



The ICSW Seafarers' Health Information Programme

A Food Safety Campaign in a Shipping Company

PART

1

Health Promotion in a Shipping Company

There is an obvious link between health and ships. Health and well being of seafarers has an effect on work on-board. And work onboard ships has an effect on the health of seafarers.

The maritime industry pays attention to health but focuses on selection, certification and reduction of accidents and injuries onboard.

An active health promotion policy, however, has a broader scope and adds health protection, lifestyle, ergonomics, hygiene and environmental aspects.

Healthy seafarers build a healthy company and ultimately improve profits.

Benefits include :

- Less absenteeism
- Better work performance
- Less work related diseases and accidents
- Loss prevention
- Positive company image for clients and new employees
- More employee satisfaction
- Less employee turnover

An organisation's "culture" is like an individual lifestyle : a complex system of values and informal regulations, that determine how things are done or why they are not done in an organisation.

In this unique atmosphere it is a challenge to set up health promotion. Some companies have a philosophy and mission that leads to actions on health promotion. Other companies have an internal welfare policy. Also company rules and regulations may lead to more health and fitness.

A health programme in a company may balance extra stress from reforms and difficult transition periods. Characteristics and observations of the workforce can also lead to promotion campaigns.

A Food Safety Campaign in a Shipping Company

Aware of the importance of healthy food onboard ships, the International Committee on Seafarers' Welfare has launched a project: FOOD SAFETY, as one of the topics in the Seafarers' Health Information Programme (SHIP).

SHIP stimulates seafarers to take responsibility for their health within their life and work environment.

Although SHIP addresses individual seafarers on lifestyle related issues, SHIP is also an instrument for health promotion in the workplace.

Food safety activities can be introduced in any company independent of its size or culture of work.

To be successful, a food safety campaign in a shipping company has to be planned step-by-step. Various people in a company can participate in this programme: accident prevention and safety managers, HR managers, unions and social services. Even in companies with a less formal structure food safety information can be used.

The SHIP campaign FOOD SAFETY offers your company a package, containing: guidelines to be used onboard, posters, a questionnaire, a trailer and leaflet to stimulate, motivate and help seafarers to contribute to safe handling of food onboard.

A Food Safety Campaign in Seven Steps

Food safety is a basic requirement in the prevention of food related problems onboard ships. The sourcing of wholesome, safe food and water is essential. Although clean and well maintained catering spaces give a good impression, food safety is about more than just cleanliness. It requires good working practices in accordance with basic principles of personal hygiene and food hygiene, such as the separation of raw and cooked foods and temperature control.

All vessels should apply food safety principles. Even if not required by international regulations, documented systems with records enable a quality management approach to be taken, along the lines of the International Safety Management Code. As well as helping to focus minds on food safety, such a system also provides evidence of good practices.

On small coaster vessels and other vessels where the number of crew reflects an average family, a less formal system may be adequate.

Control and inspection of all elements in the food chain by the master or his deputy are often a requirement in many countries.

Although the catering department of a ship is responsible, everybody participates in the food safety "culture" onboard. Therefore everybody needs information and training on aspects of food safety.

This model offers a company the tools to start a campaign on food safety with success!

STEP 1 Why a campaign on food safety for seafarers?

Create support for the food safety campaign.

First of all, you must try to raise awareness of the health problems or risks related to food safety in the company. Speak with key people and leaders. Discuss subjects such as the use of food safety onboard, health promotion, the framework to organise food safety activities onboard and the possibilities to fit the campaign in existing programmes.

STEP 2 How to handle this?

Set up a structure for the food safety promotion campaign.

In this step you need to set up a structure for the development and implementation of a food safety campaign onboard.

Get the interest of colleagues and existing workgroups and involve them in the organisation of FOOD SAFETY.

Create a workgroup or steering committee for the FOOD SAFETY campaign. Use existing channels of communication to announce the task and agenda of this committee to all employees. It is important that all kinds of employees are involved in this committee but especially seafarers must be involved. An expert or health adviser is also useful in the committee.

STEP 3 What is important?

Investigate what the target group needs and wants

Collect information on food safety problems from seafarers onboard. Analyse the relation between food safety and the general health situation within the company. Define the need of seafarers for more food safety. Determine priorities, select particular target groups and inform all seafarers in the company about the results.

Only in this way can the campaign really help the seafarers. It is no good planning activities without the active participation of the seafarers in the planning stage.

Instruments for identifying needs and problems are for example evaluated questionnaires and checklists. (see examples attached). But onboard this can also be done less formally during meetings or workshops.

STEP 4 What needs to be done?

Make a plan for a food safety campaign onboard

Make a policy document and plan based on the results of the investigation. This document contains the goals, timing and planning of the various activities and identifies the contact persons for each of the steps.

Possible activities:

- A motivation campaign to encourage seafarers to participate in activities that improve food safety onboard
- Set up a system of regular checks on store rooms, lockers, hygiene and cleaning activities in and around the galley
- Make sure washing basins, disposable towels or air dryers and soap are available to stimulate hand washing onboard
- Provide checklists and questionnaires to detect weak points in the food safety chain
- Organise meetings onboard or workshops on food safety
- Make food safety issues part of the standard selection procedure of suppliers and chandlers
- Use the "Guidelines for Food Safety Onboard Merchant Vessels" to underpin activities

In this step it is also important to decide on a bonus system. How to reward the seafarers who participate in the programme?

STEP 5 The start

Implement the campaign

Make the execution of the campaign possible and ask for reactions of the seafarers.

Make sure management is committed and participates. E.g. captain and officers have to set examples. Carefully start the programme with a good communication in meetings, newsletters, intranet and by other means.

Keep the campaigns going by giving results and information about the running campaign and activities. Instruments and programmes for intervention and implementation (e.g. training sessions, inspections, cleaning actions)

STEP 6 Have the goals been achieved?

Evaluate

Check that activities took place as planned. Evaluate the success, the satisfaction of the participants and the effect of the campaign. Adjust where necessary.

Instruments for evaluating activities include process- and outcome-related instruments and indicators (see examples attached).

Make a report with recommendations for further activities and improvements to the campaign.

STEP 7 Keep the momentum going.

Adapt and Continue

A health policy is not built on one activity or campaign alone. Integration of the activities in a general health programme like the Seafarers' Health Information Programme (SHIP) of the ICSW is important in order to have effect on long term.

Food safety does not stand by itself but has links with healthy food and weight control to name only a few. But also add other topics to your health promotion policy such as fitness, malaria, safe travel and HIV/AIDS.

Consult www.seafarershealth.org regularly. New material is produced regularly for you to download. The material and other information on food safety is kept up to date there.

Review the company health policy regularly and analyse the needs of the employees. Adapt the policy on a yearly basis.

ICSW - SHIP - Food Safety

To help your company set up a food safety campaign, the ICSW Seafarers' Health Information Programme (SHIP), has produced:

- Guidelines for Food Safety Onboard Merchant Vessels
- A brochure: "Food Safety – you are part of it"
- Two posters: "Wash your Hands" and "Beware the Danger Zone"
- A comic: "Hygiene in the Galley"
- A sticker: "Ensure Food Safety"
- Five Cartoons on Food Safety aspects
- A questionnaire: "Food Safety"
- A trailer: "Ship Food Safety"
- A display for the brochures
- A binder for the guidelines
- Instructions on how to use these materials onboard

A standard food safety package contains:

- 10 comic booklets "Hygiene in the Galley"
- 10 booklets "Food safety, you're part of it"
- 5 posters "Danger zone"
- 5 posters "Wash your hands"
- 2 guidelines on food safety
- 5 different Cartoons A5
- 5 Fridge stickers
- 1 Trailer on food safety

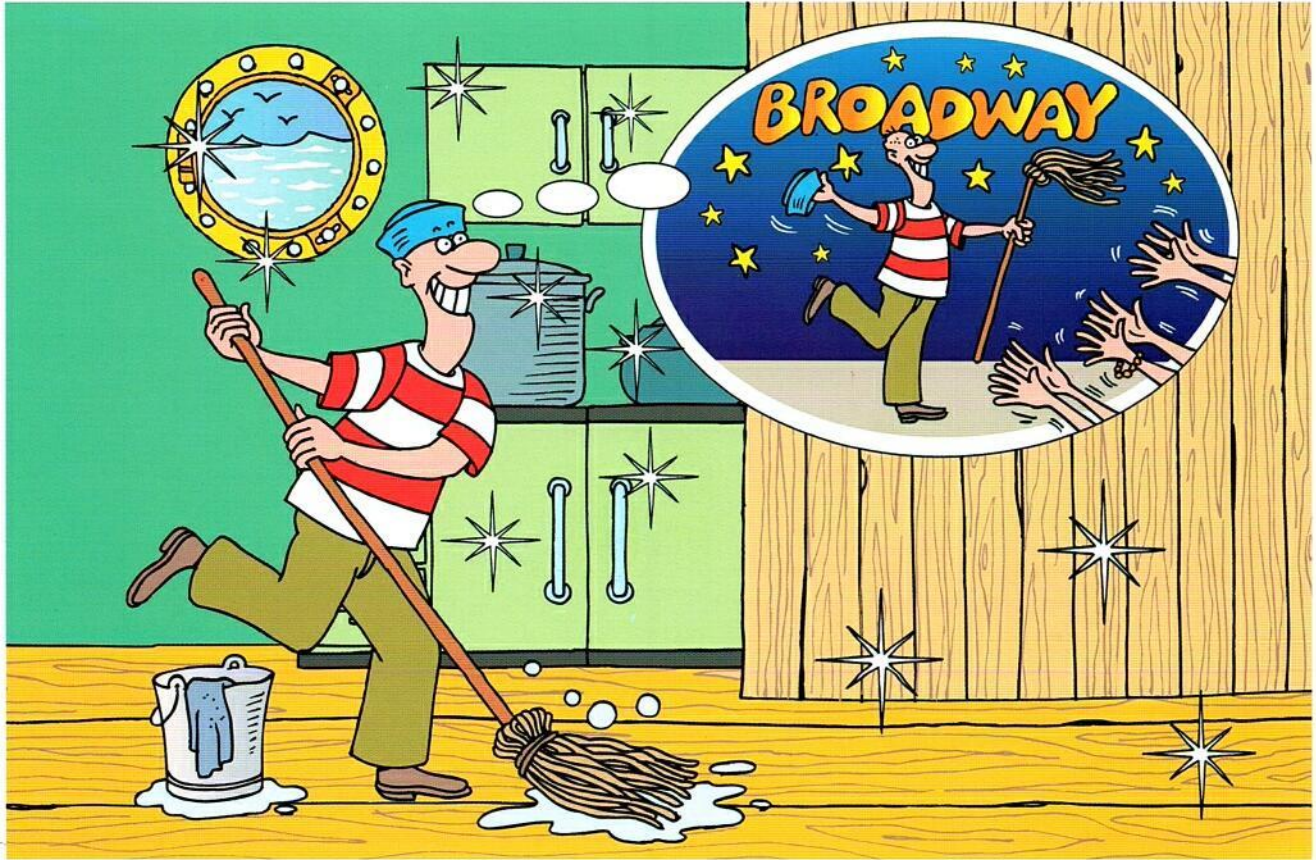
If you want to start a food safety campaign in your company, get more information and material to improve food safety onboard. Go to www.seafarershealth.org where you can download guidelines, posters, leaflets on food safety and also on other health topics for seafarers: Fit Onboard, Safe Travel, Healthy Food, Malaria, Overweight and HIV/AIDS.

Individual copies can be downloaded free of charge. Artwork for production of the material in a company or organisation can be downloaded free of charge after registration. Quality material can be ordered by contacting:



ICSW SHIP
International Committee on Seafarers' Welfare
2nd Floor, Forsyth House
77 Clarendon Road
Watford
Hertfordshire, WD17 1DS
United Kingdom
Email : SHIP@ICSW.org.uk

www.seafarershealth.org





KEEP PREPARED
AND PERISHABLE FOOD
NO LONGER THAN 2 HOURS
BETWEEN 5° AND 63°C



SAFE ZONE



DANGER ZONE



C [°]	-18°	0°	5°	8°	28°	37°	63°	82°	100°
F [°]	0°	32°	41°	46°	82°	99°	145°	180°	212°



CAREFULLY
PACKED AND STOWED
SUPPLIES KEEP RATS
AWAY!

