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Amendments of 2014 to the Code of the *Maritime Labour Convention*

The Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU) strongly endorses and fully supports the amendments of 2014 to the Code of the Maritime Labour Convention.

The changes provide increased protection for abandoned seafarers and security for compensation if a seafarer is killed, or suffers long-term disability.

Speaking at an April 2014 meeting of the Special Tripartite Committee established under Article XIII of the MLC to consider the proposed changes, Paddy Crumlin, President of the International Transport Federation (ITF) said *“Today’s vote represents a genuine turning point for the Convention. It proves that seafarers, shipowners and governments are committed to continuously reviewing the implementation of the MLC in order to ensure that it is a truly global and living instrument for the protection and benefit of all seafarers. Abandonment is a particularly dark stain on the industry and the new amendments are real and concrete relief for seafarers facing that dire predicament.”*

The changes were subsequently approved by the 103rd Session of the International Labour Conference in June 2014 with support internationally by seafarers’ unions and shipowners. They address the issue of abandonment, and seek to ensure that flag states have in place a financial security system to provide abandoned seafarers with outstanding wages, repatriation and other reasonable costs until they arrive home.

The ACTU congratulates everyone involved in this landmark improvement to the Convention which seafarers and the ITF have come to regard as the Seafarers Bill of Rights.

Yours sincerely,

Ged Kearney
President

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