

WORLD HEALTH
ORGANIZATIONORGANISATION MONDIALE
DE LA SANTÉ

Special Committee established
by the III WHA to consider the
Draft International Sanitary
Regulations

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ORIGINAL: FRENCH

DRAFT INTERNATIONAL SANITARY REGULATIONS

APPENDIX V

MARITIME DECLARATION OF HEALTH

Proposal by Professor G.P. Alivisatos (Greece)

As adopted, the Maritime Declaration of Health requires the master of a ship on which there is no surgeon, to answer questions 1, 2, 4 and 6 which a surgeon would often find difficulty in answering without having access to a laboratory.

Consequently, the answers given by the master are usually valueless from the medical point of view and cannot entail any responsibility on his part. Furthermore, when there is a surgeon on board, the note in the text of the Appendix is unnecessary, and when there is no surgeon on board, it is useless to the master of the ship; it may even give rise to misunderstandings. In my opinion, instead of fulfilling its purpose of facilitating the work of the health authority to which it is made, this declaration tends to be regarded as an empty formality by the masters of ships on which there is no surgeon.

I therefore have the honour to propose: (1) that the note be deleted; (2) that in the case of a ship on which there is no surgeon, the master be required to answer questions 3, 4, (after deletion of the words "which you suspect to be of an infectious nature") and 5; (3) that in the case of a ship with a surgeon on

board, all the questions be answered.

I would also propose that a booklet, similar to the maritime code of signals be compiled listing composite code symbols indicating the questions and answers regarding the sex, nature of the disease, results of the disease, action taken, class or rank on board ship, etc. I hope that some hundred words would suffice and that this would provide a simple means of international communication.