



MERCHANT NAVY WELFARE BOARD

SERVING SEAFARERS WORKING GROUP

REPORT

Revised April 2005

**MERCHANT
NAVY
WELFARE
BOARD**

**CO-OPERATION BETWEEN NAUTICAL CHARITIES
REPORT OF THE SERVING SEAFARERS WORKING GROUP**

MEMBERS:

Chair: Merchant Navy Welfare Board
Apostleship of the Sea
British & International Sailors Society
Marine Society & Sea Cadet Association
Mersey Mission to Seafarers
Mission to Seafarers
NUMAST
Fishermens' Mission - RNMDSF
Seamen's Christian Friend Society

MEMBERSHIP

The Merchant Navy Welfare Board Council invited all its Constituent Members to be represented on any of the Working Groups. Additionally the Minutes of all the Working Groups were distributed to all Constituents, inviting any comments on the issues raised.

INTRODUCTION

In October 1997 King George's Fund for Sailors (since renamed Seafarers UK) with the support of a number of the maritime charities, organised the Conference of Nautical Charitable Organisations 1997 – CONCO 97. The delegates included representatives from all sectors of maritime welfare and included charities caring for merchant seafarers, deep-sea fishermen and the Royal Navy.

The Merchant Navy Welfare Board used the initiative of CONCO 97 to set up five Working Groups each with the objective of examining the welfare requirements over the next one to two decades. Each of the Working Groups set out to provide some positive indicators and guidelines to assist the Nautical Charities in their deliberations for the future.

The Reports were published in 2000 and set out to recognise the enormous changes within the Industry over the previous two decades and the consequent implications for the future. The Groups have continued to meet and review both the trends and implementation of the Recommendations. In the four years since publication of the 1st Report, the nautical charities have responded, in a very positive manner, to the findings and many of the recommendations have been adopted as best practice. The members of the Maritime Charities Funding Group have also recognised the value of the Recommendations and are encouraging the adoption of these among those charities they support. The Working Group agreed that, after four years, the Report

should be revised and updated in the light of some major changes in current best practice.

The members of the Group emphasise that nothing contained in this report is intended to force change on any of the Nautical Charities. It is hoped, however, that all appropriate organisations will use the findings when considering their future strategy and that copies of this report will be widely circulated to their trustees, senior members of their staff and appropriate local representatives around the UK ports. The Merchant Navy Welfare Board is happy to discuss any issues raised within the report and will be pleased to meet with individual groups of trustees.

Since the publication of the 1st Report charity income has been adversely affected by some major fluctuations and uncertainties in the investment markets combined with increasing difficulties in direct fundraising and legacies. This has particularly affected the overall levels of grants available from the ITF Seafarers' Trust and Seafarers UK. Under the terms of its Charter the latter cannot be a major financial contributor to the Serving Seafarers, charities. The ITFST is however the major provider of capital grants for this Group.

The Working Group wishes to emphasise that this report should be considered a working document. It will therefore continue to be reviewed regularly and any suggestions should be forwarded to the MNWB for inclusion.

CONTENTS

- I SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS
- II ISPS CODE
- III ISOLATION & WORKING HOURS AMONG SEAFARERS
- IV UK IMPLEMENTATION OF ILO CONVENTIONS
 - (a) ILO Convention 163, Recommendation 173
 - (b) ILO Convention 178 & Recommendation 185
 - (c) ILO Consolidated Maritime Labour Convention
 - (d) Financial Support for Welfare and the Implications for the Voluntary Societies
- V THE PROVISION OF WELFARE SERVICES TO SEAFARERS WITHIN UK PORTS
- VI THE PROVISION AND REQUIREMENTS FOR SEAFARERS' CENTRES IN LARGER PORTS
- VII THE PROVISION AND REQUIREMENTS FOR SEAFARERS' WELFARE SERVICES IN SMALLER PORTS
- VIII THE IMPACT OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS
- IX THE PROVISION OF TRAINING FOR SHIPS' WELFARE VISITORS
- X THE PROVISION OF TRAINING AND EDUCATION FOR UK DOMICILED SEAFARERS
 - (a) Provision of Additional Education to Seafarers
 - (b) Use of Technology to Provide Health and Safety Information
 - (c) Training of Ratings for Certificates of Competency as Officers
- XI CONCLUSION

APPENDIX

Extract from ILO Consolidated Maritime Labour Convention

I SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

The following key recommendations were made that: -

- *it is essential to encourage HM Government to ratify the ILO Consolidated Maritime Labour Convention*
- *the funding of welfare in UK ports is supported, wherever needed, by a system of levies.*
- *if the need for a port levy system is endorsed by a Port Welfare Committee, the MNWB assists in lobbying the appropriate port authority/ies for support.*
- *feasibility and requirements of welfare in different ports be closely examined and monitored.*
- *the priority of a port welfare system should be to provide for ship visitors. Such visiting should be maintained even if the level of shipping activity increases.*
- *each centre regularly reviews the level of services that it provides.*
- *the provision for training and education for UK domiciled seafarers is regularly reviewed.*
- *communications technology is regularly reviewed for implications for the provision of seafarers' welfare.*
- *the effects of the ISPS Code on seafarers and ship visitors access between ships and shore are carefully monitored by the maritime voluntary societies and Port Welfare Committees.*
- *the effects of social isolation & long working hours are understood by the welfare agencies.*

II ISPS (International Ship & Port Security) Code

An issue of major significance is the introduction of the ISPS Code which was put in place on 1st July 2004. This means that access to and from ships is much more restricted than previously, although it is hoped that within the UK at Level 1, the impact will be minimised. There is little indication as to the affect of Level 2, the interim measure, but it is anticipated that at Level 3 (the maximum level) all movement of seafarers and ships' visitors will be halted. The United States has taken a much stronger view and has, in many cases, effectively stopped shore leave for all seafarers. The Working Group considered that this was an infringement of human rites but due to the power of the US there was little that could be done. It was agreed that such moves would only isolate the seafarers more and exacerbate already difficult issues.

The Merchant Navy Welfare Board, via its Port Welfare Committees, will monitor the impact of the Code on seafarers' access to shore leave and welfare visitors' ability to Board ships. If it is felt that either of these are being unreasonably denied the Board will raise the matter with whichever authority is deemed appropriate.

The basic training of ship visitors, which is in part a complementary response to the Code, is covered more fully later in the Report.

III ISOLATION & WORKING HOURS AMONG SEAFARERS

The issues of isolation and long hours are increasingly considered to be a problem among seafarers. Even without the introduction of the ISPS Code, reduction in crew sizes, increased workloads exacerbated by increasing number of statutory requirements and additional paperwork, have meant that there is little time for recreation. These are sensitive and difficult issues well understood by the voluntary societies. Effectively the implications are demonstrated by the reduced use of seafarers' centres and even the lack of opportunity to meet with a ship visitor.

IV UK IMPLEMENTATION OF ILO CONVENTIONS

(a) ILO Convention 163, Recommendation 173

ILO Convention 163 & Recommendation 173

The Working Group agreed that there was no likelihood of the UK Government ratifying ILO Convention 163. This was in part due to their concerns regarding any commitment to provide funding for seafarers' welfare and also because the ILO Consolidated Maritime Labour Convention was expected to be agreed in 2006. The latter would subsume most of the instruments contained in 163.

Members have agreed however that, in the interim period, the key issue is to ensure that the instruments are complied with as fully as possible. The members considered that the United Kingdom seafarers' welfare agencies observe the Convention and Recommendation in almost every area despite the fact that UK was not a signatory. Copies of ILO Convention 163 with Recommendation 173 have been widely

circulated in the past but are available, on request, from the Board or on the ILO website; <http://www.ilo.org/ilolex/english/convdisp1.htm>

(b) ILO Convention 178 & Recommendation 185

ILO Convention 178 & Recommendation 185 – Labour Inspection (Seafarers) Recommendation, 1996

The Working Group recognised that this Convention and its accompanying Recommendation has an impact on seafarers' welfare. It "enables masters, crew members or representatives of seafarers to call for an inspection when they consider it necessary". This includes examination of working and living conditions and respects that confidentiality of the source of any complaint. A copy of these documents is again available from the website referred to above.

(c) ILO Consolidated Maritime Labour Convention

The Working Group noted that the ILO Consolidated Maritime Labour Convention was in preparation and that a draft had been published. The part pertinent to this Working Group covering *Access to shore-based welfare facilities including; - Responsibilities of Members; Welfare facilities and services in ports; Welfare boards; Financing of welfare facilities; Dissemination of information and facilitation measures; Seafarers in a foreign port;* is included in the **Appendix**

The members expressed the view that it was important that the UK ratified this Convention and certainly from this perspective the part covering 'Access to shore-based welfare facilities'. Several of the members had attended the various ILO conferences and felt reasonably optimistic that HM Government would do so. The Working Group would continue to monitor the situation and if necessary the Board would co-ordinate a joint approach to lobby the Shipping Minister for ratification.

(d) Financial Support for Welfare and the Implications for the Voluntary Societies

Members noted that both ILO Recommendation 173 and the draft Consolidated Maritime Labour Convention state that: -

In accordance with national conditions and practice, this financial support should be made available through one or more of the following:

- a) grants from public funds;*
- b) levies or other public dues from shipping sources;*
- c) voluntary contributions from shipowners, seafarers, or their organisations;*
- d) voluntary contributions from other sources;*

Members considered, with some regret that, within the Consolidated Convention, the wording would be changed in order that governments were not obligated to provide 'grants from public funds'. Such funding was, in any event, considered unlikely to be made available in UK within the foreseeable future.

Funding therefore continues to be provided from the sources outlined in headings *b)*, *c)* and *d)*.

Increasingly necessary funding is being provided under heading *b) levies or other public dues from shipping sources*. These include voluntary port levies charged per ship movement, per tonne of cargo or direct financial contributions from the port authorities. Voluntary levies are charged either through the port dues, or via an additional charge to the shipowner via the port agent. In addition several ports provided the land for seafarers' centres at peppercorn rents as a contribution towards welfare.

Voluntary levies, or donations, are in place at ports including: - Fowey & Par (Cornwall), Great Yarmouth, Sullom Voe and Teesside.

The Working Group encourages all societies to lobby the port authorities and/or port users associations (ships' agents) to put in place some form of voluntary donations. Any request could be supported by the local Port Welfare Committee and the MNWB. They also noted that in ports where voluntary levies were charged there was seldom a refusal by the ship owner to pay as in reality it was a very small addition to the general costs.

To successfully lobby for the proper level of support societies should be prepared to supply the following information to support their needs: -

INCOME

- Income from centres including sales, services, rental income etc.
- Income from investments (if appropriate)
- Head office support (if appropriate)
- Charitable donations
- Grants from other organisations
- Other income (to be specified)

OUTGOINGS

- Costs of all locally employed personnel
- Administration costs for the managing society
- Provision of victuals
- Cost of all services
- Transport costs inc. capital expenditure
- Training costs
- Other costs (to be specified)

OTHER INFORMATION

- Size of operating deficit
- Size of reserves and any Reserves Policy
- List of shortfall in current service provision and estimated costs to make good

The Working Group continued to take the view that no port authority would countenance such a contribution unless there was a proper welfare network in place, or planned. The authorities may also wish to exercise a level of control and constraint.

Special Dues

The Report published in 2000 examined the means of obtaining funds through '*special dues*' and which could be based on the current Light Dues arrangement. Such a scheme would ensure that every ship was treated equally and no port disadvantaged.

Members took into account the Chamber of Shipping's concerns about the implications of a levy system and their objection to the cost and fairness of Light Dues. This was brought about by the perception that any increase in an overall levy system would allow the Government to include other charges e.g. anti pollution. The Group accepted, with some regret, that there was a need for pragmatism and such a scheme was unlikely to find favour.

V THE PROVISION OF WELFARE SERVICES TO SEAFARERS WITHIN UK PORTS

The Working Group recognised that a number of factors influenced the level of welfare services within any particular port. They took into account the ever reduced opportunities for shore leave brought about by fast turnaround times, small crews and their heavy workloads.

The key factor, dictating the level of services required, is the volume of traffic within a port. It is also important to consider the geographical area covered, the availability of access for ship visits to the seafarers, size of ships' crews and the opportunities for seafarers to go ashore.

In many of the smaller ports it is clearly uneconomical to provide active welfare services especially utilising salaried staff. It is however important to ensure that some emergency cover is available e.g. an honorary chaplain.

In medium size ports it is desirable that cover is available via a ship visitor. This can either be a salaried member of staff - probably a chaplain - or volunteers or both.

In the larger busier ports there may be justification for a seafarers centre operated by one or more of the voluntary societies. These centres should consider providing the services as laid out below. It is felt essential that any seafarers centre has in place an active system of ship visiting.. This is both to ensure that seafarers can have easy access to the centre and also to provide a service to those unable to go ashore.

VI THE PROVISION AND REQUIREMENTS FOR SEAFARERS' CENTRES IN LARGER PORTS

The Working Group discussed the issue of seafarers' centres in UK Ports. It was agreed that the rapid turnaround of ships often means that seafarers do not have an opportunity to visit Centres. This necessarily means that societies should consider placing greater emphasis on ship visiting and less on centres. Nonetheless members agreed that in large and busy ports there is still a place for a well organised centre that provides seafarers with a safe haven and an opportunity to relax away from shipboard environment if only for a brief period.

Members took into account the rapid changes in technology that would, in all likelihood, increasingly make communications from on board ship more cheaply and readily available. They cited the increasing usage of mobile phones (with evermore competitive packages), reducing costs of satellite communications, improved broadband internet access (which included telephone calls via the VOIP – voice over internet protocol - system). They also noted the need to try and provide seafarers with low cost telephone boxes in port areas available on 24/7 basis. All these issues however would probably mean that seafarers had less incentive to visit a centre.

The Working Group reviewed how seafarer's centres should operate effectively and the facilities that should be provided. They recommended that where practicable these should include: -

- (a) access to the centre generally between 8 am and midnight, taking into account various shift patterns aboard ship and shipping activity.
- (b) easy availability of free transport to the centres and the local town following a request.
- (c) the provision of a ship visitor to meet with seafarers unable to access the centre.
- (d) the need to ensure that seafarers in hospital or detention were visited.
- (e) the provision of non-alcoholic beverages and refreshments or meals as appropriate.
- (f) careful consideration given to the sale of alcoholic beverages, which must take into account the views of concerned local organisations (e.g. harbour authorities) and the risk assessment if a crewmember, under the influence of alcohol, was later involved in an accident, or breached the statutory alcohol limits or employment company regulations .
- (g) provision of a full or part time chaplain, or ship visitor attached to each centre and available at short notice.
- (h) a room available to use for worship and meditation.

- (i) access to places of worship for all denominations or religions to be made available where practicable.
- (j) a private meeting room and rapid access to a properly trained person with 'Counselling' skills.
- (k) provision of cheap telecommunications including, where possible, 'dedicated' telephones available in the port area/s on a 24/7 basis.
- (l) provision of cheap internet access.
- (m) provision of newspapers and magazines. Access to overseas news via the Internet where practicable
- (n) entertainment and leisure facilities might include:-
 - (i) TV with video and/or DVD
 - (ii) Games e.g. pool, darts
 - (iii) Access to sports facilities e.g. football matches, swimming pools
 - (iv) Exchange of magazines and paperbacks
 - (v) Exchange of videos and DVDs
 - (vi) Exchange of ships libraries when appropriate
 - (vi) Distribution of health information material, including fitness and hygiene promotion.
 - (vii) Distribution of local information material

VII THE PROVISION AND REQUIREMENTS FOR SEAFARERS' WELFARE SERVICES IN SMALLER PORTS

The Working Group agreed to recommend the following level of welfare services as desirable in busy UK ports with no centre:-

- (a) Visits to vessels by chaplain and / or ship visitors
- (b) Visits to seafarers in hospital or detention.
- (c) Easy access to places of worship
- (d) Assistance with transport facilities to places of worship, sports facilities, shops etc.
- (e) Access to a private meeting place
- (f) Rapid access to a properly trained person with 'Counselling' skills.
- (g) Ability to facilitate easy and cheap telecommunications where possible, utilising 'dedicated' telephones available in the port area on a 24/7 basis.
- (h) Access to an Internet café where possible.
- (i) Sale of provisions and / or ability to purchase on behalf of seafarers
- (j) Provision of international newspapers and/or magazines.
- (k) Exchange of magazines and books
- (l) Exchange of ship's libraries
- (m) Access to sports facilities e.g. football matches, swimming pools etc.

VIII THE IMPACT OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS

The Working Group agreed that this was a complex and fast moving issue. The outcome would inevitably lead to easier and cheaper access to telecommunications both at sea and ashore. It is anticipated that this will have an impact on the seafarers' centres.

IX THE PROVISION OF TRAINING FOR SHIPS' WELFARE VISITORS

Since the first Report a course has been implemented to provide a basic level of training for all ships' welfare visitors. This Course is a joint venture among the nautical voluntary societies working in UK ports and provides formalised training course for those involved in visiting ships. These include not only the ordained and lay chaplains, but all those who both enter port areas and board ships in any welfare capacity.

Those societies involved include the Apostleship of the Sea, British and International Sailors' Society, Fishermen's Mission, Mission to Seafarers, Seamen's Christian Friends Society and other smaller organisations. The Course takes into account that in the past much of the work has been centre based. It recognises that, with the increasingly fast turnaround of ships, coinciding with smaller crews, seafarers often have little time to go ashore and there is, consequently, an ever increasing need for ship visitors. The societies have agreed that all ship visitors should be given some basic training covering the various issues. The course particularly recognises the implications of the International Ship and Port Security Code (ISPS Code), health & safety, shipboard protocol, a basic understanding of seafarers issues and of the maritime industry.

The Merchant Navy Welfare Board co-ordinates and funds the provision of the two-day training course which is held in and around UK ports. It also funded the setting up costs and owns all copyright. The course is run by an experienced maritime training organisation and has been formally accredited by the Nautical Institute. All those successfully completing it are issued with a certificate and identity card. The course is welcomed by the port authorities and ships' masters as it will allow them to verify that those holding the identity card represent a bona fide seafarers' welfare organisation and have a clear understanding of the issues.

The structure of the course includes: -

- an understanding of the global and local maritime industry and international seafarers' welfare management.
- a relevant knowledge of issues including health & safety topics, security, personal responsibilities and accountability
- an understanding of best practice, ship and port protocols, cultural issues, personal responsibility and accountability.

All those who visit ships, whatever their experience, are required, by their societies, to attend the course which will be ongoing for new recruits. The Board administers a database of all ship visitors for the benefit of all involved.

At the time of publication of this Report a number of courses have been arranged around the UK. These are intended to subsume the large numbers of those individuals already involved in visiting ships. Once this group has received training, further courses will be arranged, on a regular basis, to cover newly recruited personnel. Those involved also recognise the likelihood of needing to provide refresher courses in future years.

Certification and Identity Cards

All those persons who have successfully completed the course will receive both a certificate and an identity card. The card is of 'credit card' size and will include a photograph of the individual, details of his or her organisation and the validation date. The card must be surrendered when the person concerned leaves their position. Alternatively it will expire after 5 years, when it can be renewed by the Board, subject to the recommendation of the parent society.

The identity card is intended to verify the credentials of the holder to both the port authorities and ship's master (or duty officer). It will establish that the holder is a bona fide ship visitor from a recognised seafarers' welfare organisation. It will not however exonerate any requirement by the dock or terminal operator to provide their own pass, although it is hoped that possession of this card will facilitate easy processing of an application.

The MNWB also recognises the need to provide a Provisional Identity Card for those who have been unable to attend a course. This will be validated for twelve months, but issued only on the recommendation of one of the seafarers' welfare societies.

X THE PROVISION OF TRAINING AND EDUCATION FOR UK DOMICILED SEAFARERS

The Working Group agreed that there was a continuing need and the potential to provide better education facilities on board ship.

(a) Provision of Continuing Education to Seafarers

There are a number of services operated by the Marine Society College of the Sea, which includes access to a variety of nautical and non-nautical correspondence courses and ships libraries. These opportunities include almost any area of education for seafarers via correspondence courses. Currently the shortcoming of the system is often the difficulty of ensuring that the correspondence catches up with a seafarer. It is anticipated however, that with the advent of improved IT communications this situation will become easier in the future.

(b) Use of Technology to Provide Health and Safety Information

The Working Group agreed the value of utilising technology (e.g. internet) to provide better health and safety information to seafarers. It was anticipated that this would be facilitated by the International Committee for Seafarers Welfare (ICSW).

c) Training of Ratings for Certificates of Competency as Officers

Member noted that there was evidence to suggest that many British ratings, faced with the prospects of a job loss, would like to study to qualify as officers. The problem faced is the cost of financing themselves and often their families whilst ashore with no income (other than any residual leave remaining). There is limited Government funding available for retraining under the SMART Scheme. The NUMAST Slater Awards also helps and, via the Marine Society, makes available a certain amount in over sixty interest free loans. Additionally the Maritime Training Trust collects, from those British shipowners not training cadets Payments in Lieu of Training (PILOT). The income from this Fund is used for a Maritime Education Foundation to train normal cadet entries, those in the Undergraduate Scheme and assist ratings to train as officers.

A major initiative, Sea Vision, has been set up to promote the maritime industry in the UK and encourage youngsters to consider a career at sea. There are numerous partners including shipowners, maritime trade unions and voluntary societies.

XI CONCLUSION

The Members wish to emphasise that this report should be considered a working document. It will therefore be reviewed every two years and any suggestions can be forwarded to the MNWB for consideration.

The Board would like to thank the members of the Working Group for all their work and effort and all other individuals and organisations who have contributed.

Serving Seafarers Working Group Report – July 2004 Appendix

ILO Consolidated Maritime Labour Convention (Draft)

Extract - Access to shore-based welfare facilities

*Regulation 4.4 – Access to shore-based welfare facilities
(See Comment 33 of the Commentary at end of document)*

Purpose: To ensure that seafarers have access to shore-based facilities and services to secure their health and well-being when working on board a ship

1. Members shall ensure that shore-based welfare facilities, where they exist, are easily accessible. Member shall also promote the development of welfare facilities, such as those listed in the Code, in designated ports to provide seafarers on ships that are in their ports with access to adequate welfare facilities and services.
2. The responsibilities of Members with respect to shore-based facilities such as welfare, cultural, recreational and information facilities and services, are set out in the Code.

Standard A4.4 – Access to shore-based welfare facilities

1. Members shall require, where welfare facilities exist on their territory, that they are available for the use of all seafarers, irrespective of nationality, race, colour, sex, religion, political opinion or social origin and irrespective of the State of the flag flown by the ship on which they are employed.
2. Members shall promote the development of welfare facilities in appropriate ports of the country and determine, after consultation with the organizations of shipowners and seafarers concerned, which ports are to be regarded as appropriate.
3. Members shall encourage the establishment of welfare boards which shall regularly review welfare facilities and services to ensure that they are appropriate in the light of changes in the needs of seafarers resulting from technical, operational and other developments in the shipping industry.

Guideline B4.4 – Access to shore-based welfare facilities Guideline B4.4.1 – Responsibilities of Members

1. Measures should be taken by Members to ensure that adequate welfare facilities and services are provided for seafarers in designated ports of call and that adequate protection is provided to seafarers in the exercise of their calling.
2. In the implementation of these measures, Members should take into account the special needs of seafarers, especially when in foreign countries and when entering war zones, in respect of their safety, health and spare-time activities.

3. Arrangements for the supervision of welfare facilities and services should include participation by representative organizations of seafarers and shipowners concerned, where such exist.

4. Members should take measures designed to expedite the free circulation among ships, central supply agencies and welfare establishments of welfare materials such as films, books, newspapers and sports equipment for use by seafarers on board their ships and in welfare centres ashore.

5. Members should cooperate with one another in promoting the welfare of seafarers at sea and in port. Such cooperation should include the following:

(a) consultations between the competent authorities aimed at the provision and improvement of seafarers' welfare facilities and services, both in port and on board a ship;

(b) agreements on the pooling of resources and the joint provision of welfare facilities in major ports so as to avoid unnecessary duplication;

(c) organization of international sports competitions and encouraging the participation of seafarers in sports activities;

(d) organization of international seminars on the subject of welfare of seafarers at sea and in port.

Guideline B4.4.2 – Welfare facilities and services in ports

1. Members should provide or ensure the provision of such welfare facilities and services as may be required in appropriate ports of the country.

2. Welfare facilities and services should be provided, in accordance with national conditions and practice, by one or more of the following:

(a) the public authorities;

(b) the organizations of shipowners and seafarers concerned, where such exist, under collective agreements or other agreed arrangements;

(c) voluntary organizations.

3. Necessary welfare and recreational facilities should be established or developed in ports. These should include:

(a) meeting and recreation rooms as required;

(b) facilities for sports and outdoor facilities, including competitions;

(c) educational facilities; and

(d) where appropriate, facilities for religious observances and for personal counselling.

4. These facilities may be provided by making available to seafarers in accordance with their needs facilities designed for more general use.

5. Where large numbers of seafarers of different nationalities require facilities such as hotels, clubs and sports facilities in a particular port, the competent authorities or bodies of the countries of origin of the seafarers and of the flag States, as well as the

international associations concerned, should consult and cooperate with the competent authorities and bodies of the country in which the port is situated and with one another, with a view to the pooling of resources and to avoiding unnecessary duplication.

6. Hotels or hostels suitable for seafarers should be available where there is need for them; they should provide facilities equal to those found in a good-class hotel, and should wherever possible be located in good surroundings away from the immediate vicinity of the docks. Such hotels or hostels should be properly supervised, the prices charged should be reasonable in amount and, where necessary and possible, provision should be made for accommodating seafarers' families.

7. These accommodation facilities should be open to seafarers of all nationalities, irrespective of colour, race or creed. Without in any way infringing this principle, it may be necessary in certain ports to provide several types of facilities, comparable in standard but adapted to the customs and needs of different groups of seafarers.

8. Measures should be taken to ensure that, as necessary, technically competent persons are employed full time in the operation of seafarers' welfare facilities and services, in addition to any voluntary workers.

Guideline B4.4.3 – Welfare boards

1. Welfare boards should be established, at the port, regional and national levels, as appropriate, whose functions should include:

(a) keeping under review the adequacy of existing welfare facilities and monitoring the need for the provision of additional facilities or the withdrawal of under-utilized facilities; and

(b) assisting and advising those responsible for providing welfare facilities and ensuring coordination between them.

2. Welfare boards should include among their members representatives of organizations of shipowners and seafarers, the competent authorities and, where appropriate, voluntary organizations and social bodies.

3. As appropriate, consuls of maritime States and local representatives of foreign welfare organizations should be associated with the work of port, regional and national welfare boards in accordance with national laws and regulations.

Guideline B4.4.4 – Financing of welfare facilities

1. [Standard A4.4 should not be understood as in any way obligating Members to provide financial support for port welfare facilities.]

2. In accordance with national conditions and practice, financial support should be made available through one or more of the following:

(a) grants from public funds;

(b) levies or other special dues from shipping sources;

- (c) voluntary contributions from shipowners, seafarers, or their organizations;
- (d) voluntary contributions from other sources.

3. Where welfare taxes, levies and special dues are imposed, they should be used only for the purposes for which they are raised.

Guideline B4.4.5 – Dissemination of information and facilitation measures

1. Information should be disseminated among seafarers concerning facilities open to the general public in ports of call – particularly transport, welfare, entertainment and educational facilities and places of worship – as well as facilities provided specifically for seafarers.
2. Adequate means of transport at moderate prices should be available at any reasonable time, in order to enable seafarers to reach urban areas from convenient locations in the port.
3. All suitable measures should be taken by the competent authorities to make known to shipowners and to seafarers entering port any special laws and customs, the contravention of which may jeopardize their freedom.
4. Port areas and access roads should be provided by the competent authorities with adequate lighting and signposting and regular patrols for the protection of seafarers.

Guideline B4.4.6 – Seafarers in a foreign port

1. For the protection of seafarers in ports in which they are not nationals, measures should be taken to facilitate:
 - (a) access to their consuls; and
 - (b) effective cooperation between consuls and the local or national authorities.
2. Seafarers who are detained in a foreign port should be dealt with promptly under due process of law and with appropriate consular protection.
3. Whenever a seafarer is detained for any reason in the territory of a Member, the competent authority should, if he or she so requests, immediately inform the flag State and the State of nationality of the seafarer. The competent authority should promptly inform the seafarer of the right to make such a request. The State of nationality of the seafarer should promptly notify the seafarer's next of kin. The Member should allow consular officers of these States immediate access to the seafarer and regular visits thereafter so long as the seafarer is detained.
4. Every possible practical assistance should be given to seafarers stranded in foreign ports pending their repatriation.
5. In the event of delay in the repatriation of seafarers, the competent authority should ensure that the consular or local representative of the flag State is informed immediately.

6. Members should take measures, whenever necessary, to ensure the safety of seafarers from aggression and other unlawful acts while ships are in their territorial waters and especially in approaches to ports. (R.173P22)

7. Every effort should be made by those responsible in port and on board a ship to facilitate shore leave for seafarers as soon as possible after a ship's arrival in port.

Comment 33 (on Regulation 4.4)

1. *Regulation 4.4* addresses seafarers' access to onshore welfare facilities. It is part of a ratifying Member's duty to cooperate and provide onshore relief for seafarers, within the limits, of course, of port state requirements relating to seafarer identification and security matters.

2. The main concern of many Governments related to ensuring that the wording of the provisions refers to an obligation to promote the development of shore-based welfare facilities without importing any financial obligations to provide or establish these facilities.