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IBF Extends High Risk Area

The International Bargaining Forum (IBF) responds to the widespread piracy attacks that originated in Somalia by extending the High Risk Area (HRA) into the Arabian Sea and the Indian Ocean. IBF issues separate guidelines on navigation in the Extended High Risk Area (EHRA) to address labor and security concerns.

According to IBF Resolution, the EHRA is bordered in the West from the coastlines at the border of Djibouti and Somalia to position 1148N; 45 E; from 12:00 N, 45E to Mayyun Island in the Bad El Mandeb Straits; in the East, it is bordered at 78 E; in the South at 10 S; and in the North at 26 N. Vessels navigating these coordinates are required to provide security measures to seafarers above the latest BMP level and vessel crew and compliment are entitled to double pay and double compensation during piracy attacks.

Effective 01 April 2011, IBF instructs vessels navigating in the EHRA will be required to follow the latest BMPs as minimum standard of security measure. IBF also says that seafarers will have to be paid a bonus equal to 100% of their wage and double compensation when the vessel they are boarding is under attack. However, seafarers will not be entitled to the option of whether to proceed or not with the

passage while their vessels are navigating the EHRA.

Meanwhile, the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration is looking into revising their existing Governing Board Resolution (GBR) on the High Risk Area or GBR No. 04 Series of 2008 to adopt the guidelines of the IBF. POEA called for a consultative meeting with the maritime industry, including JMG, last April 11 for the purpose. The new GBR still has to be issued. Source: IBF, POEA

JMG raises 7.5million for Japan

JMG will be donating 7.5 million pesos to the Japanese Red Cross Society. The donation was raised from contributions to the Philippine-Japan Friendship Cooperation Fund. The fund will be given to benefit those affected by the March 11, 2011 earthquake and tsunami disaster.

JMG says PJMCC remitted US\$120,000.00 on 14 April 2011 and another US\$50,000.00 on 08 May 2011 to the Japanese Shipowners' Association (JSA), the channelling agency for the Philippine-Japan Friendship Cooperation Fund. JMG further announced that the campaign will still be running and open while rehabilitation in Japan continues and while donations are still being extended for the Japan cause.

Meanwhile, DOLE Secretary Rosalinda D. Baldoz who was consulted by the industry at the start of the project has instructed the

MITC to formally create a committee to handle tripartite initiatives for emergency situations arising from major calamities and catastrophes especially abroad. Source: JMG, PJMCC

MITC Resolves Ratification of ILO C-185

The Maritime Industry Tripartite Council (MITC) has issued a resolution recommending the ratification of ILO C185 or the Seafarers' Identification Documents Convention of 2003. Further, MITC assists in the preparation of the ratification document which will be submitted to the Senate before Congress adjourns its first regular session in June 10.

The MITC Resolution adopts previous resolutions of the Tripartite Industrial Peace Council passed in 2009 recommending Philippine ratification of the ILO-C185 Convention. The MITC is hopeful that the present resolution will be accepted positively and requisite action will be taken by Government agencies to ensure ratification of the convention.

The Council has given top priority on the ratification of ILO-C185 among its agenda considering that the Philippines' continued non-ratification of said convention has placed Filipino seafarers at a disadvantage and has subjected ship operators to needless fines in foreign ports since late last year. Source: MITC, JMG

Congress creates OWWA charter

After more than three decades, OWWA might finally get its own agency charter as Batasan reviews House Bills 2422 and 3562, both of which written for the purpose of creating a charter to govern OWWA's operations and administration.

The Committee on Overseas Workers Affairs (COWA) headed by Committee Secretary Atty. Christopher S. Lomibao met on April 13 and May 04 to review and harmonize the provisions of the said two bills. COWA has so far been able to define preliminary parts of the bill including 'Declaration of policy' and the 'Nature' and 'Scope' of the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration. .

The creation of the OWWA Charter is seen as a solution to the increasing controversies surrounding the OWWA Fund and the OWWA Contributions, and how these should be disbursed to fund OWWA Services to OFWs.

JMG and FAME sit as part of the Technical Working Group reviewing the bills to ensure that seafarer's contributions to the OWWA fund will be treated separately and independently for the benefit of seafarers and for services extended to them including repatriation and insurance. Source: COWA, JMG

POEA declares 3 Middle East countries under caution stage

Alert Level 2 or Caution Stage has been raised on Bahrain, Yemen and Syria by the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration. POEA says that the deployment of new hires to these countries is indefinitely deferred until political and security conditions in these countries have stabilized.

Since the alert level was raised and a partial deferment of deployment was imposed, returning OFWs cannot be deployed except if an affidavit is executed by the worker expressing his willingness to travel to any of the three countries which have been placed on alert considering the unstable political situation in these places.

Processing of New-hire OFWs bound for said countries have also been suspended. The deferment of deployment which was announced through POEA Advisory Nos. 12, 17, and 21 in March are still effective. POEA has not issued any order lifting these guidelines yet. Source: POEA

MITC says MLC 2006 will cover domestic ships

The Maritime Industry Tripartite Council targets to recommend ratification of the ILO-Maritime Labor Convention of 2006 by September of 2011. According to DOLE Undersecretary Hans Leo J. Cacdac, the domestic seafaring sector will be included in the implementation. The

TWG is working on the details of the ratification taking into account the exclusions and flexibilities allowed by the MLC.

The TWG is considering the exclusion of about 1710 domestic ships with Bay and River licenses, and an additional number of ships with Coastwise licences navigating 20 miles from land and 100 miles from departure. Temporary exclusion until 2020 is also being considered for ships with Coastwise licenses which are below 200 GT. After 2020, these ships will be required to meet MLC standards and will be subject to inspection.

Ships which are over 200 GT, possessing Coastwise licences and are above 200 GT and navigating outside the –‘20-miles-from-land; 100-miles-from-departure’ limit shall be covered in the implementation together with ships of international voyages.

MITC will be bringing the findings to public consultation with maritime stakeholders in Cebu, Davao and NCR before September 2011 to determine the propriety of the exclusions. Source: MITC, JMG

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is an umbrella organization of the five largest manning associations of the Philippines namely:



the Filipino Association for Mariners' Employment, Inc. (FAME), the Filipino Shipowners' Association (FSA), the International Maritime Association of the Philippines (INTERMAP), the Philippine Association of Manning Agencies and Shipmanagers, Inc (PAMAS) and the Philippine-Japan Manning Consultative Council (PJMCC)

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