

Abstract

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ILO Convention no 185

The International Labor Organization (ILO) has always placed a special importance on the Maritime sector and Seafarers for their vital role to world commerce since over 90% of the all trade is transported by sea. In June 2003 the ILO adopted the "Seafarers' Identity Documents Convention (Revised) no (185), the revision of the earlier convention no (108)1958, as a rapid response to the world concern on ports' security following the events of 11th Sept 2001. The Convention aims to establish a worldwide special system for a new Seafarers' Identity Document that will be more secure, more reliable and machinery readable, which is going to be used by Seafarers when they seek access to ports for shore leave when crossing international borders during transit to and from their ships, it's not in itself a travel document since it must be used in conjunction with passport, but it does identify an individual as a seafarer. The convention has already come into force but still not ratified by some countries due to technical difficulty and the expense involved in the implementation. Seafarers from not ratifying countries will not be permitted to shore leave access when crossing international borders during transit to and from their ships as they don't carry the new seafarers' Identity Document as specified by the convention. The aim of this paper is to present the contents of convention 185, historical background, difficulties facing implementation and consequences of lack of ratifying.