



Governing Body

313th Session, Geneva, 15–30 March 2012

GB.313/POL/5

Policy Development Section
Social Dialogue Segment

POL

Date: 27 January 2012

Original: English

FIFTH ITEM ON THE AGENDA

Effect to be given to the recommendations of sectoral and technical meetings

Purpose of the document

In the present document, the Governing Body is invited to take note of the outcomes of international meetings held between September and December 2011, approve the publication of two guidelines, a code of practice and a joint publication, and request the Office to follow up on the recommendations of the sectoral and technical meetings covered in this paper (see the draft decision in paragraph 26).

Relevant strategic objective: Enhance the coverage and effectiveness of social protection for all (Outcome 6: Occupational safety and health); and Strengthen tripartism and social dialogue (Outcome 9: Employers' organizations; Outcome 10: Workers' organizations; and Outcome 13: Decent work in economic sectors).

Policy implications: If endorsed by the Governing Body, the meetings' recommendations will guide the Office in its follow-up work.

Legal implications: None.

Financial implications: In cases where recommendations for follow-up are cost-neutral and can be included in the current programme for the 2012–13 biennium, it is envisaged that these will be carried out within the existing budgetary allocations. Follow-up actions that might require substantial resources will be considered for inclusion in proposals for the 2014–15 biennium.

Follow-up action required: The Office will be required to take action as set out in the decision paragraph.

Author unit: Sectoral Activities Department (SECTOR).

Related documents: Reports of the meetings mentioned in this document.

Executive summary

This paper deals with the effect to be given to the recommendations of the following meetings: (a) Global Dialogue Forum on the Needs of Older Workers in relation to Changing Work Processes and the Working Environment in Retail Commerce; (b) Joint ILO–IMO Meeting on Medical Fitness Examinations of Seafarers and Ships’ Medicine Chests; (c) Global Dialogue Forum on the Role of Private Employment Agencies in Promoting Decent Work and Improving the Functioning of Labour Markets in Private Services Sectors; (d) Tripartite Meeting on Promoting Social Dialogue on Restructuring and its Effects on Employment in the Chemical and Pharmaceutical Industries; (e) Tripartite Meeting of Experts for the Review and the Adoption of ILO Guidelines on Training in the Port Sector; (f) Meeting of Experts on the Code of Practice on Safety in the Use of Machinery; and (g) Meeting of the Secretariat on the Revision of the International Basic Safety Standards for Protection against Ionizing Radiation and for the Safety of Radiation Sources (BSS).

It also provides an overview of two symposia – The Business of Representing Employers: Trends, and the Workers’ Symposium on Policies and Regulations to Combat Precarious Employment.

I. Sectoral and technical meetings

A. Global Dialogue Forum on the Needs of Older Workers in relation to Changing Work Processes and the Working Environment in Retail Commerce (21–22 September 2011)

1. In accordance with the decision of the Governing Body,¹ the Global Dialogue Forum on the Needs of Older Workers in relation to Changing Work Processes and the Working Environment in Retail Commerce was held in Geneva on 21 and 22 September 2011. Mr Amir Hossein Shamir (Government, Islamic Republic of Iran) chaired the Forum, which was attended by 15 Government, nine Employer and 14 Worker representatives. Representatives of international non-governmental organizations also took part.
2. The Forum discussed five major themes: the employment and occupational characteristics of retail commerce and the working conditions in the sector; the current age profiles of retail commerce workers and how they and the sector's workforce were likely to be affected by global demographic trends, especially ageing populations; the main factors shaping future labour demand in retail commerce; how the retail sector could increase its competitive capacity in the labour market to attract and retain older workers, especially with respect to terms of employment, working conditions, occupational health and safety, flexible working arrangements, and training and staff development; and, in the context of an ageing global population, how the ILO and its constituents could best support decent work in the retail sector.
3. The Forum adopted consensus points on how best to improve the attraction of workers, including older workers, into the retail commerce sector, and how to retain them.²

B. Joint ILO–IMO Meeting on Medical Fitness Examinations of Seafarers and Ships' Medicine Chests (26–30 September 2011)

4. As decided by the Governing Body,³ the Joint ILO–IMO Meeting on Medical Fitness Examinations of Seafarers and Ships' Medicine Chests was held in Geneva from 26 to 30 September 2011. The Meeting was chaired by Ms Mayte Medina (Government, United States). It was attended by 12 Government, seven Shipowner and five Seafarer representatives. Representatives of intergovernmental and international non-governmental organizations also took part.
5. On the basis of a draft prepared by the Office, the Meeting reviewed and unanimously adopted revised ILO–IMO Guidelines on the medical examination of seafarers.⁴ It also further discussed the contents of ships' medicine chests and adopted conclusions on the

¹ GB.304/STM/1, GB.307/Inf.1 and GB.308/Inf.1.

² GDFRC/2011/11.

³ GB.303/15, paras 47–51; GB.310/14(Rev.), paras 91–93; GB.310/STM/3/3.

⁴ ILO/IMO/JMS/2011/12.

matter (Appendix II of the report of the Meeting),⁵ also requesting the IMO and ILO secretariats to pursue discussions with the World Health Organization (WHO) with a view to consider revising the *International Medical Guide for Ships* (IMGS) to include revised contents for ships' medicine chests.

6. The Office has consequently initiated consultations with the IMO and WHO secretariats and, in light of the progress achieved, will in due course make proposals on the revision of the IMGS and the revision of the contents of ships' medicine chests.

C. Global Dialogue Forum on the Role of Private Employment Agencies in Promoting Decent Work and Improving the Functioning of Labour Markets in Private Services Sectors (18–19 October 2011)

7. As decided by the Governing Body,⁶ the Global Dialogue Forum on the Role of Private Employment Agencies in Promoting Decent Work and Improving the Functioning of Labour Markets in Private Services Sectors was held in Geneva on 18 and 19 October 2011. The Forum was chaired by Mr Jean-Jacques Elmiger (Government, Switzerland). It was attended by 144 participants, including 25 Government representatives and five advisers, 62 Worker representatives and 50 Employer representatives. A representative of the European Commission and representatives of intergovernmental and international non-governmental organizations also took part.
8. The report of its discussions⁷ reflects the substantive essence of the debate at the Global Dialogue Forum. For the first time in a sectoral meeting, the Forum touched upon fundamental issues relating to the wider role and impact of private employment agencies in the world of work. As such the meeting can be considered a milestone event, even if participants did not reach agreement on a document outlining points of consensus.

D. Tripartite Meeting on Promoting Social Dialogue on Restructuring and its Effects on Employment in the Chemical and Pharmaceutical Industries (24–27 October 2011)

9. The Tripartite Meeting on Promoting Social Dialogue on Restructuring and its Effects on Employment in the Chemical and Pharmaceutical Industries was held in Geneva from 24 to 27 October 2011. The Meeting was chaired by Ms Sarah Fox (Worker member of the Governing Body, United States). It was attended by 12 Government, 17 Employer and 23 Worker representatives. Representatives of international non-governmental organizations also took part.
10. Using as a basis for its deliberations a report prepared by the Office,⁸ the Meeting identified changes to employment that had occurred as a result of restructuring in the chemical and pharmaceutical industries, examined how the Global Jobs Pact was being

⁵ ILO/IMO/JMS/2011/13.

⁶ GB.304/STM/1, para. 25, and GB.304/PV, para. 216.

⁷ GDFPSS/2011/9.

⁸ TMCPI/2011.

implemented in those industries, and identified skills and qualifications, as well as vocational training and education programmes, conducive to sustainable development in the industries. The Meeting considered ways to make the industries more attractive to young workers and to women, and how better opportunities for long-term career development could be created. It also discussed challenges and opportunities associated with contract and agency labour in the chemical and pharmaceutical industries, and identified social dialogue practices to promote an atmosphere conducive to better industrial relations during restructuring. Finally, it considered ways in which social dialogue could improve the sustainability of small and medium-sized enterprises and help to promote decent work.

11. The Meeting unanimously adopted a set of conclusions,⁹ which include follow-up activities for action by the ILO.

E. Tripartite Meeting of Experts for the Review and the Adoption of ILO Guidelines on Training in the Port Sector (21–25 November 2011)

12. As decided by the Governing Body,¹⁰ the Tripartite Meeting of Experts for the Review and the Adoption of ILO Guidelines on Training in the Port Sector was held in Geneva from 21 to 25 November 2011. The Meeting was chaired by Mr Brian Thomas (independent expert, United Kingdom). It was attended by 12 Government experts, five Employer experts and three Employer advisers, and five Worker experts and one Worker adviser. Representatives of intergovernmental and international non-governmental organizations also took part.
13. On the basis of a draft prepared by the Office, the Meeting reviewed and unanimously adopted ILO Guidelines on training in the port sector.¹¹ It also adopted a report¹² of its discussions, which includes suggestions for follow-up activities to promote the implementation of the guidelines.

F. Meeting of Experts on the Code of Practice on Safety in the Use of Machinery (29 November–7 December 2011)

14. The Meeting of Experts on the Code of Practice on Safety in the Use of Machinery was held in Geneva from 29 November to 7 December 2011. The Meeting was attended by eight Government, eight Employer and eight Worker experts. It was chaired by an independent chairperson Ms Rosi Edwards (Health and Safety Executive, United Kingdom). Observers also attended the Meeting, representing the WHO, the International Organisation of Employers (IOE) and the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC).

⁹ TMCPI/2011/14.

¹⁰ GB.311/11, paras 5–10.

¹¹ TMEPS/2011/10.

¹² TMEPS/2011/11.

15. On the basis of a draft prepared by the Office, the Meeting reviewed and unanimously adopted the code of practice on safety in the use of machinery¹³ and a report¹⁴ of its discussions.

G. Meeting of the Secretariat on the Revision of the International Basic Safety Standards for Protection against Ionizing Radiation and for the Safety of Radiation Sources (12 December 2011)

16. In accordance with the procedures indicated in paragraph 7 of the paper submitted to the Governing Body in March 2007,¹⁵ the BSS have been revised with the active participation and agreement of experts appointed by the Employers' and Workers' groups of the Governing Body, who participated in the work together with representatives of the Office. The Board of Governors of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) approved the revised BSS with the title "Radiation Protection and Safety of Radiation Sources: International Basic Safety Standards" on 12 September 2011 and the IAEA published an interim edition of the text.¹⁶
17. The Director-General of the IAEA has invited the ILO and the other organizations involved¹⁷ to co-sponsor the new BSS. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) has already confirmed its co-sponsorship. Subject to the approval of the ILO Governing Body and of the competent bodies of the other participating organizations, the revised BSS will become a joint publication, issued by the IAEA.

II. Symposia

A. The Business of Representing Employers: Trends (5–6 September 2011)

18. As decided by the Governing Body,¹⁸ the Symposium on the Business of Representing Employers: Trends was held in Geneva on 5 and 6 September 2011. The Symposium was attended by 21 representatives of employers' organizations chosen in consultation with the secretariat of the Employers' group of the Governing Body, by enterprise representatives and by leading academic researchers.

¹³ MEUM/2011/6.

¹⁴ MEUM/2011/7.

¹⁵ GB.298/15/2.

¹⁶ The revised BSS, in Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish, can be downloaded from http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_protect/---protrav/---safework/documents/publication/wcms_171036.pdf and are available on CD.

¹⁷ The European Commission, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the Nuclear Energy Agency of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, the Pan American Health Organization, the United Nations Environment Programme and the WHO.

¹⁸ GB.308/8, paras 15 and 17.

19. Participants considered the short- to medium-term prospects for organizations representing employers. They looked at how membership needs were changing and discussed innovations to help them to remain relevant and useful to business. They reaffirmed the continuing value of the roles business associations played as networks and as a coordinated voice for membership, but pointed out that the way that they fulfilled those roles must take account of changes in the business environment. They suggested that business associations that dealt only with single issues, which was the case for certain employers' organizations, might need to review their mandates to see whether they could widen their service offers to other domains. With respect to their representative role, business associations needed to address a much broader audience than they had traditionally done and pay attention to more diverse concerns, since policy was now driven by a wider range of players. The participants stressed that business associations should see themselves as a special kind of niche business – navigating markets, competitors and constraints, and seeking opportunities in a world of constant change.
20. The report of the Symposium will serve to guide the ILO's employer constituents in strategically reviewing their own visions and operations. The Symposium confirmed the rationale behind the approach taken by the ILO in its programme of assistance to employers' organizations, which will lead to a better understanding of business associations by all concerned, including governments and development partners. By bringing together a group of leading academic researchers, the Symposium has also helped to begin an ILO-led programme of research into the way successful business associations respond to challenges and opportunities in different institutional and operational settings.
21. The report of the Symposium, along with other related documentation, can be found on the website of the Bureau for Employers' Activities (ACT/EMP)¹⁹ in English, French and Spanish.

B. Workers' Symposium on Policies and Regulations to Combat Precarious Employment (4–7 October 2011)

22. As decided by the Governing Body,²⁰ the Workers' Symposium on Policies and Regulations to Combat Precarious Employment was held in Geneva from 4 to 7 October 2011. The topic selected was "From precarious work to decent work: Policies and regulations to combat precarious employment". The Symposium was attended by 110 trade union representatives from over 40 countries.
23. The Symposium discussed a background document prepared by the Bureau for Workers' Activities (ACTRAV) on the social, economic and legal dimensions of the challenge of precarious work. The Symposium took up the issues of the economic drivers of precarious work, its legal framework, its particular impact on youth, the relationship between precarious work arrangements and the effective right to collective bargaining and freedom of association, trade union responses to precarious work, and national and international regulatory approaches to combat precarious work. Particular emphasis was placed on the relevance of the Employment Relationship Recommendation, 2006 (No. 198), and on the potential and limitations of the Private Employment Agencies Convention, 1997 (No. 181), with respect to protecting workers and avoiding the growth of precarious employment.

¹⁹ www.ilo.org/employers.

²⁰ GB.310/19, para. 5.

24. The Symposium adopted a set of conclusions outlining its desired response to the challenge of precarious work.²¹ ACTRAV has committed itself to support their full implementation.
25. The background document and report of the Symposium, along with other related documentation, can be found on ACTRAV's website²² in English, French and Spanish.

III. Draft decision

26. *Subject to the availability of resources, the Governing Body:*

- (a) *authorizes the Director-General to publish the revised ILO–IMO Guidelines on the medical examination of seafarers, the Guidelines on training in the port sector, the Code of practice on safety in the use of machinery and, as a joint publication, the Radiation Protection and Safety of Radiation Sources: International Basic Safety Standards;*
- (b) *authorizes the Director-General to communicate the final reports or notes on the proceedings of the sectoral and technical meetings referred to in Part I of this paper to governments, requesting them to communicate the texts to the employers' and workers' organizations concerned, as well as to the international employers' and workers' organizations and other international organizations concerned;*
- (c) *requests the Director-General to bear in mind when drawing up proposals for future work, the recommendations made by: the Global Dialogue Forum on the Needs of Older Workers in relation to Changing Work Processes and the Working Environment in Retail Commerce; the Joint ILO–IMO Meeting on Medical Fitness Examinations of Seafarers and Ships' Medicine Chests; the Tripartite Meeting on Promoting Social Dialogue on Restructuring and its Effects on Employment in the Chemical and Pharmaceutical Industries; and the Tripartite Meeting of Experts for the Review and the Adoption of ILO Guidelines on Training in the Port Sector; and*
- (d) *requests the Director-General to bear in mind when drawing up proposals for future work, the views expressed by the participants in the Global Dialogue Forum on the Role of Private Employment Agencies in Promoting Decent Work and Improving the Functioning of Labour Markets in Private Services Sectors, as summarized in the final report of the discussion.*

²¹ www.ilo.org/actrav/info/WCMS_165275/lang--en/index.htm.

²² www.ilo.org/workers.