



REPUBLIC OF CYPRUS  
**SHIPPING DEPUTY MINISTRY**

Circular No. 8/2023

13 March 2023

SDM 05.13.002  
SDM 04.28.003.013.001

To all Registered Owners, Registered Bareboat Charterers,  
Managers and Representatives of Ships flying the Cyprus Flag

To all holders of certificates of competency, certificates of proficiency and  
documentary evidences issued by the Shipping Deputy Ministry

**Subject: Preventing Drug and alcohol abuse on board Cyprus flagged vessels**

I hereby wish to inform you that in accordance with paragraph 2 of Regulation V/III/1 of the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers, 1978 (STCW78) as amended<sup>1</sup>, for the purpose of preventing drug and alcohol abuse on board Cyprus flagged vessels we remind you of the following:

- 1) Any level of alcohol consumption by crew members on board a ship has implications for the safety of the vessel, the crew and any passengers. Even small quantities of alcohol have been shown to sufficiently impair judgment and increase the risk of accidents.
- 2) Drug abuse is a serious hazard to the crew members, other persons on board, and the security of the vessel.
- 3) It is an offence for a professional seafarer to be impaired by drink (or drugs) whilst on duty on board a ship or at any time on board a vessel if they might be required to undertake emergency duties to protect the safety of passengers.
- 4) For the purpose of preventing alcohol abuse a limit of not greater than 0.05% blood alcohol level (BAC) or 0.25mg/l alcohol in the breath for masters, officers and other seafarers while performing designated safety, security and marine environmental duties is established.<sup>2</sup>
- 5) In accordance with section 10 of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Laws of 1977 to 2020 (Law 29/1977 as amended) in conjunction with sections 5(1)(a) and 5(3) of the Penal Code (Cap.154) as amended, the use of illegal drugs on board Cyprus flagged vessels is prohibited and constitutes a criminal offence.

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<sup>1</sup>Ratified by the Republic of Cyprus by virtue of the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers, 1978 (Ratification) and for Matters Connected Therewith Law of 1985 to 2012 (Law 8/85 as amended).

<sup>2</sup> Paragraph 10 of Section A-VIII/1 of the STCW Code.



- 6) Paragraph 8 of Section B-VIII/1 of the STCW Code recommends that all companies should consider the implementation of a clearly written policy of drug and alcohol abuse prevention including a prohibition on the consumption of alcohol four hours prior to serving as a member of a watch. In addition, the ILO publication “Drug and Alcohol Prevention Programs in the Maritime Industry” (A Manual for Planners)<sup>3</sup> provides valuable information and should be taken into account.<sup>4</sup>
- 7) The shipowners and ship management companies should:
- i. adopt policies and procedures to prevent drug and alcohol abuse on ships;
  - ii. educate seafarers on the harmful effects and consequences of the unauthorized possession and abuse of drugs and of alcohol;
  - iii. provide guidance to seafarers on safe and sensible alcohol consumption;
  - iv. identify at an early-stage seafarers who may be abusing drugs or have an alcohol related problem;
  - v. eliminate the presence of unauthorized drugs on ships;
  - vi. provide confidential advice, support and assistance to any seafarers known to have drug- or alcohol-related problems; and
  - vii. provide instructions to seafarers and the shore-based employees responsible for implementing the drug and alcohol policy.

**This Circular must be placed on board vessels flying the Cyprus flag.**



Liana Charalambous Tanos  
Acting Permanent Secretary

cc:

- Maritime Offices of the Shipping Deputy Ministry abroad
- Inspectors of Cyprus Ships
- Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Diplomatic Missions and Honorary Consular Offices of the Republic
- Cyprus Shipping Chamber
- Cyprus Union of Ship-owners
- Cyprus Master Mariners Association
- Association of Merchant Marine Officers
- Recognised maritime training schools
- Trade Union SEK
- Trade Union PEO
- Trade Union DEOK
- Cyprus Bar Association

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<sup>3</sup>[https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed\\_protect/---protrav/---safework/documents/publication/wcms\\_117734.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_protect/---protrav/---safework/documents/publication/wcms_117734.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> Paragraph 9 of Section B-VIII/1 of the STCW Code.