



DanishShipping

Best Practice Guidelines

For a safe and respectful
workplace environment
onboard – free from
bullying and harassment

In the shipping industry, we have focused on physical safety for years to the extent that it has become part of our DNA.

However, studies unfortunately show that despite many good initiatives and intentions in the industry, we still have a long way to go regarding the equally important psychological safety.

As an industry, we face a significant, collective task: We must create a healthier, safer, and psychologically secure work environment on our ships.

However, it may be difficult to know where to start. Therefore, we recommend initially focusing on our three main recommendations and then considering which of the associated action proposals to implement first.

- **Lead from the Top**
- **Address Challenges and Implement Training**
- **Measure and Report Regularly**

We encourage you to actively use our recommendations in your efforts to make maritime work safe and secure for everyone.

Together, we can change the course.

Anne W. Trolle

Executive Director

- **Lead from the Top**

The CEO and the rest of the management play a crucial role in making the onboard work environment a top priority. Therefore, the effort should be anchored in top management. Management must clearly communicate goals and priorities and explain how these goals are integrated into daily operations and embedded in the company culture.

Action Proposals

- Establish and clarify goals and visions for the crew's health, safety, and psychological security. Articulate the desired culture.
- Formulate and publish a policy that clearly commits the management and describes a clear procedure for reporting bullying and harassment.
- Define desired behaviors and norms that promote health, safety, and psychological security onboard, including respectful communication. Also, provide examples of unacceptable behavior.
- Involve employees in the development of the company's policies, programs, and implementation plans.
- Allocate responsibility for the implementation of the crew's health, safety, and psychological security so that no one is in doubt.
- If the company uses ship managers, clarify your expectations for the onboard work environment and integrate goals and reporting into the contracts.

- **Address Challenges and Implement Training**

We urge all maritime companies to develop a strategy to create maximum awareness of the crew's health, safety, and psychological security – and to introduce comprehensive training programs for everyone onboard.

Action Proposals

- Raise awareness among the crew and emphasize the importance of ongoing education and dialogue.
- Use multiple communication channels (posters, brochures, on-board announcements, meetings, training videos) to highlight your efforts. Use simple language for maximum effect.
- Make it clear where the crew can report incidents of bullying and harassment. Ensure a transparent process that clearly shows how reports are handled and how the crew is protected.
- Ensure that captains and senior officers understand their role and responsibility in creating a healthy and safe work environment.
- Establish an ambassador program with selected employees who can lead and promote health, safety, and psychological security initiatives onboard.
- Integrate dialogues and role-plays on bullying and harassment into onboard training exercises.
- Offer regular training and education in cultural differences.
- Offer conflict management training.

- **Measure and Report Regularly**

It is important that everyone onboard feels safe and respected, so they dare to speak up about any incidents they experience or witness. Only by bringing problems to light can we address them.

We therefore encourage all maritime companies to promote a "speak-up" culture. Create a culture where everyone, regardless of background and position, dares to speak openly - without fearing consequences.

Action Proposals

- Create platforms for open dialogue and feedback where crew members can share concerns and suggestions regarding their health, safety, and psychological security.
- Ensure clear reporting lines, including a whistleblower system where anonymous reporting is possible. This will help build trust and promote a "speak-up" culture.
- Implement methods to monitor efforts against bullying and harassment.
- Regularly assess reported incidents, trends, and feedback for continuous improvements (e.g., trust in the reporting system and the number of unreported cases).
- Define a clear and systematic process for investigating reported incidents and ensure prompt, professional, and impartial handling.
- Conduct recurring welfare surveys with a particular focus on crew members' health, well-being, and safety, including the extent of bullying and harassment.

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