



RESOLUTIONS FROM 29th CESMA AGA 24th MAY 2024 - ROTTERDAM, THE NETHERLANDS

CESMA members attending CESMA 29thAGA noted with concern the following seafarers' problems: Wars in Ukraine and Gaza consequences such as attacks on merchant ships in the Red Sea, Gulf of Aden, Arabian Gulf, and Northern part of Indian Ocean accompanied by capturing ships and taking crew as hostages, shortage of European Union (EU) officers and still actual difficulties to obtain visas for non EU seafarers, piracy, safety of ro-ro, ropax and cruise ships, refugees in the Mediterranean and the English Channel, mooring accidents involving approved equipment. It was also noted the different practices in simulator training in EU countries, the excessive paperwork on board commercial ships and related problems with fatigue and minimum safe manning requirements, the decrease of traditional navigational skills, the minimum requirements for sea and port pilots in some European countries, the development of Maritime Autonomous Surface Ships (MASS), the shipmasters key role in navigating the ship in VTS control areas, and the continued accidents with Very Large Vessels. CESMA draws the following resolutions as being of primary importance for shipmasters.

Resolution1: Red Sea and Gulf of Aden

The Assembly, having noted the risks and dangers to proceed in Gulf of Aden, Red Sea, Arabian Gulf and Northern part of Indian Ocean and considering also that merchant vessels are not equipped, even when security guards on board, to react to an attack by missile or drone, asks EU Commission of Transport and EU States Flag Authorities to do all possible to ensure safe passage in these waters. It also asks European Owners to not require their vessels to transit via such areas till the conflict is terminated and areas being considered as fully safe for navigation. The Assembly also urges EU diplomatic and military bodies to do all possible to return EU seafarers taken as hostage back home.

Resolution2: Crew member visas

The Assembly, considering the difficulties to provide crew visas to non-EU Seafarers joining and leaving their vessels when in the EU, and in order to observe and recognize MLC (Maritime Labour Convention 2006), urges EU States Authorities to recognize the seafarer's entitlement to repatriation under seafarers employment agreements. Consideration be given to create such a visa in the similar manner to that of the combination C1/D visa being issued by the US state department, Crewmember Visa.

Resolution3: Transport of Lithium-ion Batteries and Electric Vehicles (EVs)

Following the numerous fire incidents attributed to sudden self ignition of lithium-ion batteries reported on vessels, and the associated risks to seafarers, the Assembly requires urgently to EU Commission of Transport, jointly with EU States Politics and Industrials, to cooperate with International Organizations, such as IMO, to regulate the transport of such batteries, especially in EVs.

In mean time there are available guidelines from EMSA and Classification Societies; and Assembly encourages all parties involved in shipping and transport of EVs to use them as guidance when developing and implementing internal procedures for transporting EVs and other AFVs (alternative fuel vehicles).

Resolution4: STCW documentation and certification

The Assembly notes the process of revision of STCW and urges EU institutions to intervene the amendments proposed to be in favor of seafarers.

CESMA encourages the EU Commission to address the recognition of International STCW qualifications to allow for EU course attendances, which could reduce the number of false certificates.

Resolution5:European Seafarers

CESMA urges EU institutions to adopt programs that support maritime professions to attract and to retain European Seafarers. European policy should be harmonized on education, including new fuels and green shipping, employment of cadets, ship / shore and ship type mobility. The improvement of mental health and wellbeing of seafarers is one of the solutions to attract and retain Young EU Seafarers.

Resolution 6: Criminalisation of shipmasters.

The Assembly acknowledges that the issue of criminalizing seafarers, especially shipmasters, remains a significant concern. To address this, CESMA recommends that captains obtain their own legal insurance to protect themselves in case of any incidents while serving on ships. Additionally, CESMA recommends ship owners and/or operators to always provide legal assistance to shipmasters who are detained by local authorities due to an incident, until a final verdict is reached. The Assembly is also aware of the growing commercial pressures faced by shipmasters.

Captain D. Dimitrov
President

24thMay 2024

Captain H. Ardillon
SecretaryGeneral