



Workshop Report

4th EMSA Workshop on the
"STCW Information System"

Lisbon, 4 November 2010

Report of the 4th EMSA workshop on the: "STCW Information System"

Background

In accordance with the EMSA founding Regulation (EC) N° 1406/2002 of the European Parliament and of the Council, as amended, the Agency has been tasked with the evaluation of the implementation of Community legislation relating to the education, training and certification of seafarers within the European Union.

In this context, EMSA has undertaken the development of an Information System related to maritime education, training and certification of seafarers (STCW-IS).

The STCW-IS was first proposed to Member States and to the Commission as a platform for information on maritime education, training and certification systems, both in the EU Member States and in the third countries that provide seafarers for the EU flagged fleet. However, because reliable information on the availability of certified seafarers at EU level is not obtainable elsewhere, it was agreed to widen the scope of the STCW-IS so that it could also produce harmonised and reliable statistics on potential seafarer supply.

The 22nd and 23rd meetings of the EMSA Administrative Board that took place on 20-21 November 2008 and 12 March 2009, approved the development of the STCW-IS in two phases, the first focused on information on maritime administrations and training institutions and the second on seafarer supply.

Workshop Objectives

The objective of the workshop was:

- 1) To present to the Member States the system developed under Phase one, and
- 2) To update the participants on the current status of the development of Phase two.

The workshop was attended by experts from 20 EU Member States and Norway. The European Commission also participated with two representatives (the participants' list is attached in Annex).

Workshop Programme

The workshop was chaired by the EMSA Unit for Safety Assessments & Inspections and followed the Agenda as attached in the Annex.

The workshop included three presentations:

- STCW-IS On-line presentation of Phase one of the system
- STCW-IS Data Extractor Technical Specification
- STCW-IS Live presentation of the Anonymisation module

The main topics discussed under each presentation are summarised below:

1. On-line presentation of Phase one of the STCW-IS

The following points were made:

- EMSA mentioned that Phase one is the result of collaboration between the Member States and the Agency and thanked the effort demonstrated until now by the Member States;
- EMSA reminded the participants that the objective of this part of the system is to provide generic information on maritime education, training and certification systems not only on Member States but, eventually also on Third Countries. Information on Third Countries will become available in the system as soon as an agreement will be reached with each individual country;
- After all the menus were presented, EMSA highlighted that not all information provided by the Member States will be made available for public consultation. Information submitted by the Member States on fraudulent certificates for instance is mostly confidential and only non-confidential information will be made available to the public;
- EMSA pointed out that although the system was thought to be updated annually, it can be updated at any time if the Member States wish to, by sending an e-mail to the STCW-IS e-mail address: stcw-is@emsa.europa.eu. The participants were also informed that a platform using a secure connection will be made available in the future so that Member States can access their own information, update it accordingly, and eventually validate it;
- EMSA assured the Member States representatives that only confirmed data will be made available to the public.

Suggestions were made regarding:

- The legislation menu, where a reference could also be inserted to the name of the listed legislative acts in the original language.
- An alternative approach for Member States to update their own information (besides e-mail contacts and a private access to the system through a secure connection and login) using an automatic process of data extraction at source (Member State's information systems) and of importing it to the STCW-IS.
- A way to inform the reader on the source of information.

2. Data Extractor Technical Specification

The following points were made:

- After presenting what fields of data EMSA would like to receive from the Member States seafarers registry systems, the Agency clarified that all fields of data containing special characters will be accepted as they are written in the national systems. However, EMSA strongly recommended Member States to extract the required information from the translated version into English or using the Roman characters and Arabic figures, as provided by Regulation I/2 of the STCW Convention;
- Since Member States have different ways of organising and registering information in their national systems a way had to be developed to allow harmonisation of data sent by different sources. Therefore, EMSA will receive data as it is originally registered in the national systems and will associate pre-defined internal codes of the STCW-IS to the values received in the fields from the Member States in the staging area;
- As far as the Seafarer's Unique Identifier is concerned, Member States should make an effort to choose a reliable identifier that can assure it is unique per seafarer so that different documents issued at national level to the same seafarer can be identified by EMSA. The Seafarer's Unique Identifier can be of any format as long as it is assured that it is unique;
- EMSA highlighted again that it is only interested in collecting data regarding issued certificates to Officers (deck and engineer) and Ratings (forming part of a navigational or an engine-room watch) under the main STCW Regulations;
- The extraction and transmission of data on certificates and endorsements from the national seafarers registry systems is an exercise to be conducted annually. The data related to certificates and endorsements issued to officers and ratings should be extracted every year and transmitted to EMSA during a specific period of time to be agreed with the Member States.
- Data transmitted in one year will, therefore, replace the data received in the previous year. Information will be kept for historical analysis so that trends can be identified;
- In the case of national systems where a mandatory field is missing (such as Seafarer's Given Name for instance), a 'space' character should be generated in this field during the extraction process.

The following was clarified:

- An 'Active Seafarer' is considered to be a seafarer holding a valid certificate;
- Where a national seafarers registry system keeps record of a single certificate (with a single number) issued to a specific seafarer entitling him/her to serve in more than one capacity and where each of these capacities have different limitations, an effort should be made to split the capacities and to generate one document for each capacity with its specific limitations in the extracted data. All these documents shall keep the same number.

Suggestions were made on the following:

- The date of issue and the date of expiry for Ratings' certificates (if available) should not be considered mandatory fields since there are Member States issuing these documents for life or not keeping records of such data;
- To save the data extracted from the national seafarers registry systems in the XML format because the XLS (XLSX) or CSV versions could be subject to changes over the coming years.

3. Live presentation of the Anonymisation module

The following points were made:

- The participants were reminded that EMSA, as a European Public Institution, is subject to the European data protection legislation and is entitled to hold and process information considered as being personal data. Nevertheless, due to the restrictive legislation of some Member States regarding the transmission of such data a solution was developed to ensure that data will be encrypted at source before it is transmitted to EMSA;
- EMSA clarified in addition that the original data and all documents identified as being invalid by the Anonymisation module and deleted from the list of documents extracted before anonymisation and transmission to EMSA will be Member States' property only. The Agency is neither interested to hold nor will in any way be able to have access to such information;
- EMSA pointed out that the anonymous data transmitted from the national systems will only be accessible to a restricted number of EMSA staff and will be used exclusively for statistical purposes. Therefore, EMSA has no way (not having access to the original data that is used for the generation of the encryption keys) and no interest whatsoever in reverting back to the original personal data.

Workshop Closing Remarks

The following points were made:

- Member States were in general positive to collaborate in feeding annually the system;
- Member States were reminded that the development of the system was unanimously approved by the EMSA Administrative Board Members;
- Member States attending the workshop which have not yet sent data for Phase one ensured that they will do it soon;
- EMSA thanked the presence of all participants and invited Member States to send additional views and remarks regarding the STCW-IS by e-mail to stcw-is@emsa.europa.eu;
- Member States were informed that the second phase of the STCW-IS will be able to start receiving data during the first few months of 2011 and those who are able to send data first were therefore invited to participate in a 'Pilot exercise'.

Follow-Up Activities

The next steps to be addressed were identified:

- The Draft Technical Specification for the data extractor to be amended in line with the proposals agreed during the workshop;
- The final Technical Specification for the data extractor, the Anonymisation module and the Anonymisation User Manual to be sent to the Member States as soon as possible;
- Member States that have not yet provided such information to send an e-mail to stcw-is@emsa.europa.eu providing details of a contact point concerning the STCW-IS matters.

Attachments

- (1) Workshop Agenda
- (2) List of participants

The workshop-related documents and presentations are also available on the EMSA website (www.emsa.europa.eu).

Agenda

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Lisbon, 4 November 2010

- 09h00 Registration
- 09h30 Opening of the Workshop and Welcome to the Participants
- 09h40 STCW team - updates to the Member States
Jaime Veiga
- 10h00 STCW-IS – Phase 1 (information on Maritime Administrations and MET Institutions) – On-line presentation
Mircea-Tinel Udrea / Margarida Martins
- 11h00 Coffee Break
- 11h30 STCW-IS Phase 1 – discussions (feedback from the Member States)
Mircea-Tinel Udrea
- 12h30 Lunch Break
- 14h00 STCW-IS Phase 2 (Seafarers Supply module) – Technical specifications for the 'Data extractor' to be developed by the Member States
Mircea-Tinel Udrea
- 15h00 STCW-IS Phase 2 – Anonymisation of personal data (Live presentation)
Mircea-Tinel Udrea
- 15h30 Coffee Break
- 16h00 Conclusions
- 16h30 Closing

Country	Name	First Name	Organisation
Belgium	Blomme	Patrick	Federal Public Service Mobility & Transport
Bulgaria	Anestiev	Valentin	Executive Agency Maritime Administration
Cyprus	Costakis	Costaras	Department of Merchant Shipping
Czech Republic	Marek	DLouhy	Ministry of Transport
Denmark	Arrias	Jette Bloch	Danish Maritime Authority
Estonia	Bogdanova	Ulvi	Estonian Maritime Administration
Finland	Tuomaala	Jukka	Finnish Transport Safety Agency
France	Busson	Olivier	Ministry of ecology, energy...and the sea
Germany	MacDonald	James	German Federal Maritime and Hydrographic Agency
Hungary	Komjathy	Zsolt	National Transport Authority
Italy	Cantoni	Serena	Ministry of Infrastructures and Transport
Lithuania	Vytautas	Braslauskas	Lithuanian Maritime Safety Administration
Malta	Ivan	Tabone	Merchant Shipping Directorate
Norway	Skogly	Arild	Norwegian Maritime Directorate
Poland	Piotrowska	Agnieszka	Ministry of Infrastructure
Portugal	Leitão	Carlota	IPTM
Portugal	Bispo	Paulo	IPTM
Romania	Pana	Ioan	Romanian Naval Authority
Slovenia	Prelaz	Lorna	Slovenian Maritime Administration
Slovenia	Bordon	Miran	Slovenian Maritime Administration
Spain	Astorga Vergara	Fernando	Dirección General de la Marina Mercante
Sweden	Bagge	Johan	Swedish Transport Agency
The Netherlands	Hassing	Sibrand	Ministry of Infrastructure and Environment
Commission	Mendola	Giovanni	European Commission
Commission	Rigas	Konstantinos	European Commission
EMSA	Veiga	Jaime	EMSA
EMSA	Udrea	Mircea	EMSA
EMSA	Hevia Rodriguez	Antonio	EMSA
EMSA	Martins	Margarida	EMSA