to serve on.

The penalties for not providing a habitable ship, which can go beyond detention and crew problems, with a report of a crew member killed by hydrogen sulphide gas from an ill maintained sewage system. Habitability can be more than efficiency and the provision of somewhere decent to live aboard. It could also be a matter of life and death.

REFERENCES:

- MLC

ATTACHMENTS: No.

Kindest Regards,

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