

D-3: CONVENTION ON FACILITATION OF INTERNATIONAL MARITIME TRAFFIC

Name of the convention: Convention on Facilitation of International Maritime Traffic

Acronym or short name: FAL

International organisation in charge: International Maritime Organization (IMO)

Summary description (in plain language): The main objective of the Convention is to prevent unnecessary delays in maritime traffic ([art.I](#)), to aid co-operation between governments ([art.II](#)), and to secure the highest practicable degree of uniformity in formalities and other procedures in maritime traffic ([art.III](#)).

This Convention provides standards and recommended practices ([art.VI](#)): in its Annex, the Convention contains “Standards” and “Recommended Practices” on formalities, documentary requirements and procedures which should be applied on arrival, stay and departure to the ship itself, and to its crew, passengers, baggage and cargo.

The Convention defines standards as internationally-agreed measures which are “necessary and practicable in order to facilitate international maritime traffic” and recommended practices as measures the application of which is “desirable”. The Convention provides that any contracting government which finds it impracticable to comply with any international standard, or deems it necessary to adopt differing regulations, must inform the Secretary-General of IMO of the “differences” between its own practices and the standards in question. The same procedure applies to new or amended standards.

In a case of recommended practices, contracting governments are urged to adjust their laws accordingly but are only required to notify the Secretary-General when they have brought their own formalities, documentary requirements and procedures into full accord.

This concept of standards and recommended practices, coupled with the other provisions, allows

continuing progress to be made towards the formulation and adoption of uniform measures in the facilitation of international maritime traffic.

Date of first approval: 9 April 1965

Date of coming into force: 5 March 1967

Dates of revision and Reasons of revisions:

- **1973 amendment** introduces the “tacit acceptance” procedure.

-**2002 amendments:** adopted on 10 Jan.2002, entered into force on 1 May 2003

The Amendments added new standards and recommended practices for dealing with stowaways. Another amendment related to the Dangerous Goods Manifest (FAL Form 7), which became the basic document providing public authorities with the information regarding dangerous goods on board ships.

-**2005 amendments:** adopted on 7 Jul.2005, entered into force on 1 Nov. 2006

The Amendments were intended to modernize the Convention with introducing a Recommended Practice that all information should be submitted to a single point to avoid duplication and electronic transmission of information should be encouraged.

Applicability (situation of ratification): The Convention shall enter into force 60 days after the date upon which the Governments of at least 10 states have either signed it without reservation as to acceptance or have deposited instruments of acceptance or accession. It shall enter into force for a Government which subsequently accepts it or accedes to it 60 days after the deposit of the instrument of acceptance or accession (art.XI).

Status of Convention: 115 States, 90.77% of world tonnage (as of 31 August 2012)

Stakes for ports: This Convention is of relevance for ports notably with the facilitation of international maritime transport. In order to facilitate the clearance of cargo, passengers, crew and baggage, public authorities should with co-operation of ports administrations take

appropriate measures to the end that port time may be kept to a minimum and should provide satisfactory port traffic flow arrangements (embarkation, disembarkation; loading and unloading; customs clearance, adequate installations for passengers) (Annex. E. 2.12).

Operators of cargo docks are encouraged to provide special storage facilities for cargo “ subject to high risk of theft” and to protect those areas in which cargo is to be stored (Annex.E.2.12.2).

Services at ports are provided to organize normal services of public authorities at port in order to avoid unnecessary delays of ships after their arrival or when ready to depart and also to reduce time for completion of formalities to a minimum (Annex. Section 5.C)

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Links with other conventions: [SUA](#), [UNCLOS](#)

Key-words: facilitation, international maritime traffic, arrival, stay and departure of the ship, standards, recommended practices.

Internet hyperlink with other website:

<http://www.imo.org/>

<http://www.comitemaritime.org/>

(full text) <http://www.admiraltylawguide.com/conven/facilitation1965.html>