

**To:** Owners, Managers, Masters, All Seafarers, Agents, Approved Maritime Training Institutions, Other Interested Parties

**Subject:** Implementation of Amendments to STCW Table A-VI/1-4 Personal Safety and Social Responsibilities (PSSR) Training

**Date:** Tuesday, 30th December, 2025

**Summary:**

The Maritime Safety Committee (MSC), at its 108th session, adopted IMO Resolution MSC.560(108), amending the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (STCW) Code (Table A-VI/1-4) to introduce new mandatory training on the prevention of and response to violence and harassment, including bullying, sexual harassment, and sexual assault.

These amendments enter into force on **1 January 2026**.

This circular outlines Maritime Cook Islands' (MCI) current position on the implementation and application of these amendments.

**Annexes to this Circular:**

- Annex A: Table outlining the new content introduced into STCW Table A-VI/1-4 by IMO Resolution MSC.560(108)
- Annex B: MSC.560(108)

**1. Applicability to existing seafarers**

**1.1 Seafarers serving on Cook Islands flagged vessels**

- Existing PSSR certificates issued before 1 January 2026 remain valid (until expiry, where an expiry date applies) and are acceptable for service on Cook Islands flagged vessels.

**1.2 Seafarers who hold Cook Islands certification**

- Cook Islands Certificates of Proficiency (CoPs) in Basic Safety Training (including PSSR) issued before 1 January 2026 remain acceptable until expiry.

**1.3 Recommendation**

- MCI strongly encourages companies to provide onboard training or guidance that reflects the new requirements introduced by MSC.560(108).

## **2. Requirements for seafarers serving on Cook Islands flagged vessels or applying for Cook Islands certification.**

From 1<sup>st</sup> of January 2026, any seafarer undertaking PSSR courses must follow the updated Table A-VI/1-4 (MSC.560(108)), which includes the new competence:

“Contribute to the prevention of and response to violence and harassment, including bullying, sexual harassment and sexual assault.”

For the purpose of Cook Islands flagged endorsement applications and PSSR certificates issued on or after 1 January 2026, MCI may request evidence that the training course complies with STCW Table A-VI/1-4 as amended by MSC.560(108) (for example, by reference on the course certificate).

## **3. Potential for changes**

MCI will review this position following the IMO Sub-Committee on Human Element, Training and Watchkeeping (HTW-12) in February 2026 and will issue updated guidance should the IMO provide further clarification on transitional arrangements.

For questions or guidance, please contact the Seafarer Training & Certification Department [seafarers@maritimecookislands.com](mailto:seafarers@maritimecookislands.com)

**Annex A:**

Table outlining the new content introduced into STCW Table A-VI/1-4 by IMO Resolution MSC.560(108)

| Column 1   | Column 2   | Column 3  | Column 4   |
|--|--|---|--|
| Competence   | Knowledge, understanding and proficiency   | Methods for demonstrating competence  | Criteria for evaluating competence   |
| Contribute to the prevention of and response to violence and harassment, including sexual harassment, bullying and sexual assault. | <p>Prevention of violence and harassment:</p> <p>Basic knowledge and understanding of violence and harassment, including sexual harassment, bullying and sexual assault, and the continuum of harm.</p> <p>Basic knowledge and understanding of the consequences of violence and harassment, including sexual harassment, bullying and sexual assault on victims, perpetrators, bystanders and stakeholders, and its effects on safety, health, and well-being.</p> <p>Understand that, among others, abuse of power relations, discrimination, stress, isolation, fatigue, drugs, or alcohol may contribute to violence and harassment, including sexual harassment, bullying and sexual assault.</p> <p>Responding to violence and harassment:</p> | Assessment of evidence obtained from approved instruction or during attendance at an approved course. | <p>Acceptable practices and procedures designed for the prevention of violence and harassment, including sexual harassment, bullying and sexual assault are observed at all times.</p> <p>Able to identify violence and harassment, including sexual harassment, bullying and sexual assault, and the continuum of harm and its effects.</p> <p>Acceptable practices and procedures designed for the intervention in and reporting of violence and harassment, including sexual harassment, bullying and sexual assault are observed at all times.</p> |

|  |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|
|  | <p>Ability to identify violence and harassment, including sexual harassment, bullying and sexual assault.</p> <p>Basic knowledge of the action to take to intervene in and report violence and harassment, including sexual harassment, bullying and sexual assault.</p> <p>Understand the basic principles of trauma-informed response and how to provide appropriate support to a victim, bystanders and self.</p> |  |  |
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**RESOLUTION MSC.560(108)**  
**(adopted on 23 May 2024)**

**AMENDMENTS TO PART A OF THE SEAFARERS' TRAINING,  
CERTIFICATION AND WATCHKEEPING (STCW) CODE**

THE MARITIME SAFETY COMMITTEE,

RECALLING Article 28(b) of the Convention on the International Maritime Organization concerning the functions of the Committee,

RECALLING ALSO article XII and regulation I/1.2.3 of the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers, 1978 ("the 1978 STCW Convention"), concerning the procedures for amending part A of the Seafarers' Training, Certification and Watchkeeping Code ("the STCW Code"),

RECOGNIZING the need for training provisions to prevent and respond to bullying and harassment in the maritime sector, including sexual assault and sexual harassment,

HAVING CONSIDERED, at its 108th session, amendments to part A of the STCW Code, proposed and circulated in accordance with article XII(1)(a)(i) of the 1978 STCW Convention,

1 ADOPTS, in accordance with article XII(1)(a)(iv) of the 1978 STCW Convention, amendments to the STCW Code, the text of which is set out in the annex to the present resolution;

2 DETERMINES, in accordance with article XII(1)(a)(vii)(2) of the 1978 STCW Convention, that said amendments to the STCW Code shall be deemed to have been accepted on 1 July 2025, unless, prior to that date, more than one third of Parties or Parties the combined merchant fleets of which constitute not less than 50% of the gross tonnage of the world's merchant shipping of ships of 100 gross register tons or more have notified to the Secretary-General of the Organization that they object to the amendments;

3 INVITES Parties to note that, in accordance with article XII(1)(a)(ix) of the 1978 STCW Convention, the amendments to the STCW Code annexed hereto shall enter into force on 1 January 2026 upon their acceptance, in accordance with paragraph 2 above;

4 URGES Parties to implement the amendments to section A-VI/1 of the STCW Code at an early stage;

5 REQUESTS the Secretary-General, for the purposes of article XII(1)(a)(v) of the 1978 STCW Convention, to transmit certified copies of the present resolution and the text of the amendments contained in the annex to all Parties to the 1978 STCW Convention;

6 ALSO REQUESTS the Secretary-General to transmit copies of this resolution and its annex to Members of the Organization which are not Parties to the 1978 STCW Convention.

ANNEX

**AMENDMENTS TO PART A OF THE SEAFARERS' TRAINING,  
CERTIFICATION AND WATCHKEEPING (STCW) CODE**

**CHAPTER VI  
STANDARDS REGARDING EMERGENCY, OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY,  
SECURITY, MEDICAL CARE AND SURVIVAL FUNCTIONS**

**Section A-VI/1**

*Mandatory minimum requirements for safety familiarization, basic training and instruction for all seafarers*

1 Table A-VI/1-4 (Specification of minimum standard of competence in personal safety and social responsibilities) is replaced by the following:

| Column 1                         | Column 2  | Column 3   | Column 4   |
|----------------------------------|---|--|--|
| Competence                       | Knowledge, understanding and proficiency  | Methods for demonstrating competence   | Criteria for evaluating competence   |
| Comply with emergency procedures | Types of emergency which may occur, such as collision, fire, foundering<br><br>Knowledge of shipboard contingency plans for response to emergencies<br><br>Emergency signals and specific duties allocated to crew members in the muster list; muster stations; correct use of personal safety equipment<br><br>Action to take on discovering potential emergency, including fire, collision, foundering and ingress of water into the ship<br><br>Action to take on hearing emergency alarm signals<br><br>Value of training and drills<br><br>Knowledge of escape routes and internal communication and alarm systems | Assessment of evidence obtained from approved instruction or during attendance at an approved course | Initial action on becoming aware of an emergency conforms to established emergency response procedures<br><br>Information given on raising alarm is prompt, accurate, complete and clear |

| Column 1  | Column 2  | Column 3   | Column 4   |
|---|---|--|--|
| Competence  | Knowledge, understanding and proficiency  | Methods for demonstrating competence   | Criteria for evaluating competence   |
| Take precautions to prevent pollution of the marine environment | <p>Basic knowledge of the impact of shipping on the marine environment and the effects of operational or accidental pollution on it</p> <p>Basic environmental protection procedures</p> <p>Basic knowledge of complexity and diversity of the marine environment</p>   | Assessment of evidence obtained from approved instruction or during attendance at an approved course | Organizational procedures designed to safeguard the marine environment are observed at all times                   |
| Observe safe working practices                                  | <p>Importance of adhering to safe working practices at all times</p> <p>Safety and protective devices available to protect against potential hazards aboard ship</p> <p>Precautions to be taken prior to entering enclosed spaces</p> <p>Familiarization with international measures concerning accident prevention and occupational health</p> | Assessment of evidence obtained from approved instruction or during attendance at an approved course | Safe working practices are observed and appropriate safety and protective equipment is correctly used at all times |
| Contribute to effective communications on board ship            | <p>Understand the principles of, and barriers to, effective communication between individuals and teams within the ship</p> <p>Ability to establish and maintain effective communications</p>   | Assessment of evidence obtained from approved instruction or during attendance at an approved course | Communications are clear and effective at all times  |
| Contribute to effective human relationships on board ship       | <p>Importance of maintaining good human and working relationships aboard ship</p> <p>Basic teamworking principles and practice, including conflict resolution</p>   | Assessment of evidence obtained from approved instruction or during attendance at an approved course | Expected standards of work and behaviour are observed at all times   |

| Column 1  | Column 2  | Column 3   | Column 4  |
|---|---|--|---|
| Competence  | Knowledge, understanding and proficiency  | Methods for demonstrating competence   | Criteria for evaluating competence  |
|   | Social responsibilities; employment conditions; individual rights and obligations; dangers of drug and alcohol abuse  |  |   |
| Contribute to the prevention of and response to violence and harassment, including sexual harassment, bullying and sexual assault | <p>Prevention of violence and harassment:</p> <p>Basic knowledge and understanding of violence and harassment, including sexual harassment, bullying and sexual assault, and the continuum of harm</p> <p>Basic knowledge and understanding of the consequences of violence and harassment, including sexual harassment, bullying and sexual assault on victims, perpetrators, bystanders and stakeholders, and its effects on safety, health and well-being</p> <p>Understand that, among others, abuse of power relations, discrimination, stress, isolation, fatigue, drugs or alcohol may contribute to violence and harassment, including sexual harassment, bullying and sexual assault</p> <p>Responding to violence and harassment:</p> <p>Ability to identify violence and harassment, including sexual harassment, bullying and sexual assault</p> <p>Basic knowledge of the action to take to intervene in and report violence and</p> | Assessment of evidence obtained from approved instruction or during attendance at an approved course | <p>Acceptable practices and procedures designed for the prevention of violence and harassment, including sexual harassment, bullying and sexual assault are observed at all times</p> <p>Able to identify violence and harassment, including sexual harassment, bullying and sexual assault, and the continuum of harm and its effects</p> <p>Acceptable practices and procedures designed for the intervention in and reporting of violence and harassment, including sexual harassment, bullying and sexual assault are observed at all times</p> |



| Column 1   | Column 2  | Column 3   | Column 4  |
|--|---|--|---|
| Competence   | Knowledge, understanding and proficiency  | Methods for demonstrating competence   | Criteria for evaluating competence  |
|  | <p>harassment, including sexual harassment, bullying and sexual assault</p> <p>Understand the basic principles of trauma-informed response and how to provide appropriate support to a victim, bystanders and self</p>  |  |   |
| Understand and take necessary actions to control fatigue | <p>Importance of obtaining the necessary rest</p> <p>Effects of sleep, schedules and the circadian rhythm on fatigue</p> <p>Effects of physical stressors on seafarers</p> <p>Effects of environmental stressors in and outside the ship and their impact on seafarers</p> <p>Effects of schedule changes on seafarer fatigue</p> | Assessment of evidence obtained from approved instruction or during attendance at an approved course | Fatigue management practices are observed and appropriate actions are used at all times |