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Seafarers' social life and its effect on maritime safety with respect to Egyptian seafarers

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WORLD MARITIME UNIVERSITY

Malmö, Sweden

**SEAFARERS' SOCIAL LIFE AND ITS EFFECT
ON MARITIME SAFETY**

With respect to Egyptian seafarers

By

AHMED HAFEZ

Egypt

A dissertation to the World Maritime University in partial fulfillment of the
Requirements for the award of the degree of

MASTER OF SCIENCE

In

**MARITIME SAFETY AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION
(OPERATIONAL)**

1999

DECLARATION

I certify that all the material in this dissertation that is not my own work has been identified, and that no material is included for which a degree has previously been conferred on me.

The contents of this dissertation reflect my own personal views, and are not necessarily endorsed by the university.

..... (Signature)

..... (Date)

Supervised by:
Name: Prof. Günther Zade
Office: Vice-Rector / Academic Dean
World Maritime University

Assessor:
Name: Prof. Toshio Hikima
Office: Associate Professor
World Maritime University

Co-assessor:
Name: Mr. Åke Selander
Office: Visiting professor
World Maritime University

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

**IN THE NAME OF ALLAH THE MOST GRACIOUS,
THE MOST MERCIFUL**

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At the end to the memory of my father who put my foot on the right way.

ABSTRACT

Title of dissertation: **Seafarers' social life and its effect on maritime safety with respect to Egyptian seafarers**

Degree: **MSc**

The aim of this dissertation is to emphasize that the unstable social life of seafarers onboard ship or at home town can affect the safety of the ship, and to bring to mind that the seafaring profession needs a global approach to the improvement of seafarers' living and working conditions.

The second chapter describes **seafarers' social life** in two deferent aspects: onboard ship social life that affected by human relation, working and living conditions and home-town social life with the problems of job insecurity, family and shore alienation and the lack of social security.

The third chapter declares that occupational **stress, fatigue and job dissatisfaction** are of important concern for seafarers, shipping industry and work performance, because of their effects on seafarers' health and increased accident risks. The economic impact of these factors on the shipping industry is large and growing.

The role of the **International Labor Organization** to improve living and working conditions onboard ships, and to set standards of regulations aiming to ensure social security and reduce job uncertainty are examined in chapter four.

In chapter five an attempt to describe the **International Transport Workers Federation** activities has been made throughout the dissertation. It shows that the ITF is one of the maritime organizations that truly represent today's maritime workers.

The Egyptian seafarers' situation is highlighted in chapter six with an analysis to evaluate Egyptian work force, Egyptian fleet and ILO conventions ratified by Egypt. To prove that the ratified ILO conventions by Egypt are not enough for the benefit of Egyptian seafarers.

Finally, the concluding chapter establishes the importance of considering the improvement of living and working conditions as a global problem, in which the various factors affecting the physical and mental well being of the seafarers are inter-linked.

Keywords: Seafarers' social life, stress, fatigue, job dissatisfaction, ILO, ITF.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

FOC	Flag Of Convenience
ILC	International Labor Conference
ILO	International Labor Organization
IMO	International Maritime Organization
ITF	International Transport Workers' Federation
PSC	Port State Control
Rec.	Recommendation
SIRC	Seafarers International Research Center at Cardiff University Of Wales, UK
STCW	International convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers, 1978 as amended in 1995.
UNCLOS	United Nations Convention on the Law Of the Sea
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
WHO	World Health Organization

Chapter one

Introduction

The problem of ensuring the safety and health of seafarers has been for many years and still is a matter of concern to governments, ship owners and seafarers because of the particular dangers inherent in employment onboard ship. Despite the substantial progress that has been made in this field over the years, seafaring remains a risky occupation.

The dangers to which ship owners and government are exposed are financial or political in nature, but seafarers are exposed to physical risks, which threaten their very lives. In the first 6 months of 1996, 180 ships of more than 500 tons have been lost at sea, causing the death of 1200 seafarers and many passengers. Twice as many human lives were lost at sea in this period than in the whole 1995 (ILO magazine, 1999).

In addition, the properties of living and working condition onboard, family problems ashore and home alienation expose the individual to potential health risks and stress. Seafarer's social life is a complex life and it affects his work performance. Therefore, maritime countries have a moral international obligation to ensure that the world's seafarers enjoy adequate safety standards and decent human working conditions.

International maritime safety legislation deals with the ship, its structure, machinery and safety equipment, as well as the seafarers, their qualifications, training and health. As they remain the most vital element to the safe and efficient working of

any ship they are often blamed for what goes wrong onboard while they are the victims of management that ignores stressful conditions that could be eliminated.

Increased safety awareness and environmental protection depend not only on the qualification and training of the crew or on the high technology in ship construction and equipment, but more so on living and working conditions onboard and the health and well-being of the crew and their families.

The aim of this dissertation is to bring to attention the hard life of seafarers onboard ships and how much the majority of seafarers suffer as a result of poor living and working conditions onboard, and how their social life at home town could affect their mind. This dissertation is also to emphasize that the safety and health and the general living and working conditions are inter-linked in many ways, and the seafaring profession needs a global approach to the improvement of these conditions.

Chapter two describes seafarers' social life onboard ship as well as at home-town. Modern ships, more automation, prolonged stays at sea, reduction of crew, rapid changes in climate, continuous exposure to noise, vibration and heat, inadequate accommodation for private and common use, job insecurity and isolation from family lead to stress, fatigue and Job dissatisfaction.

In chapter three the author explains how seafarer's social life could affect the work performance and cause occupational accidents and diseases.

The author states that the national laws are obviously inadequate in shipping, which is an extra-national industry. So, the shipping industry was organized through a wide collection of international maritime organizations covering shipboard operation activities. Two of these organizations are especially concerned with the living and working conditions of seafarers. Chapter four covers the role of the International Labor Organization, while chapter five deals with the role of the International Transport-workers Federation.

An analysis of Egyptian seafarers work force, Egyptian fleet and ILO conventions ratified by Egypt is carried out in chapter six. In addition, an assessment of the status quo onboard Egyptian vessels was carried out through questionnaire for a sample of 100 Egyptian seafarers in order to test the influence of several factors on crew performance.

Chapter Two

Seafarers' social life

Social environment of the seafarers has two major components. One component deals with working and living conditions on ships and the other relates to his family away at home town. Both are inter-linked. Which one precedes the other is something like a chicken and egg problem.

Positive influence of these factors provides for higher productivity. Negative influence leads to decreased productivity and increases the risk of accidents and sicknesses. It is the main task of all those responsible for the well being of seafarers to reduce, and, ideally, eliminate as many negative factors as possible.

2.1 Seafarers' social life onboard ship

The ship for a seafarer is both his work and home place for the period of his occupational activity. Maritime vocation is not just a job, it is a way of life. From the moment of leaving the home-town the seafarer lives in a closed society with behavioral norms and social values different from those of the outside world. The seafarer experiences variable weather and climatic conditions, has a home that is a noisy metal body which vibrates and often is not a fixed base but one that is moved and tossed about by sudden movements. Ships are an extreme example of a structure that is isolated from the rest of the world.

2.1.1 Living conditions

In many places of the world there are ship owners who cut costs and lower safety, living and working conditions. They are still able to operate with relative impunity. They sail under flags belonging to FOC or developing countries. Most of these vessels have a poor track record and it is invariably the crews who suffer. Those

conditions would not exist if the flag states verified the conditions of the ship, or if they verified the financial status of the companies.

Lewis (1996) has drawn attention to the fact that living conditions on ships can be deplorable, “When the freighter Dumbravenin collided in the port of Hamburg with the freighter Venlo, no one was surprised to learn that the Captain was drunk. Nor that he had been fighting with two of his officers and would subsequently be charged with criminal offenses. What really shocked officials climbing onboard the detained vessel was the pitiful state of the crew. There were cockroaches in the kitchen. The refrigerator contained rotten meat. The crew had not been paid for several months, and one of their members had fallen ill with malaria”.

2.1.1.1 Daily life of seafarers

The daily life of seafarers as described by Chapman (1992) is boring and routine. During a typical four-hour shift, the navigating officer has normally little to do, while the engineer has to do no more than watch the dials. Deck ratings spend day after day chipping paint and repainting. Periods of work are followed by periods of rest, the rhythm is repeated for days and months. In the same time, as a result of reducing staffing levels, the boredom and routine may alternate with work overload, especially on shorter voyages.

Even when ship docked in port does not offer relief. The work routine continues, loading and unloading, stores, repairs and attending to paper work and formalities. With only few hours in a port, the seafarers often have time to do no more for themselves than make a phone calls.

Sherar (1972, 10) points out the differences between life onboard ship and life ashore, onboard ship during the working off-hours, there are only a few places to go to. The decks, mess room or another seafarer’s cabin, physical space is limited from stem to stern and from port to starboard. In addition, social interaction is restricted to fellow shipmates, regardless whether they are personal friends or not.

Furthermore, in most ships one's privacy must also be shared with a cabin mate. In comparing with people who live ashore and work five days a week, with the option of taking a day off if needed to escape from the physical boundaries of home or office. In conclusion, shore people can control their living and working conditions, but seafarers can not.

2.1.1.2 Accommodation and nutrition

The Director General of ILO (1987) declares that “ It has been widely recognized that the quality of accommodation provided for seafarers onboard ship is a primary element of their well-being. And that the quality, quantity and variety of food, and the manner in which it is prepared and served, have a direct bearing on the health of the crew and thus on their efficiency “

a) Accommodation

Just as the body requires an adequate and balanced diet to reconstitute the energy reserves that have been expended, it also needs adequate rest to overcome accumulated fatigue. To have its full effect, rest should be taken in an environment with noise level and temperature that permit total relaxation. The housing is considered as a major factor in recovery from work fatigue.

Noise, vibration, unclean accommodation, high or low temperature considered as obstacle to sleep and also a factor of nervous stress that disturbs sleep, the problem is even more acute for seafarers on night duty.

b) Nutrition

Nutrition is particularly important both generally and in relation to work. Good nutrition not only contributes to the greater welfare and happiness of people but also enables people to work and produce more. Poor nutrition does restrain productivity, not only in the conventional narrow sense, but also as a result of

increased absenteeism, lowered resistance to disease, lethargy and lack of drive. It is logic to understand that if the calorie intake does not match the work energy expenditure, the number of actual working hours will be reduced. Acute under-nutrition is an insidious factor in the causes of occupational accidents, and has been classified among the factors which may cause fatigue and lessen concentration (Parker, 1997).

Food composition is another factor to be considered. Food must not just provide the energy required for physical activity, it must also be correctly balanced. The human "machine" can not produce more than is permitted by the energy input.

The subject of food and catering for the crew onboard ship is handled in different ways in different countries. The legislative provisions on the subject vary from extremely detailed regulations giving a minimum list of items to be carried, and specifications regarding the quantity and the quality of each item, to a general statement to the effect that the ship owner shall provide the seafarers with free food, or subsistence consistent with good maritime practice. In some cases there may be provision for different ration schedules according to such factors as whether the voyage will take place in a cold or a hot climate, or to the different religious practices of the crew members. In some instances the subject of food is dealt with collective agreements. In most of this agreements rations are specified in details, other agreements are less specific, merely stating that the employer shall provide adequate supplies of good, nourishing and tasty food. Other agreements provide for the payment of a daily provision fee for each crew member.

The lack of efficient catering staff in some ships demonstrates a poor knowledge of the beneficial effects that improved nutrition can have on seafarers' productivity and even behavior. Many of the problems onboard ships are caused by bad quality nutrition. Each owner should make an adequate effort to ensure quality and quantity of nutrition and also provide additional calorie intake between meals. This will enhance productivity, increase working capacity and will improve seafarers health status.

2.1.1.3 Communication

Communication has assumed major significance since the last decade and more so in view of the "mechanized" lifestyle and limited time available to share views. Communication amongst human beings should not be considered as simple. Every human being is full of enormous experiences. This leads to varied interpretation of spoken or written words. The problem becomes manifold when the working group is multi-national.

Good communication is essential for safe and efficient ship operation, this issue has always been important but, has become even more so as the new global labor market for seafarers has produced multi-national crews of varying composition. Seafarers are well prepared for the routines and duties onboard ship and they understand the importance of communication when working together in close contact. The common argument is that the multi-national crews are not considered a bad thing, because, after all, many ships are manned that way without an apparent threat to marine safety. Furthermore, only a very small proportion of serious or fatal accidents at sea can be attributed to language deficiencies (Schroeder, 1999, 80).

On the other hand, communication is a very important factor affecting the social life onboard ship. Good communication is essential for a good social climate and individuals satisfaction, and also excludes a feeling of alienation as part of an individual or groups. Difficulties in communicating with other crew members easily, or in establishing relationships with them may cause isolation. Isolation results in mental alterations and abnormal behavior, which may have undesirable consequences. Its for every ship or more precisely every shipping company to observe these details while employing people onboard.

2.1.1.4 Welfare

The question of seafarers' welfare at sea and in port constitutes a separate item. The seafarer expects, as part of the conditions of his employment, adequate welfare facilities catering for his special needs and those of his family. The Director General of ILO In his report (1987) indicates that "it is important to recall that the needs of seafarers are changing as a result of longer periods at sea and shorter stays in port, smaller crews and the movement of many major port areas away from city centers to remote berths and terminals, among other factors".

Responsibility for the welfare of the individual officer or rating beyond the voyage is often uncertain or just not allocated. In the case of obvious emergencies many companies operate policies through which a man may be flown home or helped in all kind of various ways if he gets into trouble. But the seafarer, whether officer or rating, whose problem have not yet reached the point of crisis, may find no one onboard ship with whom his problem can be discussed or explored (Hill, 1972, 66).

While many owners provide excellent facilities onboard their ships, many do not, leaving such matters to the ingenuity of the crews themselves. The presence or absence of recreational facilities must be stressed in this connection that the massage is often more important than the usage of the facility itself. The existence of a recreation room or a hobby room may be felt to be an important demonstration of concern by the owner. Similarly, the ability to bring wives onboard for certain time will be appreciated

2.1.2 Working conditions

In the recent years there has been almost a continual stream of new technological inventions, available to the mariners, making ships faster and safer, so the problems faced in seafaring are not as such as they were in the past. Moreover

the working conditions for crew members onboard the ship have changed considerably over the past decades so far as physical work is concerned. Consequently there has been a shift from physical to mental and psychological stress situations.

The vessels are being improved in many respects and the working ways and means onboard are also changing. The technical progress in shipping, the mechanization of cargo handling and the computerization, as well as the constantly growing ship operation coasts, initiated a trend to limit the number of crew on modern ships. More automation onboard means smaller crews this often leads to more working hours while onboard, which in turn are compensated for by longer leave periods ashore. The rhythm of the traffic gets more hectic and so does the work. The responsibilities of the crew members also increased in such conditions, when a small mistake by any one onboard can lead to a great catastrophe (Clerc, 1995, 101-103).

Long working hours, non existent or inadequate rest, repetitive tasks, exhaustion caused by heavy physical work, a hostile environment, fatigue and premature aging caused by a fast work pace and the need for instance vigilance, are bad working conditions, which adversely affect seafarer's health, equilibrium and, consequently, productivity. Bad working conditions not only cause occupational accidents and diseases, but they are also the sources of tension, fatigue and dissatisfaction leading to poor health, high absenteeism, rapid seafarers turnover and reduced productivity.

2.1.2.1 Work place

As explained by Zakaria (1994) seafaring is a typical international activity and most of the health problems of the people employed on ships in many countries are similar if actually not the same, relating to the working conditions on ships. The duties of the master, officers on watch keeping duties, are counted as mental-strain-jobs. Engine room personnel and catering staff under go whenever occupied

an extra burden. Deck personnel has working conditions tense in ports during loading and discharging. The seafarers work onboard ships on cold areas or hot areas exposed to severe climatic conditions. Voyages during extreme rough sea have their own hazards. An alarming situation arises when the ship rolls and pitches, disturbing not only routine work and sleep but also chances to have accidents are increased as well. Engine room crew remains under the effect of a high level of noise and vibrations, which cause occupational mental strain. In addition, danger arises from handling oil and grease.

A more human approach to work is essential. It is not accepted that man's most treasured possessions, health, physical integrity and even his life aptitudes, professional skills, and dignity, should be endangered by his employment. As well as providing for the necessities of life, work should offer a means of personal achievement. Working conditions are not a closed system isolated from the general environment in which they are located.

2.1.2.2 Working hours

The level of hours of work and the way these hours are organized can significantly affect not only the quality of working life but also the quality of life in general. They can influence the health of the seafarer, safety at work, the degree of strain and fatigue, the level of earnings, the amount of free time available and social life of the seafarer.

At sea, the eight hours off spaced by four-hour watch, and then another eight hours off, constitutes a man's life. It is in the hours off that all else must be done: sleep, personal matters, recreation, relaxation, house keeping and any other activities. Seafaring as described by Sherar (1973) is a seven-day job.

The complement to work is rest, and the complement to working time is time for rest, for seafarers' safety, health and well being, it is essential to arrange hours of work so as to provide adequate periods of rest, short breaks during working hours, longer breaks for meals, daily or nightly rest and weekly rest.

2.1.2.3 Wages

The factors determining whether someone chooses seafaring as a career differ from one to the other and from country to country. Economic reason is one of these factors. Most of seafarers are at sea for economic reasons. Their livelihood depends upon their success in their occupation.

When pay is seen as fair based on job demands, individual skill level and community pay standards, satisfaction is likely to result. The key issue in linking pay to satisfaction is the perception of fairness. But, when the pay is not on a fair basis, the seafarers will strive to increase their wages, and this may endanger their safety and health. Danger money is the higher rates for over time that may encourage seafarers to ignore the hazards to which they may be exposed.

In recent years, there has been a noticeable tendency in pay negotiations for employers to attempt to keep a tighter control upon basic wages, compromising instead on over time and leave conditions. Owing to seagoing labor surplus in some countries in national fleets, seafarers have had to accept lower wages, longer working hours, shorter holidays and leave at less frequent intervals, simply to keep their jobs (Clerc, 1985).

2.1.3 Human relation

Human relation as defined by Dubrin, (1988), is “The art and practice of using systematic knowledge about human behavior to achieve organizational and personal objectives”. Each human being is a unique individual and normally, no two people are exactly alike physically and mentally. A personal environmental and culture background influences every person. Therefore, forming a group of people from different cultures attitudes and beliefs in social, religious and political aspects

who are then expected to live and work together can produce a lot of problems unless these people are prepared for their new multi-culture lifestyle.

The human relation concept is based on knowledge that the character of social relationships at work has a deep effect on employee performance. Consequently, having friendly and supportive co-workers leads to increased job satisfaction (Mottram, 1998). The satisfaction of social needs in face to face co-operative relationships with fellow seafarers should become a prime goal of the management, as it likely to increase productivity.

Seafarers are people who work on ships, who travel regularly at sea. These people have the ability to develop in a highly skilled way an ability to make a quick, easy, jovial temporary relationship with those with whom they sail and they value highly the ability to act out more negative feelings by constantly changing ships or companies.

During the voyage the seafarers are very much cooped up with themselves day in and day out. The relationship tends to be kept at a reasonably friendly level, since the seafarers have to work, eat and relax with each others. And even more, and because the sea life is a close society, if they have got something bothering them, they can contain themselves. Most men at sea seem to develop considerable social skill in managing to keep relationships just at a level where tension can be contained.

The relationship between shipmates, however companionable, has its limitations. The dedicated seafarer recognizes this and accepts it. It is comparatively rare for groups of seafarers to seek to remain together for voyage after voyage. For the majority the relationship between shipmates is recognized as being easy going, valued while it lasts but is essentially temporary. In contrast, Hill (1972) believes that, many seafarers come to find their relationships with their fellows on shore increasingly difficult to lack something that they find at sea, they prefer the companionship of their shipmates with whom they feel at least a common bond. Seafarers themselves often stress the value of the mutually supportive

comradeship that exists at sea and give all kind of instances of how this differs from the relation between other men, even work mates ashore. Seafarers have a commonality, they share the same destiny. They have one love, one enemy and they have one home. The sea is their love, while the weather is their enemy and the ship is their home.

The quality of relationship onboard becomes extremely important both horizontally between shipmates, and vertically between officers of different seniority and, particularly, between officers and ratings. But still, the aspects of the hierarchy onboard shall be considered, and the vertical relations that results from it, especially those between ratings and officers. This relationship comes in for sustained criticism, particularly by ratings. Complaints, says Hill (1972), are made about all the minor ways which officer's facilities differ from those given to ratings and particularly focus of resentment is the deferential nutrition quality issue. Officers do not hold these kinds of views with the same strength. Although some do feel that the social distance between them and ratings is exaggerated and express the view either that officer/ratings friendships should be encouraged rather than actively discouraged or that ratings need to be treated with greater sympathy and understanding. On the other hand, officers are also aware of the difficulties in exercising authority over and maintaining discipline with men with whom they have to live in close proximity and without having the kind of authority that exists in a military unit.

"Every ship has its own splice" is an old saying, it means that each ship is a reflection of the "old man", or each ship is operated differently, according to the working philosophy and habits of the captain (Sherar, 1973). The way in which the captain of the ship performs his task is universally held to be particularly important and the view is frequently expressed by all ranks that a captain can make or break a ship. It is also universally agreed among seafarers that the captain can be either very good or very bad. In general the good captain is perceived as one who is not manifestly disturbed in his behavior, and is able to maintain with sensitivity exactly the right balance between firmness and discipline, on the one hand, and friendliness and approachability, on the other hand. The position of the captain

still requires from him a measure of detachment. And that the sea can still be dangerous and circumstances can arise when a group of men can find themselves in isolation and danger and needing a strength of leadership different from that which they might need in any comparable circumstance ashore.

The essential point is that the needs and stresses of the individual seafarer, whether officer or rating, tend to get lost between those that see him too little and those that see him too much. The seafarer, by this contrast, has to maintain a level of reticence about his personal affairs. It is often said that by his nature the seafarer will always grumble no matter what the circumstances. Nevertheless, individual companies have made determined effort to break down the barriers between officers and ratings, ship and shore. These attempts have been appreciated by those at sea.

2.2 Seafarers' social life at home town

A seafarer might belong to a vulnerable category of people, have family or health problems, have difficulties with community or be faced with financial worries in addition to his work problems. Beyond the work place, stress factors are linked to the seafarers' home life, family and civil responsibilities. Such factors may interact positively or negatively with stressful elements of the work environment and thereby affect the over all job quality, satisfaction and productivity.

2.2.1. Getting a job

Finding a job is one of the major problems facing seafarers after every vacation. Seafarers sign on for a specific voyage or for a specific length of time and have no guarantee of another job when the voyage is over. By contrast, employees in shore-based jobs can look forward to the possibility of years or even lifetimes of steady employment with one company. Some shipping companies have objected

to the constant turnover and have instituted a system of crew continuity so they can count on having the same work force.

Seafarers, especially those from the developing countries, are unemployed when their contracts are over. They can not expect to return to the same ship in the same position. Many must start a job search all over again. And because the waiting periods between jobs are often long, during the idle time, they have to stretch their income, and during the months when they are under articles, they have to try to save in anticipation of the long months of unemployment. Most overseas workers are unable to accumulate the capital they need, forcing them to borrow between jobs against expected earnings. Many seafarers are economic hostages to a life at sea.

Recruitment methods cause seafarers great difficulties. When seafarers are in demand, recruiters generally offer decent terms, when there are more seafarers than jobs, recruiters tend to take advantage of the seafarers who are available. What choices do seafarers have when they are in direct competition with other seafarers willing, for the sake of a job, to accept poor terms. Finding a job is both difficult and expensive.

The worst abuse a recruiting agent can perpetrate is as Chapman (1992) points out, to send a worker to a job that does not exist. Seafarers arrive in a foreign port with documents, telexes supposedly from ship owners, and a letter of agreement only to discover that the agreement is fiction. And even more common abuse is to promise seafarers non-existent terms of employment.

2.2.2 Family problems and shore alienation

Separation from family and community is another ongoing cause of stress for seafarers, and most experience free-floating anxiety about life at home. On average, the contract on oceangoing vessels is for a longer period of time now than it was in the recent past. Long term contract making family, community and

interpersonal life impossible. It is not simply that a seafarer goes away and comes home again, but when he is away he is completely absent and often available, even in an extreme emergency. All the odds are against the seafarer: time, distance, the months of separation, the loss of contact and the loss of communication (Sherar, 1973). These experiences are foreign to the shore side people and represent an alternation between to equally extremes.

In his book about the seafaring career Hill (1973) mentions how a wife of a seafarer describes her husband presence and absence as “ we are never on an even keel. He comes home it is all joy and a holiday atmosphere and then he goes away and it’s all doom and gloom, until he comes again”

A common device is for the seafarer to keep his home life and his ship life in two compartments inside himself so as not to experience an intolerable conflict between the two. For this reason some seafarers are, while onboard, reticent about talking about their families to others. Coming towards home at the end of the voyage it is not so easy to keep up the separation and the resultant tension and irritability.

As time goes on the seafarer feels increasingly cut off from his friends, possibly they are married and have a new life. While, he has not, they have become more absorbed in their own affairs. He becomes aware of an increasing sense of alienation from his shore side fellows and often on a long leave quickly gets itchy feet and wants to go back to sea again, a seaman ashore is like a fish out of water.

Once a seafarer does get married, the strains on his wife can be considerable, especially if she is unsupported in bearing them. The young wife finds herself lonely, isolated, wanting her husband, having to tolerate long absence and perhaps above all the uncertainty of leave. Early marriage is in this way subject to strains that are intolerable. Regular short trips often help, as does also the ability of taking the wife on a voyage. Officers occasionally invite their wives to accompany them, but working wives often can not afford the time, others with children make it impossible, and some find the time at sea so boring that they prefer to remain at home (Fricke, 1972).

With the arrival of children, the wife as a mother has to cope with quite new responsibilities, often entirely on her own, or is put into a position in which she has increasingly to rely on relatives, rather than her husband. The seafaring husband may feel guilty that he is evading his duties, not able to nurture his children or offer support during a family crisis cause serious stress.

A severe impact on the seafarer occurs when his children grow and may not recognize him, shrink from him in terror or at the end of the leave plead with him not to return to the sea. As the children grow older, it may also become apparent that they need a father, particularly in case of growing boys, and the attempt suddenly to take over authority in the relatively brief period of a leave and then drop it again may not always be successful or in the child's best interests.

When seafarers are away for long times, the family learns to function without them. Their role at home is unclear and they feel awkward. Having suffered from homesickness while on board, they soon look forward to returning to the ship, where their role is well defined and necessary. The seafarer feels stranger when he comes ashore, the life has gone on without him and it's not going to stop to fit him into it, when he comes ashore it is vacation time for him and nobody else. Often this is a part of loneliness of seafarers

2.2.3 Social security

The working and living conditions of seafarers are different from those of shore workers. In addition to the risks to which all persons are exposed, there are a number of other specific maritime risks against which seafarers must be protected.

Social security as defined by Higuchi is:

"A set of organized measures furnished by society to its members in prescribed contingencies or circumstances. The purpose of which is, as far as possible, to prevent the occurrence of contingencies involving a

suspensions, loss or substantial reduction of income, and when they do occur, to provide benefits in cash and kind against the consequences of those contingencies and facilitate the victim's physical and vocational rehabilitation. It is also to provide benefits for the maintenance of children" (ILO, 1983, 61)

During the past decade the social security protection of seafarers has developed in a number of industrialized and developing countries (ILO, 1987).

National social security schemes in some countries are increasingly extending their coverage to seafarers, and their dependents, giving them protection either of a general nature or in respect of particular contingencies. Even so, ship owners' liability, the traditional source of protection of a seafarer who falls sick or injured, remains an important element in the social protection of seafarers. Especially as regards a sick or injured seafarer that is landed in a foreign country, and more generally, as regards seafarers employed in some developing countries where social maritime security is not applicable for seafarers.

Many seafarers find themselves deprived of protection either completely or in respect of certain contingencies during intervals between periods of employment at sea, which are not covered by a contract of employment. In addition, the growing number of seafarers on vessels registered in countries other than their own has given rise to another variety of problems in social security coverage.

Chapter three

The impact of seafarers' social life on work performance.

In the ship community which is completely self reliant, an independent society, the seafarer finds himself facing a completely different world with abnormal life style, working conditions and relationships. All these differences may contribute to create stress, fatigue and dissatisfaction. Serious illness often results from the stress of dealing with contract problems, inter-culture conflicts, difficult and sometimes dangerous living and working conditions, job insecurity, and separation from family and community.

As Cox (1996,176), points out, one of the outcomes of a failed work system may be the experience of stress and fatigue by some or all of those involved with that system, it has been widely and repeatedly suggested that work-related stress or fatigue and behavior correlate, may threaten availability for work, safety awareness and effectiveness of work behavior, the quality of working life and both psychological and physical health.

3.1 Stress

In a study by ILO (1992, 3-5), indicates that stress is becoming an increasingly global phenomenon affecting all countries, all work places and categories of workers, families and society in general. The cost of stress for the individual, for industry and for society is large and growing. Therefore, there is now much greater awareness about the need to compete stress in effective and innovative ways.

When people are faced with demands from others or from the physical or psychosocial environment to which they feel unable to respond adequately, a response of the organism is activated to cope with the situation. The nature of this response will depend upon a combination of different elements, including the extent of the demand, the personal characteristics and coping resources of the person, the constraints on the person in trying to cope and the support received from the others.

As defined by Dubrin (1988,121), "Stress is a mental and physical condition that results from a perceived threat or demand that can not be dealt with readily".

ILO has attempted a definition suggested that psycho-social hazards are those which relate to the interaction among job contents, work organization, management system, environmental and organizational conditions, on one hand, and workers' competencies and needs on the other (Clerc 1985, 87).

The discrepancy that exists between the level of demands and the person's ability to cope (personal resources) is an important factor in determining the experience of stress. The existence of stress is often signaled to the person through the experience of negative emotion-unpleasantness and distress. A classic stressful situation would involve work demands which are not well matched to the knowledge of workers or their needs, especially where those workers have little control over work and receive little support at work. Included among the stressful psychosocial factors are the physical environment, some aspect of work organization and the system of work, especially the quality of human relation with the work society. Increasing with one another, these factors affect the psychological climate in the working place as well as the physical and mental health of the workers. Under normal circumstances persons should be able, by activating their reaction mechanisms, to find new balances and responses to new situations. But, if the stress is intense, continuous or repeated, if the person is unable to cope or if support is lacking, then the stress leading to physical illness and psychological disorders.

Dubrin (1988, 122), has drawn attention to the fact that stress is often associated with strain. The two terms differ in an important way. Stress is your response to a force that upsets your equilibrium, while, strain is the adverse effect of stress on an individual's mind, body and actions. Job stress is almost inevitable. The right amount and type of stress enhance performance and personal welfare. Too much stress, or any stress from the wrong type of stresses, leads to distress, which lowers satisfaction and performance.

3.1.1 Different types of stress

There are two different types of stress;

1- Positive stress

Is a positive force in our lives that is the equivalent of finding excitement and challenge.

2- Negative stress

Wrong amount or type of stress, which results in negative outcomes for the individual and the organization.

3.1.2 Causes of stress

Negative stress has many causes. Some of these are to be found in an unsatisfactory fit between the individual and the physical environment. Causes of Stresses of this type related to noise, odorous, illumination, temperature, humidity, vibrations, crowding and dangerous substances, machine and tools. Primarily the relation between individuals and their psychosocial environment generates other stresses. These can depend on the level autonomy and responsibility, the load of activities, the arrangement of working time, the relation with the other individuals and communities (Dubrin, 1988, 185).

In the profession of seafaring the physical and mental load has been considered high. Both the work and living conditions contain many potential stress factors. The most serious problems of seafarers' work conditions are noise and vibration.

In addition, rough seas may cause both functional and health disturbances. The climatic conditions onboard are often poor in both hot and cold climates with extreme changes in humidity and temperature. Onboard, living is restricted in terms of both leisure- time activities and social contacts. Moreover, seafarers are separated from society and families for long periods of time.

The Scandinavian Journal of Work, Environment and Health (1985, 427-432), publishes a study carried out by Elo concerning health and stress of seafarers onboard Finnish merchant fleet. The study declares that the seafarer is more subject to mental health disturbances than the general population. In addition, mental health problems may have more serious consequences onboard ship than elsewhere. The study indicates that the seafarer experienced a relatively great amount of stress, and it varied between the occupational groups. Furthermore, the study shows that the stress factors are varied, some of the seafarers experienced work related factors such as noise, temperature, humidity, rough sea, unfairness of the distribution of work, and fast work pace. While, others faced with personality stress factor as worry concerning loved ones on shore, insecurity employment and social climate between ship mates.

In a survey of the health, stress and fatigue of Australian seafarers, carried out by research team from the School of Human Movement Studies at the Queensland University of Technology (1997), specifies the sources of occupational stress for the a maritime sample and for occupational group 'table 1'

Table 1

Variable	Masters/ Mates	Engineers	Crew
Hardship at sea	12.5	17.8	15.7
Weather	7.3	7.1	7.1
Missing home	13.4	13.3	13.4
Broken rest	12.7	14.2	11.8
Long working-hours	12.4	12.3	11.8

"Source: School of Human Movement Studies at Queensland University, 1997, 78"

Definitions of the measures identified under sources of occupational stress as defined by the research team as follow

- Hardship at sea means excessive noise, hot working environment, inadequate lighting, and high level of humidity.
- Weather means excessive gales, bad weather.
- Missing home means being away from home for extended periods, concern for loved ones ashore, insufficient time with family.
- Broken rest means being woken unexpectedly from sleep, unpredictable working hours, and being on call during rest breaks.
- Long working hours means long working hours, inadequate rest during trips, and inadequate rest between shifts and watches.

3.1.3 The effects of stress

The experience of stress can detrimentally affect the way a person feels, thinks and behaves. The effects of stress may be expressed in various ways through feeling of distress, increased irritability, poor decision-making, excessive smoking and drinking, poor diet, impaired sleep and sexual behavior (these two being particularly sensitive to stress and anxiety), inadequate exercise and an inability to relax, stress may also produce changes in physiological function.

As mentioned by ILO (1992, 3-5), from early disorders to real illness, the harmful consequences of stress cover a broad range from chronic fatigue to depression, by way of insomnia, anxiety, migraines emotional upsets, stomach ulcers, allergies, skin disorders, lumbago and rheumatic attacks, tobacco and alcohol abuse, and

can culminate in the most serious consequences of all in the form of heart attacks, accidents and even suicides.

In an article by The Sea newspaper (1999, 5), depression is quite a common disease of the nervous system and seafarers are more prone to it than people who work ashore. It is marked by mood changes and periods of spontaneous recovery, but has a tendency to recur. The forms of disease explained in the article as follows:

The disease comes in two forms. In the first, a sense of general unhappiness may be combined with emotional emptiness, apathy and inertia. Anxiety is a common symptom, often accompanied by an inability to sleep. Most dangerous are suicidal feelings. The second form is marked by phases of depression and mania. In the latter, exaggerated general feelings are common, as are accelerated thinking and intensified activity.

3.1.4 Human behavior under stress.

Predicting people's behavior under stress has been a prime concern of psychologists. While there is no reliable formula for exactly predicting what any one person will do, general principle can be described (Dubrin, 1988, 186).

In a situation of severe stress, the person will attempt to escape from that situation, become aggressive or "freeze". While in less stressful situations, the person will decide on their main task and focus and concentrate on it. In some cases the person may defend against admitting the stressful problem. This will prevent dealing with the situation. On the other hand, some people will react to stressful challenge by simply working harder and longer until they are eventually exhausted. They attempt to maintain performance against increasing demands by increasing their effort.

Consequently, the person reacts will depend on a number of factors, such as whether they work as a part of a team, how committed they are to their social group and organization, and how they are managed.

3.1.5 Stress and job performance.

An optimum amount of stress exists for most people and most tasks, job performance tends to be best at low and moderate amounts of ordinary stress. When exposed to too much stress, people become temporarily ineffective because they become distracted

Figure 1 shows the relation between work performance and stress.

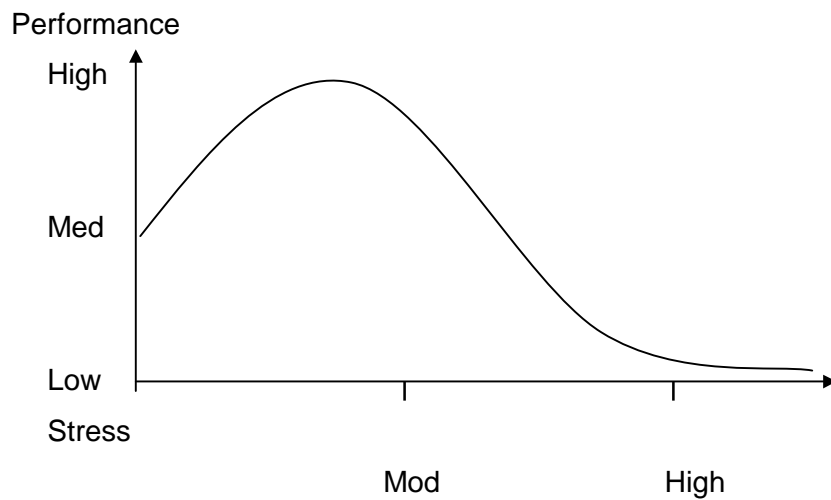


Figure 1 "Source: Dubrin, 1988, 127"

Performance is generally best at low and moderate level of stress. Whereas, it declines as stress becomes too intense.

3.1.6 Harm to the organization.

If key workers or significant numbers of workers experience and express the effects of stress at work, the problem assumes organization proportions. The possible effects of stress of more direct concern to organizations appear to be the following:

- 1- Reduced availability for work, absenteeism and poor time-keeping - all essential escape strategies.
- 2- Impaired work performance and productivity (quantity and quality).
- 3- Increased unsafe behavior, near-miss and accident rates.
- 4- Increase in complaints from food or nature of work.

3.2 Fatigue

Only recently has it been appreciated that fatigue is a multi-factorial problem. Previously, it was linked only to physical exertion, but the various forms of mental fatigue are now also recognized and there is a growing realization that physical and mental fatigue are frequently linked.

Fatigue is difficult to define. In general, it may be described as the results of effort exceeding the individual's limits of resistance and consequently demanding a period of recovery in the form of a break or, in severe cases, complete rest (Clerc, 1985).

In a workshop held by the Seafarers International Research Center (SIRC) for Safety and Occupational Health (1997, sec 4), fatigue described as "Acute or chronic and encompasses tiredness, depression, sleepiness, stress, sleep quality,

disturbed circadian rhythms and boredom". It can be experienced even when the fatigued individual appears to be performing normally.

Acute fatigue can be relieved by a period of rest or sleep. This type of fatigue is usually the result of excessive mental or physical activity. It can occur in a matter of hours. Chronic fatigue usually happens over a period of time when the sleeping period become insufficient to restore the individual's working performance to its normal and usual level.

3.2.1 Causes of fatigue

In today's shipping crews have become smaller and more multi-cultural with recruitment taking place overseas. Some of these crews have been of uncertain quality with poor level of education and training. This places a burden on senior officers who are reluctant to delegate tasks. In the same time, this kind of crews find themselves under pressure to cope with job requirements. There have been some onboard organizational changes, which may offset reduced crewing. One of these changes is the move away from strict departmental manning to a more flexible work force. All these aspects of working conditions considered as an increase of work-load which cause fatigue.

There are another aspects of living conditions, which may potentially contribute to fatigue and consequently to accidents, high levels of noise and vibration, High or low temperature inside the accommodation, fumes from cargoes and engine exhaust. All these aspects affect the quality of sleep and rest of seafarers. In addition, the long periods of absence from families, delays in relieve after service and financial problems (SIRC, 1997, sec 3).

As mentioned by Zakaria (1994, 112, 113), fatigue is not the simple physico-chemical phenomenon in a nerve-muscle preparation, psychological factors such as boredom, lack of incentives to work and the presence of opportunities for divided attention may reduce the worker's efficiency and must therefore be

recognized. Fatigue could be physical as a result of static or dynamic muscular effort (work-load) or mental as a result of extended hours of concentration or vigilance (work-pace), and the two forms may be cumulative. The sensation of fatigue may be influenced by environmental factors or by the worker's motivation or lack of it.

Fatigue may be induced by factors such as

- * Prolonged periods of mental or physical activity,
- * Inadequate rest,
- * Adverse environmental factors as noisy atmosphere,
- * Physiological factors, and stress, poor interpersonal relationship and other physiological factors (Zakaria, 1994).

Fatigue is not a problem to which a quick fix can be applied. Fatigue problems can not be solving simply by limiting the number of hours that can be worked in a day. Acute fatigue can be caused by not getting enough sleep.

3.2.2 Fatigue and job performance

Fatigue and stress are significant safety concerns aboard ships, because fatigue lowers levels of vigilance, inhibits concentration, increases reaction time and dulls muscular reflexes, it may be a major in accident causation and should therefore be seriously considered in the implementation of safety and health measures (Stevenson, 1995).

The prevention of fatigue requires a careful assessment of such factors as the type and intensity of the physical effort, the ergonomic features of machinery, air temperature and humidity, lighting, noise and vibration levels, work organization, the psychological climate, and so forth. Making a correct allowance for these factors may not only reduce fatigue but also directly affect the output of man-machine system (production and productivity), accident frequency and severity, seafarers health status, absenteeism, seafarers turn over and last but not least, the function of the enterprise and the national economy as a whole.

It is difficult to measure fatigue as declares by SIRC (1997, sec 4), because fatigued people do not necessarily have a performance deficit that is measurable, as a result it can be experienced much earlier than it can be measured. Responsible individuals will carry on performing their tasks because they do not want to let themselves or their colleagues down. They will suffer the stress of knowing their judgment may be impaired and carry on to the point of collapse. For this reason the most useful measurement of fatigue is a self-reporting system

3.3 Job satisfaction

Motivation required for a person to high level of performance is satisfaction with the job. Satisfaction is not the same as motivation. According to Dubrin (1988, 84), job satisfaction is an internal state. Job satisfaction is the amount of pleasure or contentment associated with a job.

Although the level of job satisfaction may well affect the strength of motivation, this is not always the case. Job satisfaction is more of an internal state. A person with a high level of job satisfaction holds positive attitudes towards the job. Job satisfaction can be associated with the personal feeling of achievement.

3.3.1 Factors influencing job satisfaction

There is some doubt whether job satisfaction consists of a single dimension or a number of separate dimensions. Some employees may be satisfied with certain aspects of their work and dissatisfied with other aspects.

Different factors help to create job satisfaction:

1. The external factors include:
 - 1.1 Mentally challenging work.
 - 1.2 Reasonable physical demands.

- 1.3 Meaningful rewards.
- 1.4 Helpful co-workers and superiors.

2. The internal factors include:

- 2.1 Interest in the work itself.
- 2.2 Work fitting one's job value.
- 2.3 Feeling of self-esteem.
- 2.4 Optimism and flexibility.
- 2.5 Positive self-image.
- 2.6 Positive expectations about the job.
- 2.7 Good personal adjustment.

Employees want pay systems and promotion policies that they perceive as being just, unambiguous, and in line with their expectations (Mottram, 1998).

3.3.2 Satisfaction and dissatisfaction consequences.

Job satisfaction or dissatisfaction has many important consequences to the individual and the organization

1- Relationship and cooperation

High job satisfaction leads to good results in work performance because the employees with high job satisfaction are likely to help others in solving job problems, never complain and accept orders without objections, help in promoting and improving work environment, and they make job easier

2- Early retired, quit, and absenteeism

One of the job dissatisfaction consequences is that the employees who dislike their jobs tend to be absent more frequently and more likely to quit their jobs, or even retire early.

3- Productivity (quantity and quality)

High job satisfaction is required for the employees who are involved in contact with people (employee/customers), and is recommended for managers and people who occupy high places in the organization (master) where they will be more likely to listen to the others, show awareness and concern for the feeling of the others, be tactful, have a good emotional control, and accept criticism.

4- Stress and burnout

Chronic job dissatisfaction is a source of stress and burnout.

5- Life satisfaction (love your job, live your life)

High job satisfaction accompanied with pay and promotion will lead to life satisfaction.

6- Safety and safety awareness

People with job dissatisfaction are more liable to have accidents, inattention is a poor safety practice related to job dissatisfaction and inattention leads directly to accidents.

Chapter four
The role of the International Labor Organization
in improving the seafarers' social life

Traditionally, maritime safety legislation dealt primarily with the "hard ware" ship, its structure, machinery's, and safety equipment's. Now safety legislation is also attempting to regulate the ship's "soft ware" the human beings, who operate the vessels. It is necessary because so many maritime casualties are attributed to human factors.

Improving living and working conditions at sea is of major importance in order to attract and retain competent seafarers that will be able to operate ships safely and effectively while serving under human conditions. This will lead to safety of life, ships and cargo and the preservation of marine environment.

4.1 International Labor Organization

International Labor Organization (ILO) is one of the specialized agencies of the United Nations. It has 174 member states and has been devoted to the promotion of improved labor conditions since 1919. Its work is based on the elaboration of labor standards and activities aimed at ensuring the implementation of those standards. Regular sessions of the International Labor Conference (ILC) have adopted a fairly comprehensive body of standards in form of conventions - treaties intended for ratification by the member states. In order to create formal obligations

and recommendations - authoritative suggestions by ILC as to how labor conditions might be further improved.

Periodically, special Maritime Sessions of the conference have gathered together member states' delegates directly concerned with maritime affairs and have adopted conventions and recommendations specifically related to seafarers.

The ILO co-operates with other United Nations (UN) system agencies with an interest in the maritime field, such as International Maritime Organization (IMO) in London and the World Health Organization (WHO) in Geneva. Also, there is a close contact with the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and with regional UN offices.

4.2 Legislation and jurisdiction

Because of the unique character of seafaring, in most maritime countries have special laws and regulations cover shipboard occupation. In many areas, the maritime labor law is based on the application of the international conventions and regulations.

The flag state has the duty to effectively exercise jurisdiction and control in administrative, technical and social matters over ships flying its flag in accordance with article 94 of the United Nations Convention on the Law Of the Sea, 1982 (UNCLOS). It is important to recognize that the standards may also be enforced by other states. A first supplementary method of enforcing standards is Port State Control (PSC). According to article 4 of the ILO Merchant Shipping (Minimum Standards) Convention, 1976 (ILO Convention No. 147), states which have ratified the convention may in certain conditions take measures to rectify any conditions onboard foreign flag vessels which are clearly hazardous to safety or health.

A second supplementary method of enforcing standards is the application by a state of national law to the contracts extending beyond its boundaries. National

legislation may provide that it is applicable to contracts concluded between national seafarers and foreign ship owners.

4.3 Ratification of conventions

Conventions and recommendations require the votes of a two-thirds majority of delegates present at the Conference in order to be adopted (article 19 ILO Constitutions). In addition, under the same article, within 18 months at most of their adoption, all conventions and recommendations have to be submitted to the national authorities in whose competence the matter lies for the enactment of legislation or other action.

The adoption of any convention or recommendation by the Conference or the ratification of a convention by a member state may in no case be deemed to affect any law, award, custom or agreement which ensures more favorable conditions to the workers concerned than those provided for in the convention and recommendation.

There is no requirement that a convention should be ratified, but, if a member state does decide to ratify a convention and communicates a formal instruments of ratification to the Director General of the International Labor Office. A member state must take action to give effect to the convention once it came into force.

4.4 Conventions concerning living and working conditions

The special nature of conditions of work and of life of seafarers has led to the adoption of over 50 conventions and recommendations applying specifically to seafarers (ILO, 1999). Some of the standards adopted for seafarers are of a general nature. The most important of these is certainly convention 147, of 1976, which aims at ensuring the observance in merchant ships of a wide range of

standards including those laid down in many of the conventions listed below that convention. In Particular, any ratifying country undertakes to have appropriate laws on safety, social security and conditions of work and life onboard ship, and to verify their application by inspection or other means.

4.4.1 Merchant Shipping (Minimum Standards) Convention

Convention No. 147 constitutes the central statement by ILC of what may be regarded as the minimum internationally acceptable labor standards in merchant ships. It aims to improve the efficiency and safety of navigation, enhance measures to protect the marine environment and advance seafarers' interests in the field of health and safety, working conditions and trade union rights. The convention, which essentially applies to every seagoing ship employed for any commercial purpose, come into force in November 1981.

Convention No. 147 prescribes a set of minimum standards and refers to a number of other ILO conventions. These conventions cover minimum age, medical examination, articles of agreement, officers' competency certificates, food and catering onboard ship, crew accommodation, prevention of occupational accidents, sickness or injury benefits, repatriation, freedom of association, the protection of the right to organize, and collective bargaining. In addition, one provision of convention 147 refers to standards of hours of work and manning to ensure the safety of human life aboard ships.

The obligations on states which are parties to convention No. 147 are set out in article 2, require that ratifying states have laws or regulations laid down, for ships registered in their territory, provisions which are equivalent to those of the conventions. Under convention No. 147 ratifying flag states must ensure that the competent authorities verifies, by inspection or other appropriate means, that nationally registered ships comply with national laws and regulations which apply the standards prescribed by the convention.

In the terms of the convention, a ratifying state may, on the basis of a complaint or evidence that a ship does not conform to the standards of the convention, inspect any foreign ship calling at its ports, regardless of whether the flag state has ratified convention No. 147.

4.4.2 Living arrangement onboard ship

The leading instruments, Convention No. 92 "Accommodation for Crew (Revised)", 1949, is included among the minimum standards referred to in Convention No. 147, which lays down safety standards in relation to crew accommodation and takes account of Convention No. 92, provided that some elements of it not related to safety might be dealt with rather in collective agreements.

Convention No. 92 may be read in the light of Convention No. 133 "Accommodation of Crew (supplementary provisions)", 1970, and as to medical facilities Convention No. 164 "Protection and Medical Care (Seafarers)", 1987. In these guidelines it is suggested that there should be laws and regulations framed by the competent authority after consultation ship owners' and seafarers' organization to ensure the following

- 1- Adequate security, protection against weather and insulation in respect of the location, means of access, structure and arrangement in relation to other spaces of crew accommodation.
- 2- Adequate ventilation of sleeping and mess rooms.
- 3- Adequate system of heating.
- 4- Adequate lighting.
- 5- Situation of sleeping rooms amid ship or aft above the load line.
- 6- Sufficient sanitary accommodation, ventilated with adequate disposal pipes.
- 7- An approved medical chest and normally, where a crew of 15 or more is carried, separate hospital accommodation.
- 8- Sufficient mess room, suitably furnished and equipped and close to the galley.

9- Recreation space on deck and recreation accommodation.

As regards food and catering Convention No. 68 and also Convention No. 147, require the authority to frame and enforce regulations for food and water supplies which, having regard to the size of crew and the duration and nature of the voyage, are suitable in respect of quantity, nutritive value, quality and variety.

As regards health protection and medical care, Convention No. 164 provides that;

- 1- Ship owner has a duty to keep his ship in proper sanitary and hygienic condition,
- 2- Seafarers have a right to visit a doctor without delay in port of call,
- 3- Health protection and medical care should normally be free of charge while seafarer in service and be comparable of that of workers on shore,
- 4- Arrangements for giving medical advice by radio or satellite should exist, in the same time ships with crews of 100 seafarers or more should carry a doctor.

4.4.3 Seafarers' welfare

It is necessary to ensure that adequate welfare facilities are provided onboard ship or in port irrespective of seafarers' nationality, race, color, sex, religion, political opinion or social origin. It may not always be necessary to do so through legislation, since collective agreements and other non-legislative means could be sufficient.

On the basis of:

- Convention No. 163 "Seafarers' Welfare", 1987
- Recommendation No. 48
- Recommendation No. 138
- Recommendation No. 173

The competent authority should consult ship owners' and seafarers' organizations about:

- 1- The manner in which seafarers' welfare arrangements at sea and in port should be laid down either by collective agreement or by acts of voluntary organization.
- 2- What are to be regarded as adequate welfare facilities and services.
- 3- How seafarers' welfare arrangements are to be financed.

Facilities and services to be provide might include the following:

- 1- Accommodation in port (Rec. No. 138).
- 2- Facilities for sports, recreation, education, counseling and other social purposes in ports (Rec. No. 173).
- 3- Information on facilities available in ports and on local laws and custom (Rec. No. 173)
- 4- Transport between the port and the town (Rec. No. 173).
- 5- Information on health risks and facilities for treatment in the port (Rec. No. 48 and Rec. No. 173).
- 6- Ensuring safe conditions in port areas and approaches (Rec. No. 48 and Rec. No. 173).
- 7- Counseling facilities (Rec. No. 173).
- 8- Recreational, sports, vocational training and information facilities at sea (Rec. No. 173).
- 9- Mail and telephone communications (Rec. No. 173).
- 10- Enabling family and friends to board the ship (Rec. No. 173).

4.4.4 Working hours

The limitation of hours of work may be regarded as essential both in order to protect seafarers against excessive demands on their time and to ensure that, in the interests of safety, hours of work and overtime, in particular, should be no longer than is compatible with the safe and efficient discharge of duties onboard.

- In Convention No. 147 article 2, requires minimum standards of hours of work and manning in order to ensure the safety of life onboard ship. No indications are given in Convention No. 147 and Recommendation No. 155 as on what level those standards should be.

- In Convention No. 109 "Hours of work", 1958, and Recommendation No. 109 on the Wages, hours of Work and Manning (Sea), the guidelines for the standards are laid down.
- In Convention No. 180 "Seafarers' Hours of Work and the Manning of Ships", (1996), ILO revised Convention and Recommendation No. 109 (1958), and adopted the new Convention which establishes specific daily and weekly limitations on hours of work, or conversely, daily or weekly minimum rest periods for seafarers with the aim of preventing fatigue associated with excessive work. In this Convention the provisions contained in the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (STCW), 1978, as amended in 1995, are taken into account.
- The new ILO convention No. 180 (1996), has also been included in the Protocol to the Merchant Shipping Minimum Standards Convention No. 147 (1976), which means that, following sufficient ratification, this instrument may also be subject to port state control (ILO, 1999)

4.4.5 Working environment and accident prevention

While it is apparent that much of what is contained in instruments dealt with in these guidelines affect seafarers' safety, health and welfare in one way or another, considerable attention has been given by ILC to the special hazards surrounding work at sea. The standards established are divided into, standards for the safe and healthy work environment and standards aimed at preventing accidents onboard ship.

- Convention No. 148 "Air Pollution, Noise and Vibration", 1977, measures should be prescribed in laws or regulation for the prevention, control of and protection against occupational hazardous in the working environment due to air pollution, noise and vibration.

- Convention No. 119 "The Guarding of Machinery", 1963, requires the prohibition or protection of dangerous machinery, and demands ship owners and seafarers to comply with measures and safety procedures.
- Recommendation No. 140, set the obligation of having air conditioning designed to maintain a satisfactory temperature and relative humidity and to ensure sufficient air changes.
- Recommendation No. 141, provisions should be established by competent authorities for the protection of seafarers from excessive and harmful noise onboard ship.
- Convention No. 127 "Maximum Weight", 1967, shows that no worker should be required or permitted to engage in the manual transport of a load which by reason of its weight is likely to jeopardize health or safety.
- Convention No. 134 "Prevention of Accidents - seafarers", 1970, is one of the eleven conventions included in the Merchant Shipping (Minimum Standards) Convention, 1976. It deals with measures for the prevention of occupational accidents in maritime employment. In addition, it lays down obligations for ship owners' and seafarers' organizations to establish a program for the prevention of accidents related to occupational activities. The convention provides also for supervision, inspection and sanctions to ensure the application of the provision.
- Recommendation No. 142, provides for posting of notices and other publications related to accident's prevention.

4.4.6 Wages

Several aspects of wages are covered in international labor standards which may be applicable to maritime employment, and those refer not only to the amount of wages but also to the principle of equal remuneration, minimum wage fixing

machinery and the protection of wages. Although the Conference has at various times adopted standards relating to wages of seafarers, which is a difficult area, the standards have in general not met with wide acceptance from the member states.

- Recommendation No. 109 has fixed minimum wage rates in pounds sterling and US dollars and these rates continue to be reviewed from time to time.
- Convention No. 100 "Equal Remuneration", 1951, provides for the application of the principle of equal remuneration for men and women workers for work of equal value.
- Convention No. 131 "Minimum Wage Fixing", 1970, establishes a system of minimum wages for seafarers after consulting representative organizations of seafarers and ship owners.
- Convention No. 95 "Protection of Wages", 1949, covers maritime as well as non-maritime employment and relating to the way in which remuneration is protected.
- Recommendation No. 173 puts down the measures to help seafarers to save and to transmit their savings to their families.

4.5 Conventions concerning social life

4.5.1 Social security

The problem of seafarers not being adequately covered by social security measures is perhaps most obvious in the case of foreign and non-resident workers. Recent years have seen considerable "flagging out" from the registers of traditional maritime countries to "open" registers, resulting in an increase in the employment in those categories. Costs, which might be cut, include both wages proper and

expenses incurred providing the social security normally due to shore workers and seafarers based in the territory of registration.

The latest standard setting in the ILO has aimed directly at that issue and has sought maximum social security coverage for all seafarers, while at the same time retaining sufficient flexibility to enable all states to make progress.

The Social Security (Seafarers) Convention No. 165 (Revised), 1987, revises the earlier standards on the subject and lays down what might be included in a comprehensive and modern system of social security for the seafaring profession. It is of course not expected that states, which wish to improve their own systems of protection for seafarers, will be able to implement all the provisions of the Convention at once. The guidelines of the Convention show how progress can be made on particular points, even in developing and other countries, which regard the whole area of social security as one of the more difficult aspects of labor standards. Convention No. 165 includes provisions on two levels of protection for seafarers in each of nine branches of social security. States may choose either minimum or superior standards in respect of

- 1- Medical care;
- 2- Sickness benefit;
- 3- Unemployment benefit;
- 4- Old-age benefit;
- 5- Employment injury benefit;
- 6- Family benefit;
- 7- Maternity benefit;
- 8- Invalidity benefit;
- 9- Survivors' benefit.

In addition, Convention No. 165 contains common provisions relating to

- Seafarers' protection being not less favorable than that enjoyed by shore workers.
- Maintenance of rights in course of acquisition as between shore workers and work

at sea.

- Ship owners' liability in respect of medical care, including where necessary repatriation.
- Protection of foreign or migrant seafarers.
- Legal and administrative safeguards.

The minimum standards required under Convention No. 147 might refer to either Convention No. 56 "Sickness Insurance (Sea)", 1936, or the ship owners' liability Convention No. 55 "Sick and Injured Seamen", 1936, or Convention No. 130 "Medical care and sickness benefits", 1969. The standards of Convention No. 130 are in fact higher than the minimum required under Convention 165.

Convention No. 71 "Seafarers' Pensions", 1946, provides for schemes which would fall outside and supplement the system of social security benefits referred to in Convention No. 165.

4.5.2 Annual leave

Leave entitlement may be established and calculated in various ways in different countries, and the interpretation of its provisions may also be complicated when applied to the employment circumstances of individual seafarers.

- Convention No. 91 "The Paid Vacations - Seafarers", 1949, and Convention No. 146 "The Seafarers' Annual Leave with Pay", 1976 are referred to as alternatives, but Convention No. 146 provides better and more modern model for national legislation for annual leave matters, except if they are covered satisfactorily by collective agreement.

4.5.3 Recruitment and continuity of employment.

- Convention No. 179 "Recruitment and Placement of Seafarers", (1996), revising Convention No. 9 "Placing of Seaman", 1920. The new Convention allows private placement services provided that they are in conformity with a system of licensing or certification or another form of regulation. The Convention stresses that ratifying member states shall ensure that no fees or other charges for recruitment or for providing employment to seafarers are borne directly or indirectly by the seafarers, and requires the competent authority to closely supervise all recruitment and placement services and to license or otherwise regulate recruitment activities which operate within its territory.
- Convention No. 145 "Continuity of Employment", 1976, which supplemented by Recommendation No. 154, provides that countries with a maritime industry must take steps to promote continuous or regular employment for qualified seafarers.

Chapter five
The International Transport workers' Federation
and the Flag Of Convenience

The International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) is the global organization of transport worker's unions. It consists of 533 unions in more than 136 countries. Those unions represent over 5 million members in all branches of transport all over the world.

ITF was founded in 1896 in London. Its activities, which cover various sections of transport industry, such as civil aviation, railways, road transport, inland navigation, docks, fishing, tourism services and seafarers, are directed at social justice against unemployment and poverty, at decent wages and working conditions and a safe and healthy working environment. ITF also provides help and support for its affiliated unions.

Throughout much of the twentieth century, the ITF has been a respected advocate for seafarers' rights in the international arena. When the International Labor Organization began in 1919, it was the ITF that ensured the adoption of several important conventions and recommendations.

5.1 ITF special seafarers' department

In the maritime industry, ITF unions face the challenge of the transfer of ships to flags of convenience (FOC). For half a century ITF unions have been battling against the FOC system. Legouas (1998) claims that the maritime industry, which is international in character, is mostly unregulated. And the growth of the FOC

phenomenon is attributed to ship owners' desire to gain a competitive advantage by reducing their operational costs.

The ITF special seafarers' department was created to negotiate proper collective agreements on behalf of crews serving in flag of convenience shipping. And to provide such crews with a kind of affiliation to substitute for security while they are denied through the absence of trade unions and to give the seafarers concerned access to welfare facilities on an international basis.

5.2 FOC phenomenon

After the Second World War most of the countries in Africa and Asia were just emerging from, or still under, colonial rule. Since those countries were not allowed to develop their own shipping industry, the majority of the seafarers of those countries were dependent on employment on non-national flag vessels.

By the end of the war there was a massive reduction in movement of cargo and troops by ships. Consequently, allied countries disposed a large surplus of ships. The new owners registered those vessels mostly in Panama because of favorable fiscal and maritime laws, which do not require them to pay profit tax or to comply with any safety requirements and standards. Other countries followed Panama by offering similar facilities. At the same time there was a large surplus of seafarers, which were seeking employment on vessels of traditional maritime countries, and gradually found employment on these ships.

Dickinson (1997) points out that the percentage of the world fleet registered in countries designated as FOC has grown steadily since 1948 as follow

1950	5.6 %
1960	26.1 %
1970	29.7 %
1980	31.6 %
1990	32.4 %
1994	42.0 %

1996 46.0 %

The ITF declares a ship to be flying a Flag Of Convenience, when there is no “genuine link” between the real ship owner and the flag the vessel flies. An FOC ship is one that flies the flag of a country other than the country of ownership. The beneficial ownership and the control of the vessel belong to a different country than that of the flag of the vessel.

Also, there are the “Second Registers”. These additional registers copy FOC in many respects, but consist mostly of nationally owned vessels. The status of this kind of registers is dependent on satisfactory union agreements with national ITF affiliates. The agreements must be equivalent to ITF minimum standards.

5.3 ITF campaign against FOC

The International Transport Workers’ Federation has been campaigning against “Flag Of Convenience” since 1948 to achieve the following aims:

- 1- To secure proper terms and conditions of employment for seafarers on FOC ships.
- 2- To secure the ultimate phasing out of FOC shipping.
- 3- To establish a genuine link between a ship and its flag.

Chapman (1992) claims that in the years following the war, ITF became particularly concerned about the increasing number of jobs that were going to non-western seafarers. And it shifted its focus from eliminating substandard conditions onboard ships to the problem of economic competition from seafarers of poor countries. In contrast, Slander (1981) declares that the ITF is a worldwide organization with worldwide responsibilities and it will not allow one group of seafarers to be played against another.

Dickinson (1997) claims a great deal of success in achieving FOC campaign objectives:

- 1- The number of special agreements for FOC vessels submitted by affiliates to the ITF has increased from 2,358 in 1993 to 2,545 in 1994, 4,099 in 1995 and 4,400 in 1996.
- 2- There are about 81,000 vessels (over 100 gross tons) in the world fleet of which 14,000 vessels belong to FOC. On the latter vessels, 17% of the world's seafarers (about 213,284 seafarers) are employed. About 4,100 FOC ships are covered by ITF acceptable agreements, this means that approximately 29% of the FOC labor force have access to the benefits and protection provided by the agreements.
- 3- Despite the continuing growth in FOC shipping there is a significant proportion of FOC registered ships returning to the flag of the nationality of the owner. Between 1992 and 1994, 543 FOC ships returned to their national flags.

5.4 ITF future objectives

Selander (1981) mentions that ITF objectives remain the same, FOC should ultimately be phased out. But till this happened, ITF will continue to sign agreements, which include wage rates based on the average rates of pay in the countries of beneficial ownership. In order to determine the value of an agreement in relation to the ITF agreement a so called total crew cost concept has been developed which will take into account wages, working hours, manning, leave, unemployment, sick pay, pensions and other benefits approved by ITF.

On the other hand, to disseminate the substandard working conditions on some ships flying the flag of certain non FOC countries where there is neither an established collective bargaining machinery, nor trade a union to represent the seafarers serving in such ships. The ITF will consider "flag rates" based on national wage levels in the countries of the flag of the ships. In addition, ITF will advocate the use of ILO standards and benefits.

Chapter six

Egyptian seafarers' situation

6.1 Egyptian seafarers' work-force

According to Egyptian Maritime National Law "The Egyptian seafarers onboard Egyptian flag ships should represent at least 95 per cent of the ratings and at least 75 per cent of the officers", but in fact, there are very few foreign seafarers onboard Egyptian flag ships. Most of them are working in the area of services relevant to offshore activities.

A survey carried out by the Data Bank of the Egyptian Ministry of Maritime Transport (1998), shows the total number of seafarers holding an Egyptian Seaman Book (table 2) as follows:

Table 2

Seafarers of different categories	Total no. of seaman book	Valid no. of seaman book in 1/3/1997	% of valid seaman book	% of expired seaman book
Master	1168	521	44.6 %	55.4 %
Navigation	1141	506	44.4 %	55.6 %
Officers	1467	681	46.4 %	53.6 %
Marine engineers	46415	22474	48.4 %	51.6 %
Crew				
Total	50,191	24,182	48%	52%

“Source: Data Bank, Egyptian Ministry of Maritime Transport, 1998”

- Total number of Masters holding seaman book are 1168, only 521 of them have a valid seaman book in 01 March 1997, they represent 44.6%.
- Total number of Navigation Officers holding seaman book is 1141, only 506 of them had a valid seaman book on 01 March 1997, they represent 44.4 %.
- Total number of Marine Engineers holding seaman book is 1,467, only 681 of them had a valid seaman book on 01 March 1997, they represent 46.4 %.
- Total number of Crew holding seaman book is 4,6415, only 22,474 of them have a valid seaman book on 01 March 1997, they represent 48.4 %.
- Total number of seamen books for all above-mentioned categories is 50,191, only 24,182 of them had a valid seamen book on 01 March 1997, they represent 48% of the total force of the Egyptian seafarers.

The survey gives the following reasons for this difference of 52% between potential and actual seafarers:

- 1- The shortage in job opportunities;
- 2- The low income for seafarers;
- 3- The expensive costs for renewal of certificates and the mandatory courses;
- 4- The availability of jobs on the shore side;

5- The required sea service period for the renewal of the seamen book not easy to Achieve.

Table No. 3 contains an age profiles for those who carry a valid Egyptian seaman book in 01 March 1997.

It is important to note the reduction in engineer numbers.

And it is also important to note the increase in crew numbers.

Table 3

Categories \ Age	Master	Officers	Engineers	Crew	Total
Less than 20 years	-	-	-	257	257
From 20 to 30 years	5	150	73	12,245	12,473
From 30 to 40 years	118	229	231	5,713	6,291
From 40 to 50 years	181	78	250	2,637	3,146
From 50 to 60 years	176	44	106	1,299	1,625
Over than 60 years	41	5	21	276	343
No age recorded	-	-	-	47	47
Total	521	506	681	22,474	24,182

“Source: Data Bank, Egyptian Ministry of Maritime Transport, 1998”

The information obtained from the pervious table shows that:

- The largest number of masters, are in the age range, from 40 to 50 years, they represent 34.7 % of the total number of masters.
- The number of engineers in the age level from 20 to 30 decreased. The average age of graduated engineers ready to join ships is 25 years. Comparing the number of engineers, who are 20 to 30 years with those in the age range 30 to 40 years, indicates that there is a significant reduction in number of new engineers, it reaches approximately 37%.

- The number of crew in age range of 20 to 30 joining the seafaring career are increased to approximately double the number of crew in age range from 30 to 40. According to the Maritime National Law the minimum age allowed to hold a seaman book and join work onboard ships is 18 years old.

The study states the following remarks:

- The age range of 40 to 50 years for the master is from a management point of view of the preferable age for masters.
- The reduction in number of young engineers reflects the fact that the seafaring career is not attractive as before, especially for engineers.
- On the other hand, working at sea still attracts young unqualified persons, which could be a sign of shortage in job opportunity ashore for those persons.

6.2 Egyptian fleet

There are 145 ships, fly the Egyptian flag, belong to different kinds of activities and different types of owner ship.

- Government shipping company owns 21 ships;
- Governmental companies engaged in fuel supply own 5 small tankers;
- In private sector, different shipping companies, own 77 ships;
- Suez Canal Authority and big companies engaged in petroleum exploration activities own 42 ships.

For the purpose of this dissertation, ships in concern are those involved in international voyages only, while ships engaged in sailing within territorial waters will not be taken into account.

Table 4 classifies the Egyptian fleet according to ship's age.

Table 4

Owner \ Age	Governmental	Private sector	Total
Less than 10 years	4	5	9
Over 10 years	15	23	38
Over 20 years	2	42	44
Over 30 years	-	7	7
Total	21	77	98

“ Source: Fair play ships and companies, 01 June 1999”

From Table No. 4 the following percentage obtained:

- 9% of the Egyptian fleet are less than 10 years old;
- 39% of the Egyptian fleet are over 10 years old;
- 45% of the Egyptian fleet are over 20 years old;
- 7% of the Egyptian fleet are over 30 years old.

It is very important to note that 52 % of Egyptian ships are over 20 years old.

6.3 ILO Conventions ratified by Egypt

Since 1920, eleven sessions of the International Labor Conference, dealing exclusively with merchant seafarers, have adopted a total of 39 conventions, 30 recommendations and one protocol to an existing convention.

Table 5

No	Conv No.	Convention title	Year of adoption	Year of ratification
1	9	Placing of Seamen Convention	1920	1982
2	22	Seamen's Article of Agreement Convention	1926	1982
3	23	Repatriation of Seamen Convention	1926	1982
4	53	Officer's Competency Certificate Convention	1936	1939
5	55	Ship owner's Liability Convention	1936	1982
6	56	Sickness Insurance Convention	1936	1982
7	68	Food and Catering Convention	1946	1982
8	69	Certification of Ship's Cook Convention	1946	1982
9	71	Seafarers' Pension Convention	1946	1982
10	73	Medical Examination Convention	1946	1982
11	74	Certification of Able Seamen Convention	1946	1967
12	92	Accommodation of Crews Convention	1949	1982
13	134	Prevention of Accident Convention	1970	1982
14	145	Continuity of Employment Convention	1976	1983
15	147	Merchant Shipping Convention	1976	1983

" Source: Ministry of Maritime Transport, 1996"

Table 5 shows the ILO conventions, which were ratified by Egypt in the period from 1920 to 1996.

Table 5 indicates the following facts:

- Egypt has ratified 15 conventions out of 39 conventions, which represent 38% of the total number of conventions.
- The last ratified convention was adopted in 1976.
- This convention was ratified in 1983, this means that Egypt did not ratify any convention for 16 years.
- In 1982, eleven conventions were ratified in one year, which represent 73% of the total ratified conventions.

- Convention No. 72 was not ratified, although conventions 71, 73, 74 of the same session were ratified.
- Convention No. 146 was not ratified, although conventions 145, 147 of the same session were ratified.

6.4 ILO Conventions not ratified by Egypt

Table 6 indicates the following facts

- 24 conventions are not ratified by Egypt yet, 18 of them related to seafarers' social life onboard or at home town, they represent 75% of the not-yet-ratified conventions.
- All conventions concerning paid vacation, hours of work and wages have not ratified yet by Egypt.
- Convention No. 180 “ Recruitment and placement of seafarers” was not ratified, Although Egypt has a surplus in work force, especially crew members (Table 2).

Table 6 shows the ILO conventions, which were not ratified yet by Egypt.

Table 6

No	Conv No.	Convention title	Year of Adoption
1	7	Minimum Age Convention	1920
2	8	Unemployment Indemnity Convention	1920
3	15	Minimum Age (Trimmers and Stokers) Convention	1921
4	16	Medical Examination of Young Persons Convention	1921
5	54	Holidays with Pay Convention	1936
6	57	Hours of Work and Manning Convention	1936
7	58	Minimum Age Convention (Revised)	1936
8	70	Social Security Convention	1946
9	72	Paid Vacation Convention	1946
10	75	Accommodation of Crews Convention	1946

11	76	Wages, Hours of Work and Manning Convention	1946
12	91	Paid Vacation Convention	1949
13	93	Wages, Hours of Work and Manning Convention(Revised)	1949
14	108	Seafarers' Identity Document Convention	1958
15	109	Wages, Hours of Work and Manning Convention (Revised)	1958
16	133	Accommodation of Crews Convention (supplementary)	1970
17	146	Seafarers' Annual Leave with Pay Convention	1976
18	163	Seafarers' Welfare Convention	1987
19	164	Health Protection and Medical Care Convention	1987
20	165	Social Security Convention (Revised)	1987
21	166	Repatriation of Seafarers Convention (Revised)	1987
22	178	Labor Inspection Convention	1996
23	179	Recruitment and Placement of Seafarers Convention	1996
24	180	Seafarers' Hours of Work and Manning of Ship Convention	1996

“ Source: Ministry of Maritime Transport, 1996”

6.5 Sample survey of Egyptian seafarers

A questionnaire has been given to a sample of 100 Egyptian seafarers working onboard Egyptian flagships. It was given to:

- 20 navigation officers of different ranks (including Masters);
- 20 marine engineers of different ranks (including Chief engineers);
- 60 crew members representing the different departments onboard the ship (not equally represented).

25% of each category belong to the Governmental Company, while the rest belong to private companies.

The questionnaire carried out to identify the different factors affecting the quality of seafarers' social life onboard ships or at home-town.

The main points, which stressed in the questionnaire, were;

1- Working conditions;

Working hours paid over time and wages.

2- Living conditions;

Food, accommodation and welfare.

3- Human relation;

4- Vacation and paid holidays;

5- Getting a job after vacation;

6- Income during periods of unemployment;

7- Coverage by social security system.

The following results were obtained;

1- 63 % of the sample reported more than 8 hours work per day without getting paid for over time.

2- 83% of the sample were not satisfied with the wages they got.

3- The quality and quantity of food, 65% of the total sample complain about the poor quality of food and insufficient quantities.

4- 65 % of the sample declare that there were no welfare facilities onboard their last ships.

5- 45 % reported dissatisfaction about the accommodation level

6- 96 % of the sample reported very good human and friendly relations onboard.

7- With respect to items no.3, 4, 5 and 6 of the questionnaire.

100 % of the seafarers onboard governmental ships are covered by the National Social Security System, they also get a paid vacation with fixed income during periods of unemployment. As they are permanent employees by the company.

In contrast, 100% of seafarers onboard ships belong to private companies are not covered by the National Social Security System. But 20% of them are covered by an Age Benefit System established in their companies, which a contribution is paid by both the ship owner and the seafarer during the period of

his employment. Then, after a specified number of years, the seafarer has the right to get an age benefit. Those companies have almost fixed crews to maintain a loyalty bond with their crew and to ensure the high quality of labor force.

About 25 % of the private companies' seafarers get paid vacation and have the chance to be back again to the same company, while 75 % of them face unemployment just when they sign off for a vacation.

100 % of seafarers working onboard ships owned by the private companies have no income during unemployment periods, which could extend to months, in some cases years.

Chapter seven

Conclusion and recommendations

7.1 Conclusion

The seafarer has an abnormal social life that is the result of living two separate lives. The first life is the onboard ship life, where the seafarer spends a long time working and living away from home in a unique environment. It is characterized by working conditions, which are worsened by harsh environmental factors. In addition, the living conditions differ from these at home in nutrition, accommodation and human relations. Moreover, at sea, separation of work and recreation is not as clear as on shore.

The second life is the home town life, where the seafarer is supposed to enjoy family life, participate in the family recreational outings and generally relax before return to sea, the contrary is always happened and the seafarers exposed to a different types of stresses concerning his family conditions. Specially if they are not protected and covered by a social security system. Moreover, the seafarer faces a major problem to find a job after his vacation.

It was found that in many aspects the pattern of modern shipping has removed many of the former aspects of seagoing life that were so attractive. Furthermore, with the erosion of pay and leave, the shrinking of crews and the less enjoyable circumstances in work onboard ships, many seafarers suffer from loneliness, stress, fatigue and other psychological problems, made all the worse by the uncertainty surrounding their employment prospects.

Consequently, the International Labor Organization (ILO), since its founding, has developed special machinery for seafarers. The machinery includes a standing, bipartite (ship owner and seafarer) joint Maritime Commission, which advises the Governing body on maritime issues, and special Maritime Sessions of the International Labor Conference (ILC) which focus solely on the preparation and adoption of maritime labor standards.

The standards laid down by ILO prove that, shipping industry problem is not the lack of regulations but the lack of enforcement of these regulations. As these standards cover all the details of working and living conditions for seafarers. Furthermore, ILO establishes the basis for social security scheme, recruitment, paid vacation and many other items, which is necessary for the maintenance of human welfare and dignity.

In the same field of Improving living and working conditions, the ITF works side by side with the international maritime community to eliminate all the negative factors initiated by the presence of the FOC phenomenon

As far as maritime labor legislation concerned, its progress in Egypt, as one of the developing countries, has been influenced by several factors, the more important ones of which are:

- Living and working conditions of the labor force in general are comparatively poor.
- The small number of seafarers' work force, which does not represent a major power to influence government decisions to ratify and implement the international labor conventions.

It was found that the vast majority of ILO conventions relating to seafarers have not been ratified.

7.2 Recommendations

Developing countries have the obligation to ratify, implement and enforce ILO conventions concerning seafarers' social life either onboard or at home, as the human well being of seafarers would greatly enhance the safety of life at sea.

Seafarers' unions are essential to observe and control working and living conditions under which seafarers are carried out their work, as an individual worker is at a total disadvantage in trying to negotiate fair terms with a corporation. The Egyptian seafarer union should be fully supported by the authority in order to carry out its task, and should be financially strengthened by means of government subsidy and ship owners' charity.

Seafarers welfare should be expanded in a number of areas, such as better communications between seafarers and their families ashore, links with their home communities through the improvement of radio and television services, and the provision of a wider range of educational services onboard ship.

Crew accommodation should include not only sleeping and messing quarters, but also a number of other facilities as well, such as recreation rooms, libraries, gymnasiums and cinemas or video rooms.

A social security coverage should be extended to all Egyptian seafarers whether onboard Egyptian flag ships or onboard other flags and to their dependents. This coverage will help seafarers to overcome their fears for job uncertainty and their worries about their families.

The length of time at sea should be reduce to the minimum acceptable period, according to negotiations between seafarers' union and ship owners, to allow seafarers to participate in the life of the society and the family. This reduction will help in reducing stress resulting from home alienation.

The shipping community should be aware of the problem that, too much negative stress can harm both individuals and their work performance, its resources should be mobilized to help employees deal with stress by establishing some type of positive program. Such as employee assistance programs that give facilities to help employees whose performance has declined because of distracting personal problems.

All that now remains, at the end of my dissertation, is to express the hope that this piece of work will, in turn, spread the conviction that changes to improve living and working conditions are possible and give rise to effective action.

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i - If your answer was No in the last question, please mention why?

.....

2.2 Living conditions

2.2.1 During sailing

- a- Is the level of accommodation furniture, spaces and arrangements satisfy you? Yes.....No.....
- b- How many seafarers per room?per room
- c- Is the nutrition satisfy your needs? with respect to quality Yes.....No.....
with respect to quantity Yes.....No
- d- are there available medicine and treatment facilities onboard? YesNo
- e- Which type of the following welfare facilities available onboard?
TV Video Gym Library others
- f- In case of the presence of TV -
Is it satellite receiver or normal receiver? Yes.....No.....
- g- In case of the presence of video -
Is the exchange of tapes carried out on a regular basis Yes.....No

2.2.2 During docking

- a- Do you have enough time to go ashore? Yes.....No.....
- b- Do you like to go ashore while the ship at port? Yes.....No
- c- If your answer is No in the last question - please mention why?

.....

.....

- d- Are there any welfare facilities available in the ports you sail to? Yes.....No
- e- Are these facilities available in suitable prices? Yes.....No

f- Please describe in brief the social life and human relations onboard your last ship.

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.....
.....

3. Social life at home town

a- What is your source of income during periods of unemployment?

.....

b- Is it possible to re-join your last shipping company,
after vacation, for new contract ? Yes.....No

c- If your answer is NO in the pervious question - please mention how can you find
a job once again?

.....
.....

d- How long it takes to find a new job? and what was the longest period you spent
looking for a job?

.....
.....

e- Do you covered with a health care scheme during
periods of unemployment? Yes.....No

f- Are your family covered with a health care scheme? Yes.....No

g- Is there any social security coverage for you or your family? Yes.....No

h- If your answer is YES in the previous question - please mention the coverage
system applied to you?

.....
.....

i - Are you under protection umbrella of any union
or social society? Yes.....No

j- If your answer is YES in the previous question - Please mention the name of that
union or social society.

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