



Loss Prevention Circular KISHPNI-LP-AUG-2022
(Importance of abiding by the Drug & Alcohol Policy)

Drug and alcohol abuse and adverse effects on safety is one of the most significant work related problems of our times.

It is supposedly receiving attention in both the club and our members. Recognizing the potentially serious impact of marine incidents, Members in general, have over the years developed guidance aimed at encouraging safe operations and protection of the environment. Whilst members have generally operated in accordance with policies related to drug and alcohol onboard their ships as per the pertaining Safety Management Systems, it seems that the said policies might have been relaxed and somehow inadequately maintained and abided by. Henceforth, notifications & reminders to members is considered necessary at times.

Members should organize to notify the seafarers by any means with respect to Drug and Alcohol policy requirements well in advance prior joining / signing the contracts, stipulating that there are mandatory rules for Seafarers under various regulations including the Code of Conduct.

It is imperative to note that the Club's Cover might not be available for members with respect to the costs associated with loss of life / repatriation / deviation / medical treatments / accident of any kind / and all related expenses related, if due diligence is proven not to have been practiced thoroughly/sufficiently & adequately as expected and required.



We shall in notes below remind some of the important points concerning the issue:

1- How can you consider that there is a Drug or Alcohol problem on board:

There are no social or class divisions of drug/alcohol users. They may be found in all walks of life and at all social levels. The physical characteristics of drug addicts depend on the type of drug used and the time that has elapsed since the last dose. The drug user generally develops an ability to lie about their habit and keep it secret. Crew members may not notice a drug user among their colleagues. In a closed community such as a ship's crew there may be a strong bond of group loyalty, which may result in an unwillingness to believe the worst about a colleague. Crew members should be encouraged to report suspicious behaviour or if indeed they are aware of the presence of drug taking on board so that it can be investigated.

The only way of establishing with any degree of certainty whether there is a drugs problem on board your vessel is to embark on a drug/alcohol testing programme.

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However; there are a number of other indicators, which might help identify those with a drug problem. These are:

- *Sudden unexplained mood changes*
- *Unusual irritability and aggression*
- *Tendency to become confused*
- *Abnormal changes in concentration*
- *Poor job performance*
- *Poor timekeeping*
- *Loss of short term memory*
- *Loss of interest in job*
- *Deterioration of relationships with fellow crew*
- *Dishonesty and theft from the vessel or fellow crew*
- *Unexplained changes in financial circumstances*

2- Matters relevant to Crew Contracts:

The inclusion of a drugs and alcohol clause within a seafarer's employment agreement ('the contract') clarifies the responsibilities and obligations of both parties, irrespective of whether the seafarer has a joint venture (such as a share fisherman) is temporary agency personnel or a direct employee of the company.

If the seafarer is a direct employee, national law may dictate that a D&A policy is required and the Club recommends that where necessary, when drafting a drug and alcohol clause thought should be given to the prevailing law of the contract and the nationality of the seafarer; it may be appropriate to take professional (legal/human resources) advice.

It is particularly important that crew members understand that by signing the contract, they give their consent to submit to the company's drug testing programme and authorize the company to receive the results of those tests. We would recommend that such a clause should:

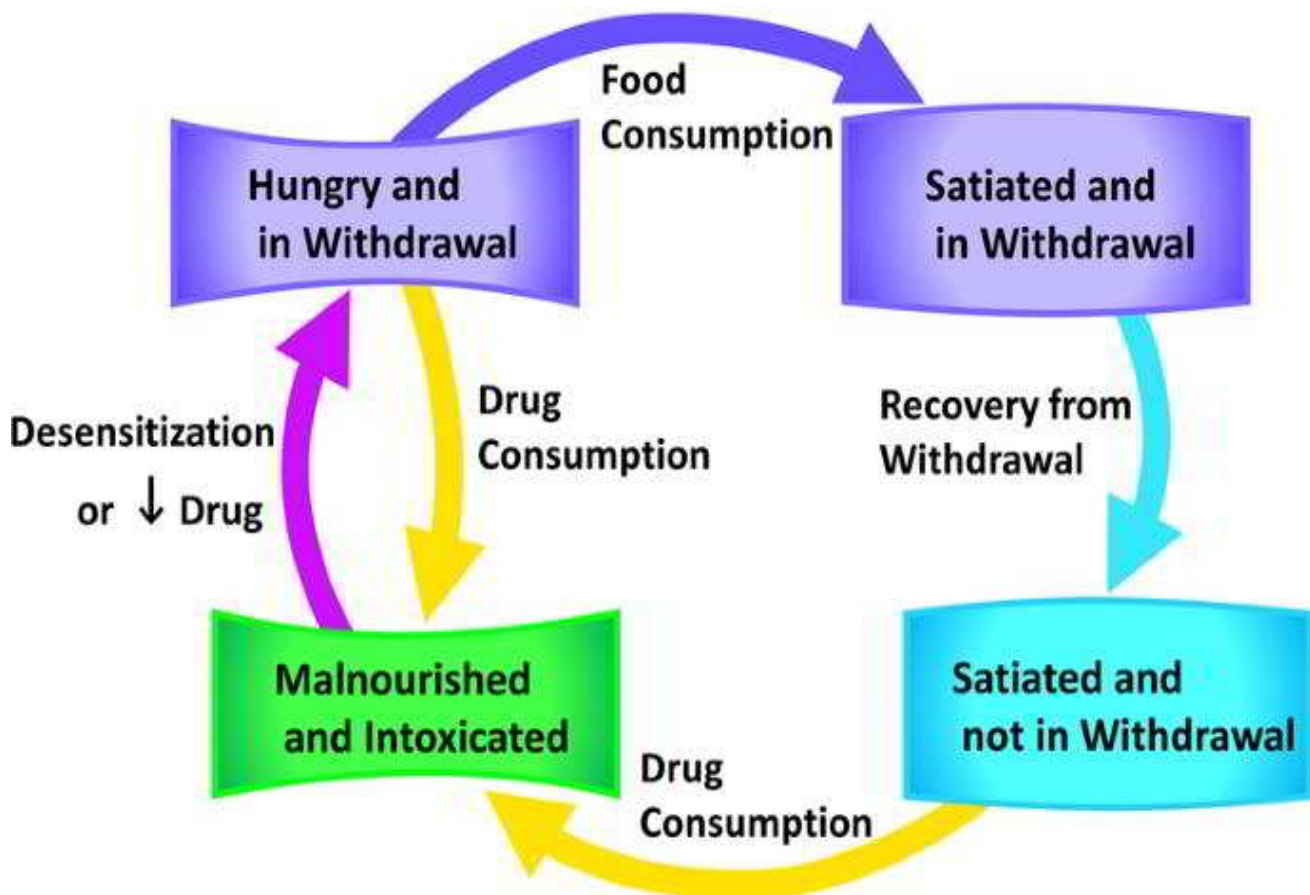
- I. *Reiterate that the company D&A policy is of prime importance.*
- II. *Stress that no person shall take on board or be in possession of any unauthorized drug.*
- III. *Define an unauthorized drug as a drug which has not been prescribed by a fully qualified medical practitioner for use by the particular crew member.*
- IV. *Stress that crew members shall disclose to the Master details of any prescribed or over the counter drugs which they are carrying/using.*
- V. *State that they specifically consent to provide samples for testing on request and that refusal to provide samples when requested to do so will in itself be considered serious misconduct.*
- VI. *Explain that being in possession or under the influence of any unauthorized drug on board the vessel or reporting for duty under the influence of any unauthorized drug is serious misconduct which will result in immediate suspension and further disciplinary action.*

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3-Prevention & Dealing with drug & alcohol use on board:

- A. Devise and implement a written policy on drugs.
- B. Implement a prevention and education programme to provide the seafarer with clear factual information about the nature of drugs, the short and long term effects of their use and the implications for the seafarer and their personal safety on board ship.
- C. Introduce a drugs and alcohol clause to your seafarer's contract of employment.
- D. Implement a drug screening /testing programme.
- E. Reiterate your zero tolerance on drug use, if applicable.
- F. Facilitate social interaction on board by means of interactive group recreational facilities.
- G. Promote a positive attitude and interest towards personal health and fitness by providing a varied, healthy and interesting diet and so far as practicable, fitness equipment for physical health.

Cycle of Addiction





4- Emergency Actions:

**Alcohol abuse, drunkenness:*

A) People who are drunk but conscious should be encouraged to drink a pint of water to prevent a hangover caused by alcoholic dehydration and to go to bed. If they are seriously drunk they should not eat anything until they have recovered. It is advisable that someone stays with a person who is seriously drunk because they may inhale their vomit whilst asleep.

B) If in port, a person unconscious from alcohol should be sent to hospital. If the patient has to be kept on board, they should be put to bed and managed as in the routine for unconscious patients. Remember that they should never be left alone in case they move out of the unconscious position and die from inhaling vomit.

***Alcohol abuse, delirium tremens (DTs):*

The patient should be confined and nursed as described for the mentally ill. There should be subdued lighting by day and by night to reduce as far as possible the imaginary visions they are likely to see. They should be encouraged to drink plenty of sweetened fluid and if they will eat, should be given food. The attack may end with the patient sleeping for up to 24 hours.

****Under the influence of drugs individuals may feel tense and panicky or sometimes drowsy depending on what they have taken. If this happens:*

- I. Calm the person and be reassuring. Try not to panic. Speak in a normal voice and if you feel scared or worried, try not to let them see it.
- II. Do not frighten or startle them, or let them exert themselves.
- III. Explain that the feelings will pass.
- IV. Encourage them to settle in a quiet, dimly lit room.
- V. If they start breathing very quickly calm them down and tell them to take long, slow breaths.
- VI. Never give them coffee to rouse them.
- VII. If symptoms persist, place them in the recovery position.
- VIII. Obtain medical advice by radio.
- IX. Remove any drugs from the patient and try to identify them and their source. If in any doubt about the diagnosis, obtain radio medical advice.

*****An overdose of most drugs will cause unconsciousness. If this happens:*

- a. Place the person in a recovery position so they will not choke if they vomit.
- b. Check breathing and be prepared to do mouth-to-mouth resuscitation.
- c. Keep them warm, but not too hot. However if someone has taken ecstasy and you think they may have overheated, make sure they have plenty of cool, fresh air and remove any excess clothing such as a hat, gloves, etc.
- d. Stay with them at all times.
- e. Call for medical assistance by radio. If the casualty is evacuated send any drugs found in their possession with the casualty.

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