



**PRE-BRIEF**  
for the  
**twelfth session of the**  
**IMO SUB-COMMITTEE ON HUMAN ELEMENT, TRAINING AND**  
**WATCHKEEPING (HTW 12)**  
Monday 23 to Friday 27 February 2026

## SUMMARY

The twelfth session of the IMO's Sub-Committee on Human Element, Training and Watchkeeping (HTW 12) will meet between Monday, 23 and Friday, 27 February 2026.

There are a total of **200 papers** submitted to HTW 12 under 12 agenda items, with the following agenda items and papers to be referred to in this Pre-Brief:

- **Agenda item 3** - Validated model training courses, **9 papers**
- **Agenda item 6** - Comprehensive review of the 1978 STCW Convention and Code, **168 papers**
- **Agenda item 7** - Development of a safety regulatory framework to support the reduction of GHG emissions from ships using new technologies and alternative fuels, **6 papers**
- **Agenda item 8** - Scoping exercise and enhancement of the effectiveness of provisions on fatigue and seafarers' hours of work and rest, **2 papers**
- **Agenda item 11** - Any other business, **6 papers**

Under agenda item 6, reviewing the consolidated text of chapters 2 and 3 of the 1978 STCW Convention and Code, there are four new elements that will be considered for amending the Convention and Code:

- Violence and harassment, including sexual harassment, bullying and sexual assault;
- Mental health, psychological safety, and gender and cultural diversity;
- Ballast water management; and
- Cybersecurity.

### Working Groups

It is expected that 5 Working and Drafting Groups to be established during HTW 12. The Secretariat will endeavour to participate in the Working Groups on Development of **training provisions for seafarers on ships using alternative fuels** and technologies and **Comprehensive review** of the 1978 STCW Convention and Code:

- 1) Working Group on the Comprehensive review of the 1978 STCW Convention and Code (agenda item 6);
- 2) Working Group on the STCW oversight and verification processes (agenda item 6);
- 3) Working Group on the Development of training provisions for seafarers on ships using alternative fuels and technologies (agenda item 7);
- 4) Drafting Group on Model courses (agenda item 3); and
- 5) Drafting Group on Scoping exercise of fatigue-related provisions (agenda item 8).

### Intersessional Working Group on Comprehensive Review of the STCW Convention and Code

On 02 – 06 Mar 2026, there will be the second meeting of the Intersessional Working Group on Comprehensive Review of the STCW Convention and Code (ISWG-STCW 2).

The documents for ISWG-STCW 2 will be those submitted to HTW 12 under the agenda item 6 on "Comprehensive review of the 1978 STCW Convention and Code". The agenda items of ISWG-STCW 2 include:

- Draft amendments to chapters 2 and 3
- Draft amendments to chapter 1 (provisions on the oversight system only)
- Update of the work plan for the comprehensive review of the Convention and Code

The provisional timetable for HTW 12 is at the end of this Brief.

The brief can also be found on our website [here](#).

## Agenda item 3 - Validated model training courses

Here are the topics and relevant papers under this agenda item:

- **HTW 12/3** - This document provides a report on the model courses that have been revised and submitted to HTW 12 for validation, a summary of the arrangements agreed for the validation of model courses by HTW 13 and HTW 14. In addition, the document provides an overview of the complete list of IMO model courses.
- **HTW 12/3/1** and **HTW 12/3/1/Add.1** – The documents provide the report of the Review Group on Draft Revised Model Course 1.21 on Personal Safety and Social Responsibilities.
  - This model course is designed to provide the trainees with the required knowledge and skills in the life on board a seagoing ship. Life on board is different from living and working ashore. Working on a ship can be hazardous. This course will give the new seafarers an insight into the various elements of a ship and working procedures in order to be prepared to cope with any unforeseen circumstances. To that extent, this course is planned to make the transition from a shore to a sea career as smooth as possible and provide some understanding of a seafarer's working environment, hazards, procedures and safe working practices they will encounter, before they actually will board a ship. This covers the competences and required knowledge, understanding and proficiencies (KUPs) specified in STCW Code table A-VI/1-4.
- **HTW 12/3/4** - This document informs the Sub-Committee of the repeated concerns in relation to the low levels of participation of Member States, international organizations and other experts in the review process of model courses for necessary action.

## Agenda item 6 - Comprehensive review of the 1978 STCW Convention and Code

Contents:

- 1) Structure of topics and arrangements
- 2) Papers on chapters 2 & 3
- 3) Papers on other chapters

### **1. Structure of topics and arrangements**

Two lines of work will be organised under this agenda item:

- 1) STCW Oversight and Verification Processes and other documents on the comprehensive review of the STCW Convention and Code
- 2) Discussions of the consolidated text of chapters 2 and 3 of the 1978 STCW Convention and Code

#### STCW Oversight and Verification Processes

The Sub-Committee will consider the report **HTW 12/6/20** of the Correspondence Group (CG) on the STCW Oversight and Verification Processes and other documents on the comprehensive review of the STCW Convention and Code, based on the road map endorsed by MSC 110 (MSC 110/21,

paragraph 13.8). The CG was tasked to examine the strengths of each of the STCW oversight system and the IMO Member State Audit Scheme (IMSAS).

### Discussions of the consolidated text of chapters 2 and 3 of the 1978 STCW Convention and Code

Following the paper **HTW 12/6** by the IMO Secretariat, the 160+ papers submitted to HTW 12 are organised to address the **416 gaps** as agreed at HTW 11 in Feb 2025. HTW 11 invited proposals on draft amendments to chapters 2 and 3 to be submitted directly to HTW 12.

**HTW 12/6, as attached**, provides a template and additional information for the submission of proposals for phase 2 of the comprehensive review of the STCW Convention and Code.

## **2. Papers on Chapters 2 & 3**

The list of gaps is included as an annex to **HTW 12/6**. Here is the list of sections of consolidated text of chapters 2 and 3 and ranges of the related gaps:

Chapter 2, existing provisions (gap numbers 107 to 160), and including new provisions for:

- Violence and harassment, including sexual harassment, bullying and sexual assault (HTW 11/WP.4, annex 1, appendix 10) (gap numbers 384 to 390);
- Mental health, psychological safety, and gender and cultural diversity (HTW 11/WP.4, annex 1, appendix 11) (gap numbers 394 and 395 (chapters II and III only));
- Ballast water management (HTW 11/WP.4, annex 1, appendix 12) (gap numbers 405 to 408); and
- Cybersecurity (HTW 11/WP.4, annex 1, appendix 13) (gap numbers 409 to 416, (chapters II and III only)); and

Chapter 3, existing provisions (gap numbers 161 to 242), and including new provisions for:

- Violence and harassment, including sexual harassment, bullying and sexual assault (HTW 11/WP.4, annex 1, appendix 10) (gap numbers 384 to 390);
- Mental health, psychological safety, and gender and cultural diversity (HTW 11/WP.4, annex 1, appendix 11) (gap numbers 394 and 395 (chapters II and III only));
- Ballast water management (HTW 11/WP.4, annex 1, appendix 12) (gap numbers 405 to 408); and
- Cybersecurity (HTW 11/WP.4, annex 1, appendix 13) (gap numbers 409 to 416, (chapters II and III only)).

**HTW 12/6/1, as attached**, provides the consolidated text of chapters 2 and 3 of the 1978 STCW Convention and Code.

There are 56 papers that provide comments on **Chapter 2 Master and deck department** of the 1978 STCW Convention and Code (due to the high number of papers, details will be provided upon request):

- 10 papers by China
- 9 paper by the UK
- 6 papers by EU States and EC
- 6 papers by Iran
- 5 papers by Republic of Korea
- 2 papers by Bangladesh, Brazil, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Saudi Arabia & Thailand
- 2 papers by Canaha
- 2 papers by CCS
- 2 papers by India
- 2 papers by Japan
- 2 papers by Russia

- 1 paper by Australia and IMRF
- 1 paper by Bangladesh, Brazil, Malaysia, Philippines and Saudi Arabia
- 1 paper by Brazil, Malaysia, Philippines and Saudi Arabia
- 1 paper by INTERTANKO and Nautical Institute
- 1 paper by INTERTANKO and OCIMF
- 1 paper by INTERTANKO, Nautical Institute and WISTA
- 1 paper by Israel
- 1 paper by the UK

There are 72 papers that provide comments on **Chapter 3 Engine department** of the 1978 STCW Convention and Code:

- 12 papers by Canada
- 10 papers by China
- 10 papers by Iran
- 9 papers by EU States and EC
- 5 papers by India
- 4 papers by Republic of Korea
- 3 papers by the US
- 2 papers by ICS
- 2 papers by Japan
- 1 paper by Azerbaijan
- 1 paper by Bangladesh, Brazil, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines and Saudi Arabia
- 1 paper by Bangladesh, Brazil, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Saudi Arabia and NI
- 1 paper by Bangladesh, Brazil, Malaysia, Philippines and Saudi Arabia
- 1 paper by the UK

There are 9 papers discussing issues under **Violence and harassment, including sexual harassment, bullying and sexual assault** (gap numbers 384 to 390):

- ✓ **HTW 12/6/19**, submitted by The Nautical Institute, provides draft amendments to section A-II/1, paragraph 6 and section A-III/1, paragraph 2 of the Code of the STCW Code in order to address gap No.385.
- ✓ **HTW 12/6/33**, submitted by ICS, provides draft amendments to tables A-II/1, A-II/2, A-II/3, A-III/1, A-III/2 and A-III/6, and sections B-II/4, B-II/5, B-III/4, B-III/5 and B-III/7 the STCW Code, in order to address gap no.390.
- ✓ **HTW 12/6/72** and **HTW 12/6/159**, submitted by EU States and EC, provides draft amendments to the STCW Code, in order to address gap No. 388.
- ✓ **HTW 12/6/74**, submitted by NI, OCIMF, at el, provides draft amendments to the 1978 STCW Convention and Code, in order to address gap Nos. 384, 386, 387, 388, 389 and 390 pertaining to violence and harassment, including sexual harassment, bullying and sexual assault.
- ✓ **HTW 12/6/112**, submitted by Republic of Korea, provides draft amendments to the STCW Code, in order to address gaps nos.387, 389 and 390.
- ✓ **HTW 12/6/122**, submitted by Japan, Norway and Singapore, provides draft amendments to the STCW Code, in order to address gap nos.384, 386, 387, 388, 389 and 390.
- ✓ **HTW 12/6/130**, submitted by the US, provides draft amendments to the STCW Code, in order to address gap nos.384, 387 and 388.
- ✓ **HTW 12/6/155**, submitted by Azerbaijan, provides draft amendments to the 1978 STCW Convention to address gap No. 385.

There are 2 papers discussing issues under **Mental health, psychological safety, and gender and cultural diversity** (gap numbers 394 and 395 (chapters II and III only)):

- ✓ **HTW 12/6/114**, submitted by Republic of Korea, provides draft amendments to the STCW Code, in order to address gap no. 395.
- ✓ **HTW 12/6/151**, submitted by China, provides draft amendments to the STCW Code, in order to address gap no. 395.

There are 5 papers discussing issues under **Ballast water management** (gap numbers 405 to 408):

- ✓ **HTW 12/6/34**, submitted by China, ICS, INTERTANKO, **INTERCARGO** and IPTA, provides draft amendments to the STCW Code, in order to address gap no. 406. The co-sponsors conclude that generic training related to the operation and maintenance of ballast water management systems is required and should be treated with the same philosophy, and as such, it should be included in the STCW Convention and Code in the same manner as the existing generic training related to other ships' systems and equipment. Such generic training should be seen as a formative precondition for the subsequent onboard familiarization required by regulation B-6 of the BWM Convention, as well as more generally by STCW regulation I/14 and the ISM Code.
- ✓ **HTW 12/6/82**, submitted by BEMA, provides proposed draft amendments to the STCW Code, in order to address gap Nos. 405, 406, 407 and 408.
- ✓ **HTW 12/6/91**, submitted by India, provides draft amendments to the STCW Code, in order to address gap no.407.
- ✓ **HTW 12/6/115**, submitted by Republic of Korea, provides draft amendments to the STCW Code, in order to address gaps nos.405, 406, 407 and 408.
- ✓ **HTW 12/6/121**, submitted by Japan, Norway and Singapore, provides draft amendments to the STCW Code, in order to address gap Nos. 405, 406 and 408.

There are 5 papers discussing issues under **Cybersecurity** (gap numbers 409 to 416, (chapters II and III only)):

- ✓ **HTW 12/6/35**, submitted by ICS, provides draft amendments to the STCW Code, in order to address gap No. 412. While the Master has the overall responsibility, the crew member designated as the ship cyber security officer (ship CySO) is responsible for cyber risk management on the ship and ensuring the specifics of compliance with applicable cyber security guidelines and the SMS under the requirements of the ISM Code. While cyber security should be managed under the requirements of the ISM Code, in practice, companies may assign a suitable management level qualified officer, such as the chief officer, chief engineer or the existing Ship Security Officer (SSO) the responsibility for managing onboard cyber security. Such responsibility should be seen as separate but complementary to their existing duties and responsibilities as outlined in the Ship Security Plan (SSP) and the ISPS Code. The crew member designated as the ship CySO, within the SMS, should also be provided with guidance on escalation paths to shore and coordination with the SSO/PFSO, where appropriate.
- ✓ **HTW 12/6/73** and **HTW 12/6/160**, submitted by EU States and EC, provides draft amendments to the STCW Code, in order to address gap Nos. 409, 415 and 416.
- ✓ **HTW 12/6/116**, submitted by Republic of Korea, provides draft amendments to the STCW Code, in order to address gap No. 411.
- ✓ **HTW 12/6/152**, submitted by China, provides draft amendments to the STCW Code, in order to address gap No. 409, in relation to the matter on lacking of training requirements for cybersecurity knowledge and skills.

### 3. Papers on other chapters

There are 10 papers discussing other issues, including **HTW 12/6/162 suggesting that any reduction in seagoing service requirements for STCW II/1 certification should only be considered if based on clear evidence.**

- ✓ **HTW 12/6/85**, submitted by EU States and EC, proposes the development of Knowledge, Understanding and Proficiency (KUPs) based on the Generic interim guidelines on training for seafarers on ships using alternative fuels and new technologies (STCW.7/Circ.25), to be included in the revised STCW Convention and Code. It emphasizes the need to provide a clear structure and location for these standards. The submission builds on the ongoing work of the working and correspondence groups on training standards for alternative fuels and technologies and refers to gaps identified in document HTW 12/6.
- ✓ **HTW 12/6/96**, submitted by India, proposes changes to competency table A-II/1, pursuant to a comprehensive review, to add new competencies to cater for new rules, technical developments, and to remove outdated requirements. This is a revised submission based on the proposal in document HTW 11/6/18, which was kept in abeyance at HTW 11, using the agreed template as set out in document HTW 12/6 and addresses gap Nos. 118, 125, 406 and 408.
- ✓ **HTW 12/6/97**, submitted by India, proposes changes to competency table A-II/2, pursuant to a comprehensive review, to add new competencies to cater for new rules, technical developments, and to remove outdated requirements. This is a revised submission based on proposals in document HTW 11/6/17, which was kept in abeyance at HTW 11, using the template as set out in document HTW 12/6 and addresses gap Nos. 140, 410 and 412.
- ✓ **HTW 12/6/98**, submitted by India,, proposes the addition of some more competencies to section A-II/4 to align with the existing practice on board, which needs to be addressed owing to the development of the ship's technology and lessons learned in the past few years. This is a revised submission based on the proposal in document HTW 11/6/16, which was kept in abeyance at HTW 11, by using the template as set out in document HTW 12/6.
- ✓ **HTW 12/6/117**, submitted by Russia, provides draft amendments to the STCW Code, in order to address gap nos.96 and 97, in relation to the matter on inadequacy or even lacking performance standards and provisions for the use of modern simulators. Partially, it overcomes limitations and outdated requirements in the GMDSS simulator guidance of section B-I/12 due to the latest amendments in the SOLAS regarding GMDSS ship's equipment. The importance of the GMDSS radio communications training will only increase with coming digital technologies. Inclusion of the GMDSS simulator basic requirements into part A of the Code will further increase its importance.
- ✓ **HTW 12/6/126**, submitted by Kenya, New Zealand, Philippines, South Africa, and United Arab Emirates, provides draft amendments to the 1978 STCW Convention and Code, in order to address gap Nos. 2 and 3, in relation to the matter on facilitation of transition and/or transfer between industries and relevant conventions, including seagoing service.
- ✓ **HTW 12/6/128**, submitted by the UK, provides draft amendments to the 1978 STCW Convention and Code, in order to address gap no.17, in relation to the matter on the recognition of simulator-based training as part of approved seagoing service.
- ✓ **HTW 12/6/153**, submitted by Azerbaijan, provides draft amendments to the STCW Convention in order to address gap no.56, in relation to the qualification criteria of a "qualified persons".
- ✓ **HTW 12/6/161**, submitted by Morocco, supports the joint proposal by Australia and the International Maritime Rescue Federation (IMRF) (HTW 12/6/103), which highlights the critical need to maintain and modernize Search and Rescue (SAR)

training requirements for all seafarers under the STCW Convention. As a coastal State with dense maritime traffic and complex SAR challenges, Morocco shares the deep concerns that any dilution of SAR training standards would weaken the global SAR system, compromise the safety of life at sea, and contravene the fundamental objectives of the STCW and SAR Conventions.

- ✓ **HTW 12/6/162**, submitted by Nautical Institute, provides comments on documents HTW 12/6/36, HTW 12/6/75, HTW 12/6/120 and HTW 12/6/156 regarding reduction in seagoing service requirements for STCW II/1 certification. A suitable period of sea time is an essential component in the gaining of practical experience, which underpins the knowledge, understanding and proficiencies set out in the STCW Code. The proposals do not include any evidence to support reducing this safety-related requirement, with one proposal seeking to address "a shortage of training berths" (HTW 12/6/75). Due to the safety-related nature of this seagoing service requirement, the advice of The Nautical Institute is that any reduction should only be considered if based on clear evidence.

## Agenda item 7 - Development of a safety regulatory framework to support the reduction of GHG emissions from ships using new technologies and alternative fuels

There are 6 papers under Agenda item 7:

- ✓ **HTW 12/6/85**, submitted by EU States and EC, proposes the development of Knowledge, Understanding and Proficiency (KUPs) based on the Generic interim guidelines on training for seafarers on ships using alternative fuels and new technologies (STCW.7/Circ.25), to be included in the revised STCW Convention and Code. It emphasizes the need to provide a clear structure and location for these standards. The submission builds on the ongoing work of the working and correspondence groups on training standards for alternative fuels and technologies and refers to gaps identified in document HTW 12/6.
- ✓ **HTW 12/7**, submitted by China, provides the report of the Correspondence Group on the Development of Training Provisions for Seafarers on Ships Using Alternative Fuels and New Technologies.
- ✓ **HTW 12/7/1**, submitted by ICS and ITF, proposes amendments to regulation V/3 of the STCW Convention and section B-V/3 of the STCW Code to address familiarization aspects for masters, officers and other personnel on board ships subject to the IGF Code. A rationale is presented for the necessity of companies to develop bespoke familiarization programmes to address ship-, technology-, system- and equipment-specific aspects while providing guidance for developing such programmes available as part of the Maritime Just Transition Task Force's Baseline Training Framework for Seafarers in Decarbonization project.
- ✓ **HTW 12/7/2**, submitted by ICS and ITF, proposes amendments to regulation V/3 of the STCW Convention and section B-V/3 of the STCW Code to address familiarization aspects for masters, officers and other personnel on board ships subject to the IGF Code. A rationale is presented for the necessity of companies to develop bespoke familiarization programmes to address ship-, technology-, system- and equipment-specific aspects while providing guidance for developing such programmes available as part of the Maritime Just Transition Task Force's Baseline Training Framework for Seafarers in Decarbonization project.

- ✓ **HTW 12/7/2**, submitted by ICS and ITF, proposes amendments to regulation V/3 of the STCW Convention and section B-V/3 of the STCW Code to address familiarization aspects for masters, officers and other personnel on board ships subject to the IGF Code. A rationale is presented for the necessity of companies to develop bespoke familiarization programmes to address ship-, technology-, system- and equipment-specific aspects while providing guidance for developing such programmes available as part of the Maritime Just Transition Task Force's Baseline Training Framework for Seafarers in Decarbonization project.
- ✓ **HTW 12/7/3**, submitted by EU States and EC, proposes for consideration of the terms of reference of the Working Group on the Development of Training Provisions for Seafarers on Ships Using Alternative Fuels and New Technologies, if established during HTW 12, in order to include training provisions on wind propulsion systems.
- ✓ **HTW 12/7/4**, submitted by RINA, recommends providing all seafarers who are assigned to work on ammonia-fuelled ships with basic training before serving on board, regardless of their duties and rank. Given the specific risks associated with ammonia as fuel and the importance of ensuring that all seafarers on board are aware of its characteristics and safety hazards, it is necessary to provide basic training to all seafarers working with ammonia as fuel. RINA proposes that these considerations are to be taken into account during discussions in the working group, if established.

## Agenda item 8 - Scoping exercise and enhancement of the effectiveness of provisions on fatigue and seafarers' hours of work and res

There are 2 papers under Agenda item 8:

- ✓ **HTW 12/8**, submitted by Indonesia, Italy, Malaysia, Mexico, Oman, Philippines, Qatar, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, OCIMF, IFSMA, INTERTANKO, InterManager, ITF and The Nautical Institute, reviews the concerns previously raised to the Maritime Safety Committee regarding the effectiveness of provisions on seafarer fatigue and seafarers' hours of work and rest. This paper then proposes a four-phase work plan to complete the mandated scoping exercise, including the establishment of an intersessional correspondence group to progress this work in an expeditious manner.
- ✓ **HTW 12/8/1**, submitted by China, proposes preliminary recommendations for the scoping exercise on fatigue and seafarers' hours of work and rest. It provides a non-exhaustive list of regulatory instruments to clarify the boundaries of the scoping exercise. A systematic review of these instruments has identified key gaps in multiple dimensions, including manning, company management and regulatory coordination. These gaps contribute to regulatory failures, seafarer fatigue, and malpractice in recording work and rest hours. The findings are intended as a reference for the Sub-Committee's work.

## Agenda item 11 - Any other business

**HTW 12/11** submitted by ICS - Uncertainty regarding application of new seafarer violence and harassment training to existing seafarers, submitted by ICS.

In May 2024, MSC 108 adopted amendments to the STCW Code, to include training provisions for violence and harassment, including sexual harassment, bullying and sexual assault, as part of the

minimum standards of competence in personal safety and social responsibilities (PSSR). This training is intended to be part of basic training for new seafarers, i.e. those entering the seafaring workforce on or after 1 January 2026. However, there seems to be uncertainty regarding whether the new training and certification requirements for new entrants should also be applied to existing seafarers and, therefore, enforceable through port State inspections. As outlined in this document, this uncertainty is having a considerable impact on shipping companies, maritime education and training institutes and seafarers themselves. Through this document, **ICS proposes:**

- the Sub-Committee recommends the Maritime Safety Committee (MSC) issue an IMO circular and public clarification, as appropriate, advising that the amendments to section A-VI/1 and table A-VI/1-4 concerning violence and harassment training are intended only for new seafarers who are due to undertake basic training on or after 1 January 2026.

## APPENDIX

### Provisional Timetable

HTW 12/1/2  
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#### ANNEX

#### PROVISIONAL TIMETABLE FOR HTW 12\*

Day	Agenda items	WG/DG
Monday, 23 February	Opening of the session Election of Vice-Chair* 1 Adoption of the agenda 2 Decisions of other IMO bodies 6 Comprehensive review of the 1978 STCW Convention and Code 7 Development of a safety regulatory framework to support the reduction of GHG emissions from ships using new technologies and alternative fuels	WG 1/WG 2 WG 3
Tuesday, 24 February	8 Scoping exercise and enhancement of the effectiveness of provisions on fatigue and seafarers' hours of work and rest 3 Validated model training courses	DG 2 DG 1
Wednesday, 25 February	4 Role of the human element 5 Reports on unlawful practices associated with certificates of competency 11 Any other business	
Thursday, 26 February	<i>No plenary session</i>	
Friday, 27 February	10 Election of Chair and Vice-Chair for 2027 – Reports of the working and drafting groups 9 Biennial status report and provisional agenda for HTW 13 12 Report to the Maritime Safety Committee	

A Vice-Chair for HTW 12 and the remainder of 2026 will be elected at the session. Refer to document HTW 12/10.