



MGN 486 (M+F) Amendment 2

Maritime Labour Convention, 2006 and ILO Work in Fishing Convention 2007; Access to shore-based welfare facilities

Notice to all shipowners, fishing vessel owners, masters, skippers, seafarers and fishermen

This notice replaces MGN 486 Amendment 1

Summary

The Maritime Labour Convention, 2006 require 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 has been designated as the national seafarers' welfare board for the United Kingdom and is the umbrella charity for the welfare of seafarers (including fishermen) and their dependents in the UK, including supporting the Port Welfare Committees at local and regional levels, which promote welfare activities locally.

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

Amendment 2 highlights the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the MCA and the Merchant Navy Welfare Board, cementing the working relationship between the two organisations.

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 The Work in Fishing Convention, 2007 seeks to ensure decent living and working conditions for fishermen worldwide, including medical care ashore. Fishermen, particularly when they are away from home, should also have access to other shore-based welfare facilities and services. A Resolution was adopted by the General Conference of the International Labour Organisation on promotion of the welfare of fishermen at the same time as the Work in



Fishing Convention which highlighted - “the need to encourage member States to strongly ensure that fishers on fishing vessels in their ports are able to have access to fishers’ and seafarers’ welfare facilities;”

1.3 This Marine Guidance Notice sets out the arrangements in place in the UK and the support that MCA gives to welfare arrangements in the UK.

2. Merchant Navy Welfare Board

2.1 In May 2021 the MCA and The Merchant Navy Welfare Board signed a Memorandum of Understanding which designates the Merchant Navy Welfare Board as the national seafarers’ welfare board and is the umbrella charity for the maritime charity sector, promoting co-operation between organisations that provide welfare services to merchant seafarers, fishermen 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. Governed by its Council, which includes both its directors and trustees, the Board is made up of an equitable number of ship owners, maritime unions and voluntary organisation representatives to provide maritime sector wide coverage. MNWB also provides administrative welfare board support to the Falkland Islands.

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 an online training course for ship welfare visitors on MLC awareness, to the development of which the MCA contributed.

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, review and support welfare provision 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 national seafarers' welfare board, acts as an independent co-ordinator for the maritime charities in the United Kingdom and Gibraltar, and is responsible for all administrative aspects of welfare boards at a local and regional level.

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 14 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
- Shipowners (commonly represented by the shipping agents)

3.4 MCA is represented on welfare boards in accordance with 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 Group and supported international seafarers' welfare board projects managed by MNWB. The Chief Medical Adviser and Medical Administration Team have provided advice and support to the Seafarers' Hospital Society on projects to promote seafarer health.

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



More Information

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