Human Element Assessment Tool for Companies (HEAT-C)

Maritime & Coastguard Agency

Assessed HEAT-C band: A B C D E F G H I J	Date of assessment:
Company name:	Assessor:
Any additional comments:	

Best practice	**A**	Exceeds industry standard - industry leader in managing human element aspects of their operations.
	B	Excellent human element capability and understanding demonstrated, on a par with leading Companies in comparable safety related industries.
Good practice	**C**	Continuous improvement in SMS and best practice is clearly demonstrated.
	D	Well managed SMS with good practice implemented. All indicators at least satisfactory, demonstrating a sound human element capability.
Defined basis for development	**E**	Satisfactorily managed and implemented SMS with only minor scope for improvement in some of the indicators.
	F	A broadly satisfactory SMS in place but with scope for improvement in many of the indicators.
Weak basis, few working processes	**G**	Some aspects of the SMS are satisfactory and provide potential for a good foundation, but there are major shortfalls in some indicators.
	H	Several major shortfalls exist across many of the sections. The SMS is unsatisfactory overall but it has an improveable basis.
Poor practice, no system in place.	**I**	Many major shortfalls across all sections, however those managing the SMS acknowledge this and can provide evidence of corrective action being undertaken.
	J	Unnacceptable level of shortfalls in all indicators – the SMS will not be working.

Carrying out the HEAT- C assessment

Who should make the assessment?

■ Using people from different areas of the company to carry out the assessment may provide a fresh perspective without preconceptions. This lack of familiarity can sometimes be useful to draw attention to potentially unsafe practices which have become routine or accepted as "the way we do things".

■ An assessor who has experience in shipping operations may pick up the "weak" signals of latent failures from their own experience. The assessor needs to interpret what they see, hear and feel, recording this evidence on the HEAT-C form where appropriate. Consideration should be given to involving seconded sea staff in the process.

How should the assessment be made?

■ Evidence should be gathered by the assessor against each relevant indicator. It may be most efficient to combine it with an internal audit or preparation for a DOC audit.

■ The important thing is to build up a balanced picture of the overall SMS/DOC as it relates to the human element.

■ All available sources of information should be used to inform the assessment:

  ▪ Objective, e.g. documentation, observable activities.
  ▪ Subjective, e.g. responses of employees to questions.

■ To encourage the most accurate and open responses from people involved:

  ▪ Consider the likely effect on responses if the company employees feel at all threatened or in danger of reprisals for their responses.
  ▪ The assessor should have the necessary people skills to put people at ease while gathering evidence, and while moving from one area of the company to another.
  ▪ A range of managers and non-managers should be involved.

■ The ethos of HEAT-C is intended as a suggestion of areas to look at rather than a specific questionnaire which must be completed systematically.

■ A rating should be recorded against each indicator using the system below. It should be noted that some indicators may not apply to every company. The principle behind the rating system is for the assessor to ask him or herself whether they would be comfortable with the present situation continuing as it is.

Rating	Meaning	Description
N/A	Not applicable.	This indicator is not relevant to the Company being assessed.
1	Entirely unsatisfactory	Immediate and urgent improvement is required.
2	Unsatisfactory	Improvement required as a medium-to-high priority task.
3	Satisfactory	There is scope for improvement but as part of ongoing development rather than as an immediate cause for concern.
4	Good practice	Demonstration of thorough risk management as part of daily operations.
5	Best practice	Industry-leading capability at managing human element related operational risks.

■ After rating each applicable indicator, the assessor should assign an overall band to the SMS/DOC of the assessed Company with reference to the descriptions on page 1. There is no direct correlation between the numerical ratings and the final band or level, but the evidence gathered for each indicator should inform the overall impression recorded.

What should be done next?

■ The final band assigned to the Company gives an indication of overall SMS/DOC quality. This can be used to assess progress over time.

■ The ultimate value of HEAT comes in responding to the rating and evidence against any indicators where performance is found to be improvable. This information can be used to guide continuous improvement, by highlighting underperforming areas of the SMS/DOC and identifying specific changes which may be necessary to improve.

■ The required urgency of response indicated by the rating should inform the speed of reaction; either immediate or as part of ongoing risk management in future.

Indicator	Rating	Evidence or comments
SAFETY & ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION POLICY		
Has a policy been produced and is it accessible to the whole work force?	N/A 1 2 3 4 5	
Has everyone seen the policy?	N/A 1 2 3 4 5	
Does every employee understand the implications for them of the Company safety and environmental policy?	N/A 1 2 3 4 5	
Is the policy being followed in practice?	N/A 1 2 3 4 5	
Does the Company make communication and enforcement of their safety and environmental protection policy an **explicit** line management responsibility?	N/A 1 2 3 4 5	
Has the policy been used to influence other business areas, including the corporate strategy and social responsibility, financial policy, human resources policy, operating policy?	N/A 1 2 3 4 5	

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Indicator	Rating	Evidence or comments
ORGANISING		
Have safety responsibilities been designated appropriately, including the provision of appropriate training? (IMO documents MSC-MEPC.7/Circs.5 & 7)	N/A 1 2 3 4 5	
Do all staff know and understand which sections are relevant to them as well as the overall meaning and purpose of the safety & environmental policy?	N/A 1 2 3 4 5	
Have targets/standards been set and are they communicated; is the necessary support provided to meet them?	N/A 1 2 3 4 5	
Are the targets reviewed, and failures to meet them acted upon?	N/A 1 2 3 4 5	
Do senior managers chair safety and environmental protection committees or attend joint consultative bodies?	N/A 1 2 3 4 5	
Does the safety and environmental protection policy form part of the standing agenda item on all management meetings?	N/A 1 2 3 4 5	
Is the review of this policy a standing item on the executive board meetings?	N/A 1 2 3 4 5	
Do employees have an input to the policy and are areas of improvement identified, communicated and acted upon?	N/A 1 2 3 4 5	

Indicator	Rating	Evidence or comments
PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTING		
Have risks and hazards been identified, trends monitored and measures put in place to reduce them?	N/A 1 2 3 4 5	
Have the results of risk assessments been used to inform business priorities, in different parts of the organisation, both ashore and onboard ship?	N/A 1 2 3 4 5	
Is the level of safety information recorded, over and above that strictly required by the regulations?	N/A 1 2 3 4 5	
Are risks to long term health identified and is an adequate preventative strategy developed?	N/A 1 2 3 4 5	
Does the company have a formal process for assessing the knowledge and competencies of those tasked with undertaking risk assessments?	N/A 1 2 3 4 5	
Does the company require all its offices to produce an annual safety and environmental protection plan that demonstrably links to the overall company policy?	N/A 1 2 3 4 5	
Does the company take positive steps to understand and address the human element and the issue of safe behaviour as part of its risk control systems?	N/A 1 2 3 4 5	

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Indicator	Rating	Evidence or comments
MEASURING PERFORMANCE		
Is the safety management system monitored and are relevant successes and good work communicated to reinforce its use?	N/A 1 2 3 4 5	
Is a blame culture in operation?	N/A 1 2 3 4 5	
Are incidents or near miss reports investigated and the findings reported to employees?	N/A 1 2 3 4 5	
Are the recommendations following incident or near-miss reports effectively followed up to prevent reoccurrence?	N/A 1 2 3 4 5	
Does the company monitor the implementation of the safety and environmental protection policy in the remote locations to ensure that local managers are meeting their responsibilities?	N/A 1 2 3 4 5	
Do investigations by the company identify where safe systems of work are either inadequate or existing control measures not properly implemented?	N/A 1 2 3 4 5	
Following an investigation does the company formally issue guidance or revision to safe procedures to all relevant areas of the business?	N/A 1 2 3 4 5	
Does the company collect & record information accurately enabling analysis to identify common causes, features and trends that may not become apparent from an individual event?	N/A 1 2 3 4 5	

Indicator	Rating	Evidence or comments
REVIEWING AND AUDITING PERFORMANCE		
Is the safety management system under constant review both internally and externally, compared with best practice in other companies?	N/A 1 2 3 4 5	
Is the document revision system effective?	N/A 1 2 3 4 5	
Does the company audit more frequently those areas identified as having the greatest or increased risk?	N/A 1 2 3 4 5	
How is the safety management review system perceived within the company, is the review sufficiently detailed to be of practicable benefit?	N/A 1 2 3 4 5	
Does the company ensure that the audit is perceived as a positive management tool to encourage continuous improvement?	N/A 1 2 3 4 5	
Does the company ensure that the audit and review scoring system is appropriate, both in terms of details and scope, to meet the safety and environmental protection needs of the organisation?	N/A 1 2 3 4 5	
Does the company use internal auditors independent of the area or section being audited?	N/A 1 2 3 4 5	
Does the company ensure that those responsible for audit are competent for the appropriate level?	N/A 1 2 3 4 5	
Is the review published in an annual report?	N/A 1 2 3 4 5	

Left intentionally blank for assessor's comments:

If you have any feedback or queries on HEAT-C please email: human.element@mcga.gov.uk
and type "HEAT-C" in the subject header