

Government proposes amendments to update regulations on merchant shipping safety to comply with international standards

The Government gazetted today (June 21) a proposal comprising the introduction of a new Merchant Shipping (Safety) (Ships Carrying Industrial Personnel) Regulation under the Merchant Shipping (Safety) Ordinance (Cap. 369) (the Safety Ordinance) and amendments to the Schedule to the Safety Ordinance to incorporate into local legislation the latest relevant requirements of the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea of the International Maritime Organization.

The proposed amendments aim to provide safety standards for ships that carry industrial personnel and for the personnel themselves, and to address specific risks of maritime operations within the offshore and energy sectors.

A spokesman for the Transport and Logistics Bureau said, "As a major member of the international maritime community, Hong Kong has been a staunch supporter of maritime safety, sparing no effort in safeguarding the safety of industrial personnel engaged in maritime operations in line with the relevant international standards. The proposed legislative amendments demonstrate our continual commitment in this regard."

The Panel on Economic Development of the Legislative Council, as well as the Hong Kong Fleet Operation Advisory Committee of the Marine Department, have been consulted on the legislative proposal. Members supported the proposal.

The proposed legislative amendments will be tabled at the Legislative Council on June 26 for negative vetting.