

Maritime transport: formalities for ships arriving in and departing from Member States ports, IMO FAL convention

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PURPOSE : to facilitate maritime transport, in particular between ports situated in the Member States, by providing for standardisation of report formalities. **CONTENT** : public authorities frequently require, for their retention on arrival and/or departure of a ship, documents and information relating, inter alia, to the ship, its stores, its crew's effects, its crew and passengers. These requirements are formalities that ships have to fulfil when calling at ports. The use of different format of documents for the same or similar purposes creates complexity for maritime transport and, in particular, short sea shipping. The International Maritime Organisation's Convention on Facilitation of Maritime Traffic (IMO FAL Convention) was signed on 9 April 1965 and came into force on 5 March 1967. The Convention has been signed by most Member States. As it stands, the Convention recommends, inter alia, the use by national authorities of six standardised forms to be filled in for ships to report when arriving in port and departing from port. This proposal aims to recognise standardised IMO FAL Forms in the Community. The proposal provides that the Member States are to accept a set of common standardised IMO FAL Forms when they require any or all the information contained in those forms as part of the reporting formalities for a ship to arrive in and /or depart from a Community port. The FAL Forms are intended to fulfil the purpose of providing that reporting information in documentary form and to be sufficient for ships to report on arrival and departure. The proposal provides for Forms No 1 (information relating to the ship), No 3 (information relating to the ship's stores), No 4 (information relating to crew's effects), No 5 (information relating to the number and composition of the crew), No 6 (information relating to passengers) to be sufficient for the particular formalities they cover. The Member States will not be able to require other categories of information than those on the relevant IMO FAL Forms or require any other documents of formats to satisfy the particular formalities for which the FAL forms covered by the proposal are intended. The Member States would also have to accept the Forms signed by the signatories stipulated in the IMO FAL Convention. Member States remain free to ask for information relating to other topics and formalities in other formats (subject to other Community and/or international rules), including information pertaining to registry, measurement, safety, manning, cargo carried and customs procedures, as long as those topics and formalities are not covered by the IMO FAL Forms concerned.