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**LIBERIA MARITIME AUTHORITY**

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**Marine Advisory: 33/2020**

**SUBJECT: Explanation of difference between the ILO minimum monthly basic wage for an AB seafarer and the IBF minimum monthly basis wage for an AB seafarer**

**Reference:** a) [IMEC Circular \(20\)123](#)  
b) [MLC, 2006 Guideline B2.2.4.1 and Standard A2.3.3](#)

**Dear Shipowner/Operator/Master/Inspectors/Recognized Organizations:**

The purpose of this Marine Advisory is to explain to Owners, Operators, Masters, Inspectors and Recognized Organizations the calculation of minimum monthly basic wage for an Able Body (AB) seafarer set by the International Labour Organization (ILO) and that set for an AB seafarer by the International Bargaining Forum (IBF) and the difference between the two wage scales.

**Background**

Guideline B2.2.4 of Maritime Labour Convention (MLC), 2006 provides that the basic pay or wages for a calendar month of service for an AB seafarer should be no less than the amount periodically set by the Joint Maritime Commission or another body authorized by the Governing Body of the International Labour Office.

Following negotiations concluded in 2018 in Geneva, a Subcommittee of the Joint Maritime Commission (JMC) of the ILO has agreed on a Resolution raising the minimum monthly basic wage figure for AB seafarers to \$641 a month as of January 2021.

Standard A2.3.3 requires that each member acknowledges that the normal working hours' standard for seafarers, like that for other workers, shall be based on an eight-hour day with one day of rest per week and rest on public holidays. However, this shall not prevent the Member from having procedures to authorize or register a collective bargaining agreement which determines seafarers' normal working hours on a basis no less favourable than this standard.

The International Bargaining Forum (IBF) was established in 2003 as the mechanism by which maritime employers, represented by the Joint Negotiating Group (JNG), and seafarers' unions, represented by the International Transport-Workers' Federation (ITF) could negotiate over the wages and conditions of employment of seafarers serving on ships under collective bargaining agreements (CBA) and to which ITF Special Agreements apply.

**Explanation**

The following explanation is primarily intended for those shipowners and operators that use the IBF CBA on board their ships.

In order to explain the difference between the ILO minimum monthly basic wage and the IBF minimum monthly basic wage for an AB seafarer, the International Maritime Employers' Council (IMEC) recently issued a circular in [reference a](#)).

Taken at face value, the revised ILO minimum monthly wage scale would suggest that some of the IBF CBAs negotiated in 2018 (which will still be in force in 2021 as a result of the recent agreement on postponing talks) are below this minimum. However, in reality, this is not the case.

The ILO minimum monthly basic wage for an AB seafarer is calculated on 8 hours work per day on a 6 days week (a 48 hours week) whilst IBF CBAs are based on either 5 days or 5.5 days (40 hours week or 44 hours week).

It can therefore be concluded and is widely recognized that the IBF wages currently exceed the minimum rate established by the ILO.

For more information, please contact Regulations and Standards at [RegsandStandards@liscr.com](mailto:RegsandStandards@liscr.com) or telephone +1 703 790 3434.

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