

International Bargaining Forum

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For immediate release

27 September 2007

International Bargaining Forum Agrees Seafarers Pay

At its meeting today in London, representatives of the International Bargaining Forum reached agreement on changes to seafarers pay and conditions that will take effect on 1 January 2008. The IBF agreements cover some 70,000 seafarers of all nationalities serving on over 3,500 ships.

The IBF agreement covered increases in wage levels, changes in contractual clauses to reflect the provisions of the ILO Maritime Labour Convention and a number of important changes to IBF systems and structures.

Both sides commented that the achievement of amendments to the crew contracts that made substantial progress towards full compliance with the ILO Maritime Labour Convention was a considerable achievement. They considered that the IBF contracts were in the forefront of making the industry as a whole compliant with the best and most recent international labour standards for seafarers.

The ITF Spokesman, Brian Orrell, expressed particular satisfaction that the IBF had agreed to establish IBF Developed Economy Ratings Funds to encourage companies to offer employment to seafarers from traditional maritime nations who had suffered major job losses during the past two decades. "This shows", he said, "that the IBF can create innovative solutions to problems and improve the overall standards in the industry to all parties."

The JNG Spokesman, Ian Sherwood, stated that there were a number of measures agreed by the IBF that appealed to the employer organisations. The agreements on implementing IBF contracts more effectively and more flexibly were of particular importance and most welcome.

The delegates reported that it had been a particularly difficult and challenging series of meetings, starting in Sydney in May and proceeding via Tokyo and Pusan to end in London. They expressed their satisfaction that the IBF system had managed once again to deliver an outcome that represented best practice in the industry and a series of measures that would benefit both seafarers and maritime employers.

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