



Kiribati Ship Registry

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MARINE CIRCULAR No. 20/2012

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TO : Ship Owners, Managers, Charterers, Ship Master and the Shipping Community

SUBJECT : International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Fishing Vessel Personnel, 1995 (STCW-F 1995)

This Circular is to notify the shipping community of the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Fishing Vessel Personnel, 1995 (STCW-F 1995), entering into force on 29 September 2012, 12 months after the required 15 ratifications were reached on 29 September 2011 and of which Kiribati is one of the signatories.

The STCW-F Convention sets the certification and minimum training requirements for crews of seagoing fishing vessels of 24 metres in length and above. It is the first to establish basic requirements on training, certification and watchkeeping for Fishing Vessel Personnel on an international level and prescribes minimum standards relating to training, certification and watchkeeping for Fishing Vessel Personnel, which countries are obliged to comply with.

Due to the many lives lost world-wide during fishing operations, the IMO recognises the need for a response to the safety crisis in the fishing industry and has a number of instruments addressing the issue. One of these instruments is the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Fishing Vessel Personnel (STCW-F Convention), which was adopted by IMO in 1995, and is expected to bring considerable benefits and advantages to the fishing industry i.e. improving the quality of education and training provided to personnel employed in fishing vessels; and enhancing the standard of training and safety in the fishing industry and fishing vessel fleets.

The STCW-F Convention will contribute to the reduction of casualties, and will go a long way to improve the present poor safety record of the global fishing industry. The STCW-F Convention will apply to crew onboard seagoing fishing vessels of 24 metres in length and above. It sets the regulatory framework for the training and certification of personnel employed on board fishing vessels with a view to improve the safety of life and property at sea in the fishing industry. This is the first attempt to establish international mandatory training standards for crew manning and operating fishing vessels and it is hoped that it will indeed have the desired impact and effect. However, it is important to note that the STCW-F Convention does not actually deal with the manning requirements for the fishing vessels, which will be determined by each country.

The STCW-F Convention is comparatively short and consists of 15 Articles and an annex containing technical regulations in four chapters as follow:

- (a) Chapter I - General Provisions;
- (b) Chapter II - Certification of Skippers, Officers, Engineer Officers and Radio Operators;

- (c) Chapter III - Basic safety training for all fishing vessel personnel; and
- (d) Chapter IV - Watchkeeping

As Kiribati is a Party to the STCW-F Convention, please ensure that the fishing vessels under Kiribati Flag are manned with Fishing Vessel Personnel duly certificated in accordance with the STCW-F Convention.

Yours sincerely,

Deputy Registrar
Kiribati Ship Registry