

CODE OF ETHICS

Foreword



Dear colleagues,

We, as IMO staff members and international civil servants, are required to perform our duties consistent with the highest standards of ethics, integrity and accountability, and I would like to reaffirm IMO's commitment to uphold and promote the values and principles of the United Nations to secure such high standards of conduct in IMO.

Following the establishment of the ethics function in January 2012 and the subsequent issuance of ethics related policies on the reporting, accepting and retaining honours, decorations, favours, gifts or remuneration from governmental and non-governmental sources in May 2014, the filing and utilization of financial disclosure statements in June 2014, and the protection from retaliation for reporting misconduct and for cooperating with duly authorized audits and investigations in December 2015, I take great pleasure in presenting to you the IMO Code of Ethics, developed by the Internal Oversight and Ethics Office.

The IMO Code of Ethics, which is based on the UN Ethics Committee's model Code of Ethics text, sets out the core values and principles we, as international civil servants, should attain and adhere to in the course of our duties. The Code cites the Standards of Conduct for the International Civil Service and standards of conduct provided in the relevant Staff Regulations and Rules and other relevant issuances of IMO. The Code will therefore be a useful guidance document for understanding the ethical standards and conduct required of ourselves in the performance of our duties.

I would like to thank all of you in advance for your commitment to uphold this Code to ensure that we, together in IMO, adhere to the highest ethical standards and conduct.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kitack Lim'.

Kitack Lim
Secretary-General
April 2016

CODE OF ETHICS FOR INTERNATIONAL MARITIME ORGANIZATION PERSONNEL

PREAMBLE

Reaffirming the purposes of the International Maritime Organization, as enshrined in the Convention on the International Maritime Organization, and the importance for the International Maritime Organization, as a specialized agency of the United Nations, to secure the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity;

Recognizing that it is imperative for the International Maritime Organization to cultivate and nurture a culture of ethics, integrity and accountability and thereby enhance the trust in, and the credibility of, the International Maritime Organization;

Reaffirming the Standards of Conduct for the International Civil Service¹ as well as standards of conduct provided for in the relevant Staff Regulations and Rules² and other relevant issuances of the International Maritime Organization;

The present Code of Ethics sets out the values and principles to guide the conduct and behaviour of International Maritime Organization personnel.

VALUES

Independence

International Maritime Organization (IMO) personnel shall maintain their independence and shall not seek or receive instructions from any Government or from any other person or entity external to IMO and shall refrain from any action which might reflect negatively on their position as IMO personnel responsible only to IMO.³

Loyalty

Loyalty to the purposes, values and principles of IMO is a fundamental obligation of all IMO personnel. They shall be loyal to IMO and shall, at all times, discharge their functions and regulate their conduct with the interests of the United Nations and of IMO only in view.⁴

¹ The Standards of Conduct for the International Civil Service (ICSC) are applicable to IMO staff members by virtue of IMO Staff Regulations and Staff Rules, Article 1, Staff Regulation 1.4.

² In particular, the regulations under Article 1 of the IMO Staff Regulations (Duties, Obligations and Privileges); and, Staff Rule 101.2 (Staff member obligations and acts of misconduct).

³ The duty to remain independent is set out in the ICSC Standards of Conduct at paras 8, 11, 12; and, IMO Staff Regulation 1.3, 1.4, 1.7.

⁴ Loyalty is defined in the ICSC Standards of Conduct at para.7. The duty of 'loyalty' is expressed in IMO Staff Regulation 1.1; and, in the oath, IMO Staff Regulation 1.9.

Impartiality

IMO personnel, in the performance of their official duties, shall always act with impartiality, objectivity and professionalism. They shall ensure that expression of personal views and convictions does not compromise or appear to compromise the performance of their official duties or the interests of IMO. They shall not act in a way that unjustifiably could lead to actual or perceived preferential treatment for or against particular individuals, groups or interests.⁵

Integrity

IMO personnel shall maintain the highest standards of integrity, including honesty, truthfulness, fairness and incorruptibility, in all matters affecting their official duties and the interests of IMO.⁶

Accountability

IMO personnel shall be accountable for the proper discharge of their functions and for their decisions and actions. In fulfilling their official duties and responsibilities, IMO personnel shall make decisions in the interests of IMO. They shall submit themselves to scrutiny as required by their position.⁷

Respect for human rights

IMO personnel shall fully respect the human rights, dignity and worth of all persons and shall act with understanding, tolerance, sensitivity, and respect for diversity and without discrimination of any kind.⁸

PRINCIPLES

Conflict of interest

IMO personnel shall arrange their private interests in a manner that will prevent actual, potential or apparent conflicts of interest from arising, but if such a conflict does arise between their private interests and their official duties and responsibilities, the conflict shall be disclosed and resolved in favour of the interests of IMO.⁹

⁵ Reference to impartiality is made in the ICSC Standards of Conduct at paras 8, 9; and, IMO Staff Regulation 1.4, 1.7.

⁶ The concept of integrity is defined in the ICSC Standards of Conduct at para.5. Staff members' duty of integrity is set out in IMO Staff Regulation 1.4; and, Staff Rule 101.7(a).

⁷ The duty of accountability is set out in the ICSC Standards of Conduct at para.13.

⁸ Explanation of respect for human rights is provided in the ICSC Standards of Conduct at paras 3, 6, 15; and, IMO Staff Rule 101.2(e).

⁹ Explanation of conflicts of interest is provided in the ICSC Standards of Conduct at paras 23–24; IMO Staff Regulation 1.4; Staff Rule 101.2 (n)–(s); and, Appendix G (IMO Financial Disclosure Policy).

Abuse of authority

IMO personnel shall not use the authority entrusted to them, in particular by taking advantage of colleagues, beneficiaries or other individuals or groups, for financial, political, sexual or other gain.¹⁰

Gifts, honours, favours or other benefits

IMO personnel shall not solicit or accept gifts, honours, favours and/or other benefits from sources external to IMO that may bring into question their independence, impartiality and integrity, unless the acceptance of such gifts, honours, favours and/or other benefits is pursuant to applicable policies and regulations.¹¹

International Maritime Organization resources

IMO personnel shall only use or allow the use of the resources of IMO, directly or indirectly, including its property, for authorized purposes.¹²

Confidentiality of information

IMO personnel shall not use information that is not generally available to the public for private gain, financial or otherwise, to benefit themselves or others with whom they have personal, family or other ties, nor shall they disclose such information to the public without authorization. IMO personnel shall not divulge to colleagues or other individuals or groups, information required to be kept confidential by applicable regulations, rules and policies.¹³ This duty of confidentiality continues to apply after the expiration of their service with the Organization.¹⁴

Post-employment

IMO personnel shall not act in such a manner as to take improper advantage of their official functions and positions, including privileged information obtained from such functions and positions, when seeking employment or appointment after leaving their service with IMO.¹⁵

¹⁰ The duty to refrain from abuse of authority is set out in the ICSC Standards of Conduct at paras **21–22**; IMO Staff Rule 101.2(g); and, Appendix E to the Staff Regulations and Staff Rules.

¹¹ The duty to refrain from accepting honours, favours or other benefits is set out in the ICSC Standards of Conduct at paras **50–51**; IMO Staff Regulation 1.6; and, Staff Rule 101.2(k): IMO Policy on reporting, accepting and retaining honours, decorations, favours, gifts, or gifts from governmental or non-governmental resources is published in internal memorandum ADMIN/14/28.

¹² The duty to safeguard resources of the United Nations Organizations is set out in the ICSC Standards of Conduct at para.**25**. IMO policy on the misuse of IMO resources is set out in Appendix F to the Staff Regulations and Staff Rules.

¹³ IMO Staff Regulation 1.5; Staff Rule 104.9(g); and, Staff Rule 111(j)

¹⁴ The duty to protect the confidentiality of information is set out in the ICSC Standards of Conduct at para.**39**

¹⁵ The nature of continuing obligations on staff members post-employment is set out in the ICSC Standards of Conduct at para.**26**

ADMINISTRATION OF THE CODE

The present Code of Ethics will be applicable to all IMO personnel.

For the purposes of this Code, IMO personnel includes IMO staff and related personnel, such as temporary employees; personnel or employees of non-IMO entities or individuals who have entered into a cooperative arrangement with IMO (including interns, international and local consultants as well as individual and corporate contractors); and, experts on mission.

The values and principles contained in the present Code of Ethics are to be found in the Standards of Conduct for the International Civil Service, applicable Staff Regulations and Rules and other relevant issuances of IMO, including the obligation to report any breach of the Organization's regulations and rules to the officials whose responsibility it is to take appropriate action.

The present Code of Ethics shall enter into effect on 21 April 2016.
