IMO NEWS
THE MAGAZINE OF THE INTERNATIONAL MARITIME ORGANIZATION

ISSUE 3 2008

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World Maritime Day 2008
IMO: 60 years in the service of shipping

The year 2008 contains a number of key milestones and anniversaries for IMO. March 6th was the 60th anniversary of the adoption of the IMO Convention by a conference held in Geneva in 1948 under the auspices of the United Nations; March 17th was the 50th anniversary of that Convention entering into force in 1958; and June saw the convening of the 100th session of the IMO Council, the executive organ of IMO responsible for supervising the work of the Organization in between sessions of the Assembly.

The inaugural meeting of IMO – originally known as the Inter-governmental Maritime Consultative Organization, or IMCO – was held in London in 1959. The purposes of the Organization, as a specialized agency of the United Nations, are mainly “to provide machinery for cooperation among Governments in the field of governmental regulation and practices relating to technical matters of all kinds affecting shipping engaged in international trade; and to encourage and facilitate the general adoption of the highest practicable standards in matters concerning maritime safety, efficiency of navigation and prevention and control of marine pollution from ships”. The Organization is also empowered to deal with administrative and legal matters related to its purposes.

The need for an international agency regulating maritime transport stems from the fact that shipping is perhaps the most international of all the world’s global industries. The ownership and management chain surrounding any particular vessel can embrace many different countries; it is not unusual to find that its owners, operators, shippers, charterers, insurers and the classification society, not to mention the officers and crew, are all of different nationalities and that none of these is from the country whose flag the ship flies. And shipping’s prime physical assets – the ships themselves – move continually between countries and between different jurisdictions.

Shipping is also an inherently dangerous occupation, with ships having to confront the worst that the elements can throw at them. Sometimes, disaster strikes – as witnessed by high-profile incidents of the type involving ships such as the Titanic, Torrey Canyon, Exxon Valdez, Estonia, Erika, Prestige and, most recently, the Princess of the Stars. There is, therefore, an over-arching logic in favour of a framework of international standards to regulate shipping – standards which are adopted, recognized and accepted by all.

IMO has come a very long way since its inception all those years ago. The Organization was born into a world weary from war and in which the old colonial powers still held sway in terms of global prosperity and trade. As a consequence, these were also major powers in shipping and, as the leading maritime nations, they tended to create their own standards with regard to vessel construction, safety, Manning and so on. But, in 1948, only three years after the creation of the United Nations, a new spirit of global unity was in the air and the first glimpses of a new world order were on the horizon.

Moreover, it was at the time gradually becoming generally accepted that a situation in which each shipping nation had its own maritime laws was counter-productive to ensuring the seamless flow of traffic and promoting safety in shipping operations worldwide. Not only were standards different, but some were far higher than others. Conscientious safety-minded shipowners were at an economic disadvantage vis-à-vis their competitors who were spending relatively little money on safety, and this was a threat to any serious attempt to improve safety at sea and to international seaborne trade as a whole.

Now, of course, all this has changed. Globalization has transformed international commerce, new powers have emerged in shipping and the plethora of measures established by IMO during its 60 years in the service of shipping has provided the bedrock from which a safer and cleaner industry has emerged, one that can continue to develop and flourish. Furthermore, IMO’s work has demonstrated, beyond doubt, that international standards – developed, agreed, implemented and enforced universally – are the only effective way to regulate such a diverse and truly international industry as shipping.
The Organization’s standards are now firmly embedded in shipping’s consciousness and practice worldwide and they shape the industry of today. Indeed, the comprehensive body of IMO conventions (50 in total), supported by literally hundreds of codes, guidelines and recommendations, govern just about every facet of the industry – from the design, construction, equipment and operation of ships to the training of seafarers, or from the drawing board to the scrapyard.

Many of the main IMO treaties (including, for example, SOLAS, the Tonnage and Load Lines Conventions, the Collision Regulations, the STCW Convention and Annexes I and II of MARPOL), have been ratified by States that are, collectively, responsible for more than 98 percent of the world’s fleet.

It is because of the extensive network of global regulations that IMO has developed and adopted over the years that we can say with confidence that, today, shipping is a safe and secure mode of transport; clean; environmentally-friendly; and very energy-efficient.

A most encouraging development of recent years is that shipping’s environmental consciousness continues to grow. This is illustrated not only by its wide acceptance of IMO’s environmental standards and the initiatives that the industry itself has put in place to prevent its operations having a negative impact on the environment, but also by its eagerness to challenge and reverse shipping’s unwarranted negative image and, through a variety of media, enhance its environmental credentials, highlighting its ever-improving record and contribution to sustainable development. Shipping’s care for the environment, in which it operates, is also demonstrated by its determination to limit and control ships’ exhaust gas emissions and reduce greenhouse gas emissions, thereby lowering their impact on the atmosphere and contributing to worldwide efforts to address the phenomena of climate change and global warming.

The strength of IMO’s measures is derived from a number of factors. First of all, none of them has been developed overnight, on the spur of the moment or as a knee-jerk reaction to an accident or incident. Even though some have been prompted by particular events – and IMO has a very good record of timely and appropriate response – nevertheless, all IMO instruments are the result of measured and considered technical work by the world’s finest maritime experts.

Not only do the IMO Member Governments send their top experts to the various technical meetings of the Organization, the process also benefits hugely from the contribution of specialist non-governmental organizations and inter-governmental organizations. Representing all sectors of the industry, as well as a host of other civil society and geographical interests, these organizations take an active and committed role in a wide spectrum of IMO activities and their contribution to the success story of the Organization is valued highly.

Another reason why IMO’s measures have such widespread acceptance is that decisions within the Organization are generally taken by consensus. There is, of course, a voting procedure, but it is very rarely called upon in the normal course of IMO business. In this way, the natural reluctance one might feel at being asked to implement measures that one may not have espoused fully in the first place, is circumvented. Agreement by consensus means that all countries have a stake in those measures and a genuine desire to exercise the responsibility that comes with a sense of ownership.

And so, IMO stands united, focused on the challenges ahead and continuously relevant to the industry it has been serving for so long. Shipping is, par excellence, a significant contributor to, and facilitator of, economic growth on a worldwide basis. As such, the mission of IMO (that of promoting its safety and security, its efficiency and its environmental credentials) is one that reaches out far beyond the Organization’s immediate constituency and touches the life of nearly everyone on the planet. Today we can say, with confidence and pride, that IMO has served the shipping industry well since its inception 60 years ago. As we look back over what we have achieved and, more importantly, forward to the challenges that lie ahead, we know that the edifice from which we operate is strong and well-structured. Our course for the future is set, and we will make our passage with optimism and a clear vision about the objectives we want to achieve.

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Progress towards developing a mandatory regime to control greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from international shipping was made during the first intersessional meeting of IMO’s Working Group on Greenhouse Gas Emissions from Ships, held in Oslo, Norway (23 to 27 June 2008). The meeting was attended by more than 210 delegates, comprising experts from all over the world.

In particular, the Oslo meeting made progress on developing a mandatory CO₂ Design Index for ships and an Interim CO₂ Operational Index, and held extensive discussions on best practices for voluntary implementation and economic instruments with GHG-reduction potential.

Although, to date, no mandatory GHG instrument for international shipping has been adopted, IMO has given extensive consideration to the matter and is currently following an ambitious work plan, due to culminate, in 2009, with the adoption of a binding instrument. IMO is working to have measures in place to control GHG emissions from international shipping before the first commitment period under the Kyoto Protocol expires at the end of 2011.

**Mandatory CO₂ Design Index**

The meeting developed further a formula and the methodology, as well as draft text for the associated regulatory framework, for a proposed mandatory CO₂ Design Index for new ships. Once finalized, the Index will serve as a fuel-efficiency tool at the design stage of ships, enabling the fuel efficiency of different ship designs, or a specific design with different inputs such as design speed, choice of propeller or the use of waste heat recovery systems, to be compared.

The Design Index will contain a required minimum level of fuel efficiency related to a baseline, which will be established based on fuel efficiency for ships delivered between 1995 and 2005. The actual minimum level, and the frequency with which the limit will be tightened, are among the matters that will be considered by MEPC 58 in October.

The Oslo meeting thoroughly considered the different elements in the formula to avoid so-called “paragraph ships”, meaning future ship designs optimized for certain conditions but which do not actually deliver greater fuel efficiency. The different correction factors to make the formula relevant for all ship types were given extensive consideration, as was verification of the Design Index, as there might not be a Flag state dedicated to the ship at the design stage.

The meeting encouraged Member States and observer organizations to test the robustness of the agreed draft formula by conducting simulations and submitting the outcome to MEPC 58. With this outcome, MEPC 58 should be in a position to approve the CO₂ Design Index for new ships and agree on the final details.

**Interim CO₂ Operational Index**

The intersessional meeting considered the interim CO₂ Operational Index and identified all areas where changes have been proposed. The interim CO₂ Operational Index was adopted by MEPC 53 in July 2005 and has been used by a number of flag States and industry organizations to determine the fuel efficiency of their ship operations. IMO has received the outcome from thousands of trials and a large amount of data exists.

The interim CO₂ Operational Index has been used to establish a common approach for trials on voluntary CO₂ emission indexing, enabling shipowners and operators to evaluate the performance of their fleet with regard to CO₂ emissions. As the amount of CO₂ emitted from a ship is directly related to the consumption of fuel oil, CO₂ indexing also provides useful information on a ship’s performance with regard to fuel efficiency. The draft CO₂ Operational Index will be put forward to MEPC 58 with a view to finalizing it at that session.

**Best practices for voluntary implementation**

The intersessional meeting reviewed best practices for voluntary implementation and developed further guidance for the ship industry on fuel efficient operation of ships. The meeting considered best practices regarding a range of measures identified by earlier sessions of the MEPC and how they can be implemented by ship builders, operators, charterers, ports and other relevant partners to make all possible efforts to reduce GHG emissions. Operational measures have been identified as having significant
Intelligence

reduction potential that often can be achieved without large investments, but would require co-operation with other stakeholders.

**Economic instruments with GHG-reduction potential**

The Oslo meeting had a thorough and in-depth discussion related to the further development of different economic instruments with GHG-reduction potential including, *inter alia*, a global levy on fuel used by international shipping and the possible introduction of emission trading schemes for ships. Proposals for both open emission trading schemes, where ships will be required to purchase allowances in an open market in line with power stations or steel mills, and closed schemes, where the trading will only be among ships, were considered.

“Grandfathering” or auctioning of the allowances, how the cap is set and by whom, the management of any system, the banking of allowances and the impact on world trade, as well as legal aspects, were also among the issues considered. The meeting had an extensive exchange of views, paving the way for further discussion at MEPC 58 on the possible introduction of market-based measures to provide incentives for the shipping industry to invest in fuel-efficient ships.

**Next steps**

MEPC 58 will be held in London from 6 to 10 October 2008 and is expected to consider further the reduction mechanisms developed by the intersessional meeting, with a view to their forming part of the future IMO regulatory regime. MEPC 58 is also expected to consider the related legal aspects and decide whether the GHG regulations should form part of an existing convention or whether an entirely new instrument should be developed and adopted. However, no clear conclusion was reached as to whether any such instrument should apply to all ships, irrespective of flag, or only to ships flying the flag of Parties to the UNFCCC and listed in Annex I to that Convention. MEPC 58 will also decide on the work needed prior to MEPC 59, to be held in July 2009, when final adoption of a coherent and comprehensive IMO regime to control GHG emissions from ships engaged in international trade is planned.

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West and Central African states to co-operate in sub-regional *Coastguard network*

Twenty member States of the Maritime Organisation of West and Central Africa (MOWCA) adopted a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on the establishment of a Sub-regional Coastguard Network for the West and Central African sub-region at the 13th General Assembly of Ministers of MOWCA, in Dakar, Republic of Senegal, 30th July, 2008.

The adoption of the MoU is a major landmark in a long-running campaign by IMO and MOWCA to improve maritime safety, security and environmental protection in the sub-region. It follows a feasibility study undertaken by IMO and the successful IMO/MOWCA forum on the establishment of an integrated coast guard function network for West and Central African Countries held in Dakar in October 2006.

The MoU provides an institutional framework for suppressing piracy, armed robbery and other unlawful acts against ships and addressing illegal fishing, drug and weapon trafficking, illegal migration, oil theft, damage to gas pipelines and maritime accident response in the sub-region. It provides guidelines for coastal surveillance, presence in the exclusive economic zones of the sub-region and enforcement of international conventions, regulations and codes – principally those of IMO and the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). It has provisions on a “right of hot pursuit” in case of unlawful acts perpetrated against ships.

Organizationally, the sub-region has been divided into four Coastguard Zones, each comprising five States; with four coastguard centres in Dakar, Senegal; Abidjan, Cote D’Ivoire; Lagos, Nigeria; and Pointe Noire, Congo. The Network has two Principal Coordinating Centres in Accra, Ghana and Luanda, Angola.

Soon after the MoU was adopted and opened for signature, 11 of the 20 coastal member States of MOWCA, representing 55 per cent of the membership, immediately signed the MoU. Member States of MOWCA which signed the MoU are Cameroon, Cape Verde, Republic of Congo, Democratic Republic of Congo, Côte D’Ivoire, Gabon, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Nigeria, Senegal and Togo. Other Coastal member States which supported the adoption of the MoU are expected to sign it within the next few weeks.

The MoU comes into force in any given coastguard zone (made up of five adjoining states) three months after all the states of the zone have signed it. The signing of the MoU builds on the significant progress made by IMO towards the development of sub-regional capacity for ensuring maritime safety and security through the establishment of co-operative mechanisms including Maritime Rescue Coordinating Centres (MRCCs) and inter-agency agreements.

Speaking at the opening of the General Assembly, the Prime Minister of Senegal, Mr Cheikh Soumare, expressed his gratitude to IMO for the unstinting support given, through the international community and through MOWCA, for the success of this project.

The General Assembly was attended by Angola, Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Republic of Congo, Democratic Republic of Congo, Côte D’Ivoire, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal and Togo, all of which are member States of MOWCA. It was also attended by MOWCA Specialised Organs representing ports, shippers, shipping lines, the Regional Maritime Academy in Abidjan and the Regional Maritime University in Accra. IMO, the African Union, the Economic and Monetary Union of West Africa and INTERPOL were in attendance as observers.
An international organization comprised of representatives of the ocean common carriers of the world, operating under the flags of many nations, dedicated to the development, enhancing the understanding, and uniform application of rules and regulations governing maritime transportation of dangerous goods. Collectively, VOHMA members are responsible for the safe transport of approximately 75% of the world’s ocean borne container traffic.

VOHMA’s primary focus is to foster the safe handling of dangerous goods, as well as to offer the expertise of the ocean carriers in the development of international and national multimodal regulations.

VOHMA holds consultative status and actively participates at the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and the UN Sub-Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods. VOHMA actively comments on proposed regulations and is in frequent contact with the regulatory bodies around the globe.

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IMO welcomes Security Council moves on Somali piracy

IMO Secretary-General Efthimios E. Mitropoulos has welcomed the adoption (on 2 June 2008) by the United Nations Security Council of a resolution authorizing a series of decisive measures to combat acts of piracy and armed robbery against vessels off the coast of Somalia.

Under the terms of resolution 1816 (2008), which was adopted unanimously, the Security Council decided that, following receipt of a letter from Somalia to the President of the UN Security Council giving the consent of Somalia’s Transitional Federal Government (TFG), States co-operating with the TFG would be allowed, for a period of six months, to enter the country’s territorial waters and use “all necessary means” to repress acts of piracy and armed robbery at sea, in a manner consistent with relevant provisions of international law.

This latest move comes after more than two years of intensive effort by IMO to bring this matter to the attention of the Security Council and to urge concerted action, culminating in the adoption, last November, of a second IMO Assembly resolution on the subject. In welcoming the Security Council resolution, Secretary-General Mitropoulos said that firm action was needed, since the current situation was stifling the flow of much-needed aid to the people of Somalia, jeopardizing the lives of innocent seafarers, fishermen and passengers, and adversely affecting international trade.

He added, “IMO has been asking, since June 2007, that the Transitional Federal Government of Somalia consent to naval ships entering the country’s territorial waters to protect shipping under attack by pirates and armed robbers. This has now been done, through the Security Council resolution, and we should work together to ensure that acts of piracy and armed robbery against ships sailing off the coast of Somalia are prevented and suppressed to the benefit of the Somali people, first and foremost, the seafarers and passengers on ships sailing in the region, the shipping industry and international seaborne trade."

The Security Council text was adopted with the consent of Somalia, which itself lacks the capacity to intercept pirates or patrol and secure its territorial waters. It follows a surge in attacks on ships in the waters off the country’s coast, including hijackings of vessels operated by the World Food Programme (WFP) and other commercial vessels - all of which posed a threat “to the prompt, safe and effective delivery of food aid and other humanitarian assistance to the people of Somalia”, and a grave danger to vessels, crews, passengers and cargo.

Affirming that the authorization provided in the resolution applies only to the situation in Somalia and shall not affect the rights and obligations under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, nor be considered as establishing customary international law, the Security Council also requested co-operating States to ensure that anti-piracy actions they undertake do not deny or impair the right of innocent passage to the ships of any third State.

While urging States, whose naval vessels and military aircraft operate on the high seas and airspace adjacent to the coast of Somalia to be vigilant, the Security Council encouraged States interested in the use of commercial routes off the coast of Somalia to increase and co-ordinate their efforts to deter attacks upon and hijacking of vessels, in co-operation with the country’s Government. All States were urged to co-operate with each other, with IMO and, as appropriate, with regional organizations, and to render assistance to vessels threatened by or under attack by pirates.

The UN resolution urges States to use naval assets to help deter attacks upon and hijacking of vessels off Somalia.

Better fire protection for cabin balconies on passenger ships

Amendments to the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS) to strengthen the fire protection arrangements on cabin balconies on passenger ships entered into force on 1 July 2008, along with other SOLAS amendments relating to the prevention of accidents involving lifeboats and protective coatings on ships.

Fire regulations on cabin balconies

Amendments to SOLAS chapter II-2 and to the International Code for Fire Safety Systems (FSS Code) to strengthen the fire protection arrangements in relation to cabin balconies on passenger vessels were developed in response to the fire aboard the cruise ship Star Princess, while on passage between Grand Cayman and Montego Bay, Jamaica, in March 2006. The fire began on an external balcony and spread over several decks.

The amendments to SOLAS chapter II-2 are aimed at ensuring that existing regulations 4.4 (Primary deck coverings),
5.3.1.2 (Ceilings and linings), 5.3.2 (Use of combustible materials) and 6 (Smoke generation potential and toxicity) are also applied to cabin balconies on new passengerships.

For existing passengerships, relevant provisions require furniture on cabin balconies to be of restricted fire risk unless fixed water spraying systems, fixed fire detection and fire alarm systems are fitted and that partitions separating balconies be constructed of non-combustible materials, similar to the provisions for new passengerships.

**Prevention of accidents involving lifeboats**

An amendment to SOLAS regulation III/19.3.3.4 concerns provisions for the launch of free-fall lifeboats during abandon-ship drills. The amendment will allow, during the abandon-ship drill, the lifeboat to either be free-fall launched with only the required operating crew on board, or lowered into the water by means of the secondary means of launching without the operating crew on board, and then manoeuvred in the water by the operating crew. The aim is to prevent accidents with lifeboats occurring during abandon-ship drills.

**Protective coatings**

Amendments to SOLAS regulations II-1/3-2 make mandatory the Performance standard for protective coatings of dedicated seawater ballast tanks on all new ships and of double-side-skin spaces of bulk carriers.

The performance standard will apply to ships for which the building contract is placed on or after 1 July 2008; or, in the absence of a building contract, the keels of which are laid on or after 1 January 2009, or the delivery of which is on or after 1 July 2012.

**Other amendments**

Amendments to Codes and other instruments which also entered into force or became effective on 1 July 2008 include:

- amendments to the FSS Code relating to fire extinguishers, specifically portable foam applicators; fixed foam fire-extinguishing systems; fixed-pressure water-spraying and water-mist fire-extinguishing systems, fixed fire detection and fire alarm systems for cabin balconies;
- amendments to the International Life-Saving Appliance Code (LSA Code), including those related to life rafts, lifeboats and rescue boats, particularly in relation to stowage and release mechanisms;
- amendments to the International Code for the Construction and Equipment of Ships Carrying Liquefied Gases in Bulk (IGC Code), to update the references to SOLAS regulations and to add two more chemicals to the list of products in chapter 19 (Summary of minimum requirements);
- amendments to the International Codes of Safety for High-Speed Craft (1994 HSC Code and the 2000 HSC Code), to update them in line with relevant SOLAS amendments and, in the case of the 2000 HSC Code, to revise requirements relating to testing and calculations for buoyancy, stability and subdivision;
- amendments to the Protocol of 1988, relating to the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea, 1974, to include in the Record of equipment for the relevant safety certificate an entry regarding the long-range identification and tracking system;
- amendments to the Protocol of 1988 relating to the International Convention on Load Lines, 1966, including amendments of a reference in regulation 22 (Scuppers, inlets and discharges) and an amendment in regulation 39 (Minimum bow height and reserve buoyancy);
- amendments to the Dynamically Supported Craft (DSC) Code to update it in line with relevant amendments to SOLAS;
- amendments to the Gas Carrier (GC) Code, to update it in line with certain fire safety requirements in SOLAS; and
- amendments to the revised recommendation on testing of life-saving appliances (resolution MSC.81(70)), including revisions to prototype tests for lifebuoys, lifejackets, immersion suits, anti-exposure suits and thermal protective aids, liferafts, lifeboats, rescue boats and fast rescue boats, launching and embarkation appliances, position-indicating lights for life-saving appliances and hydrostatic release units; and revisions to production and installation tests for survival craft, and to launching and stowage arrangements.

The amendments were all adopted in December 2006.

SOLAS amendments contain provisions for the launch of free-fall lifeboats during abandon-ship drills.
“Gulfs area” and Southern South African waters Special Areas in effect

Special Areas in which the discharge of wastes from ships is prohibited took effect in the ‘Gulfs area’ and off southern South Africa on 1 August 2008, providing extra protection from pollution from shipping in those areas under the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL).

“Gulfs area” Special Area

The ‘Gulfs area’ was established as a Special Area in 1973, when MARPOL was adopted, but the discharge requirements therein could not take effect until States in the area had ratified the Convention and provided adequate reception facilities.

Following a 10-year regional project on the implementation of MARPOL, organized and administered by ROPME/MEMAC, with support from IMO’s Integrated Technical Co-operation Programme, all the States in the “Gulfs area” have now ratified MARPOL and have provided adequate reception and treatment facilities for Annex I (oil) and Annex V (garbage).

Southern South African waters Special Area

The Southern South African waters Special Area under MARPOL Annex I was adopted as an amendment to MARPOL in 2006, and an MEPC resolution was adopted in 2007 establishing 1 August 2008 as the date on which the discharge requirements take effect. This followed information provided by South Africa that adequate reception facilities for oily wastes from ships were provided in all major ports within the Special Area.

The Cook Islands becomes 168th IMO Member State

The Cook Islands has become the latest Member of IMO, following the deposit, on 18 July 2008 of an instrument of acceptance of the Convention on the International Maritime Organization, as amended, with the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

With the accession of the Cook Islands, the number of IMO Member States stands at 168, with a further three Associate Members.

Since the Cook Islands is not a Member State of the United Nations, its application to join IMO required the approval of two-thirds (112) of the current IMO membership. The Cook Islands applied to join IMO in 1999 and the 112th letter of acceptance was received by the IMO Secretariat on 15 July 2008.

IMO deploys expert to assist Princess of the Stars salvage

The Government of the Philippines has requested IMO to mobilize an independent salvage expert to provide guidance on assessing the technical aspects of the salvage proposals and plans being considered in the case of the ferry Princess of the Stars, which went aground and sank on 21 June 2008 in the Philippines. Almost all the 861 passengers and crew on board lost their lives.

IMO’s involvement followed the discovery that the ferry was carrying various hazardous materials, in particular a 40-ft container containing 10 metric tonnes of endosulfan, a toxic pesticide. Further to an initial request from the Government of the Philippines, IMO consulted several salvage experts and consolidated relevant technical information on the salvage issue that was shared with the Philippines Government and the United Nations Country Team.

Based on the technical information provided by IMO, the Philippines Government, which is taking a hands-on role in the incident, requested IMO to mobilize urgently a competent salvage expert to assist and guide them in what is expected to be a complex salvage process, taking into account both the number of human casualties, as well as the hazardous materials on board. In response, IMO mobilized Mr. Paul Glerum, a Dutch salvage master, to undertake this task.

Paul Glerum draws on more than 30 years’ salvage experience during which he has been involved in a number of high-profile salvage projects, including the raising of the Kursk, the Russian nuclear submarine that suffered an explosion and sank in the Barents Sea in 2000. The Government of the Netherlands has provided financial support for his deployment.

Mr. Glerum departed Amsterdam on 17 July, and arrived in Manila on 18 July 2008 for a period of seven days. He undertook tasks such as the review of salvage plans, provision of technical input and advice, as well as providing assistance and guidance to the Government in the salvage process.

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Voluntary Audit Scheme
– first consolidated audit summary report reviewed

The first steps in establishing a learning process from the Voluntary IMO Member State Audit Scheme were put in place when the first Consolidated Audit Summary Report was considered by the Sub-Committee on Flag State Implementation (FSI) at its 16th session.

The Sub-Committee noted that the findings from eight of the audits conducted during 2006 and 2007 had provided valuable lessons on the enforcement and implementation of the 10 mandatory IMO instruments thus far covered by the audit scheme. The findings also identified areas where States had either fallen short in some areas or had encountered some difficulties – although, in general, the audits had found that the Member States concerned substantially met their obligations.

The Sub-Committee referred the Review of the Consolidated Audit Summary Report to a correspondence group, tasking it with developing a methodology for the analysis of the report, in order to provide feedback to Member States and the Organization on recurrent findings, including the identification of possible underlying causes and best practices; providing feedback on the effectiveness of the implementation by Member States of mandatory instruments falling within the scope of the audit scheme; and identifying areas where specific technical co-operation activities would benefit Member States.

The group will then conduct a trial with the methodology, summarize the outcome, and make recommendations.

Casualty analysis

The Sub-Committee continued its work on casualty analysis and approved casualty analyses for release on the IMO Global Integrated Shipping Information System (GISIS) (http://gisis.imo.org/), as well as lessons learned for presentation to seafarers, for release on the IMO website (http://www.imo.org/home.asp?topic_id=800).

Revised reporting format on marine casualties and incidents

The Sub-Committee developed revised reporting formats on marine casualties and incidents in the form of a draft MSC-MEPC.3 circular for submission to the Maritime Safety Committee (MSC) and Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC). The reporting formats update and replace the reporting forms regarding Damage cards, Intact stability casualty records, Fire casualty records, Reports on investigations into serious casualties and Incidents involving dangerous goods or marine pollutants in packaged form. The Guidelines for the investigation of accidents where fatigue may have been a contributing factor and the Questionnaire on the maritime distress system are also updated and a reporting format on Incidental spillages of harmful substances of 50 tonnes or more has been added.

Investigation into the MSC Napoli

Following the review of the “Report on the investigation of the structural failure of MSC Napoli in the English Channel on 18 January 2007”, the Sub-Committee identified four main issues for consideration: misdeclaration and loading of containers; the human element; the structural strength of container ships; and the pending International Chamber of Shipping (ICS) Code of good practice for the container shipping industry.

The Sub-Committee recommended that the MSC consider:

- referring the investigation report to the Sub-Committee on ship Design and Equipment (DE) and the Joint MSC-MEPC Working Group on the Human Element for review;
- inviting Administrations to bring to the attention of their vessel owners and operators the recommendation in the report to the ship’s operator to review its safety management system and auditing procedures to ensure that: guidance and instructions to masters regarding speed in heavy weather take into account the lessons learned from this accident; the shore management consults with the relevant classification societies when there is any doubt regarding the criticality of machinery items on board its vessels, which are defective or unserviceable; and Masters are fully aware of the requirement to inform embarked pilots of all factors affecting manoeuvrability and stability; and,
- inviting the International Association of Classification Societies (IACS) to provide an update on its review of the relevant standards.

Proposed study on combining casualty and PSC data – terms of reference agreed

The Sub-Committee agreed terms of reference for a study on combining casualty and PSC data, the aim being to study whether correlation might be established between casualty statistics and PSC outcomes, including the detention ratio. Among other things, the study would consider the cause of each casualty reported, in order to separate human factors from equipment or structural failures.

Mandatory reports under MARPOL

The Sub-Committee considered the summary analysis of the reports submitted for 2006 in relation to the MARPOL Convention and noted the following:

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- 22 incidents of spillages of 50 tonnes or more were reported (in most cases, the type of substance spilled was oil);
- 278 incidental spillages of less than 50 tonnes were reported (in most cases, oil);
- 48 cases of alleged discharge violations were reported (in most cases, oil);
- the total number of ships boarded for port State control was 51,589 for 2006, while the total number of ships detained in port or that were denied entry was 1,053, or 2 percent of those boarded; and
- 67 ships were reported as having no IOPP Certificate or equivalency, 755 ships were reported to have discrepancies in their IOPP Certificate or equivalency; 129 ships were reported to have no Oil Record Book or equivalency; 192 ships lacked required pollution prevention equipment on board; and 2,952 ships were reported with required equipment not functioning.

Although, at 24.6 per cent, the rate of reporting in 2006 was better than in previous years, it still remained low and the Sub-Committee urged all Parties to MARPOL to submit mandatory reports.

Port reception facilities

As part of its work on the Action Plan to tackle the alleged inadequacy of port reception facilities, the Sub-Committee agreed standardized forms for the Advance Notification Form and for the Waste Delivery Receipt, to be used by ships delivering wastes and residues to reception facilities, and forwarded them to the MEPC for its approval.

The Sub-Committee also reviewed data submitted to the Port Reception Facility Database (PRFD), a module of GISIS, consisting of 80 cases of alleged inadequacies – of which 59 per cent of all reports received had been submitted by a single ship and by the ships of a single company. It was felt that the low level of reporting could be due to lack of incentive for reporting; fear (by the master and/or company) that ships may be penalized at future port calls; or a belief that reporting would only generate paperwork and would not achieve any improvement towards the provision of adequate facilities. However, it was also suggested that the low number of reports might reflect that there is no serious problem of inadequacy of reception facilities.

The Sub-Committee urged those Member States that had not already done so to populate GISIS with records of reception facilities in their ports and with their contact points and to disseminate to shipping companies the form for reporting alleged inadequacies of port reception facilities. The Sub-Committee also urged non-governmental organizations representing shipowners to stress to their members the value of reporting in tackling the inadequacy of port reception facilities.

Review of the Survey Guidelines under the HSSC

The Sub-Committee developed draft amendments to the Survey Guidelines under the Harmonized System of Survey and Certification (HSSC) to update the guidelines with reference to amendments adopted to mandatory instruments and to include a new Appendix 3 on Survey Guidelines under the International Convention on the Control of Harmful Anti-Fouling Systems on ships (AFS 2001). The draft amendments will be further developed by an intersessional correspondence group.

Unified interpretation

The Sub-Committee agreed to a draft MSC/MEPC circular on Unified interpretation of the application of regulations governed by the building contract date, the keel laying date and the delivery date for the requirements of the SOLAS and the MARPOL Conventions and a draft MSC circular on Meaning of “First Survey”, for submission to MSC 85 for approval.

Applicability of regulations to FPSOs and FSUs

The Sub-Committee considered, in detail, the issue of the applicability of the SOLAS and Load Lines Conventions to floating production, storage and offloading facilities (FPSOs) and floating storage units (FSUs), recognizing that, in their normal mode of operation, they do not fall under the safety provisions of the SOLAS Convention.

While the majority of the delegations which spoke during the session were satisfied that the existing legal framework was adequate and sufficient, some Member States expressed concerns, mainly as coastal States, that the potential threat to maritime safety and the marine environment required that a technical review of the matter be conducted by the Organization with a view to developing guidelines for the application of safety requirements to FPSOs and FSUs.

Those Member States supporting a

Revised reporting formats for marine casualties and incidents were developed
technical review were invited to make proposals for a new work programme item to MSC 85.

Establishment of PSC data exchange moves forward

The Sub-Committee reviewed an agreement, in principle, by the large majority of PSC regimes, to sign data exchange protocols with IMO for the provision of all PSC inspection data and agreed to recommend the Committees to request the Secretariat to proceed with the finalization of protocols with the Secretariats of those PSC regimes; and to liaise with the PSC Information Centres to establish the data exchange. The aim is for the PSC regimes to use GISIS to share data among themselves.

Illegal, unregulated and unreported (IUU) fishing

The Sub-Committee reviewed the report of the second meeting of the Joint IMO/FAO Ad Hoc Working Group on Illegal, Unreported, Unregulated (IUU) Fishing and Related Matters, held in July 2007 at the Headquarters of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in Rome and stressed the importance of future collaboration, in particular in the following areas:

- implementation of port State measures;
- development of a comprehensive global record of fishing vessels;
- information sharing and co-ordination with regard to vessel identification, monitoring and tracking, such as vessel monitoring systems, LRIT and AIS;
- development of criteria for assessing the performance of flag States, taking into account the experience of IMO in relation to the ISM Code and the Voluntary IMO Member States Audit Scheme;
- implementation of security measures for non-convention vessels;
- development of PSC guidelines for the implementation of the 2007 ILO Work in Fishing Convention; and
- collaboration in relation to work on marine debris, including work on “Abandoned, Lost and Otherwise Discarded Fishing Gears” through the MEPC Correspondence Group working on the review of MARPOL Annex V Regulations for the prevention of pollution by garbage from ships.
IMO women’s programme celebrates 20 years

IMO celebrated 20 years of achievement through its Women in Development Strategy and the Programme for the Integration of Women in the Maritime Sector, during the 58th session of the Technical Co-operation Committee, with the formal approval of a report on two decades of action to strengthen regional capacities by encouraging and facilitating the training of women in all maritime subjects.

The Committee noted that the Programme on the Integration of Women in the Maritime Sector had supported a number of training fellowships in port management and security and the protection of the marine environment, as well as the establishment of formal networks or associations for women employed in the maritime sector during 2007.

Three subregional associations in Africa were established in 2007 with the assistance of the IWMS Programme, including: the Network of Professional Women in the Maritime and Port Sectors of West and Central Africa, formalized at a workshop held in Benin in February 2007; the International Women’s Maritime Forum for MENA1 and Africa, established in July 2007 under the Arab Academy for Science and Technology and Maritime Transport (AASTMT) in Alexandria, Egypt; and the Women in the Maritime Sector of East and Southern Africa (WOMESA), established in Mombasa, Kenya in December 2007.

In the Philippines, the Women in Maritime Philippines (WIMAPHL) Association was established in July 2007 through the support of the IMO Regional Co-ordinator for east Asia, and the IWMS Programme also funded the IMO/WIMAPHL “Seminar on Environment Protection in the Philippines: Advocacy by Women in the Maritime World”, held in November 2007.

Shortly after its registration, WIMAPHL initiated projects/activities aimed at assisting the Philippines achieve the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), including the conduct of an HIV/AIDS seminar in partnership with the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS)-Philippines. The Regional Co-ordinator continued to encourage women in east Asian countries to mobilize themselves into groups in order to contribute actively to the development of their respective country’s maritime industry. Discussions have started with women in the maritime sector in Indonesia, Thailand and Malaysia with a view to establishing similar associations.

The IWMS Programme has become the Organization’s mechanism for the implementation of the United Nations Millennium Development Goal (MDG) no3, to “Promote gender equality and empower women”.

Following the publication, in 1988, of the Strategy of the Integration of Women in the Maritime Sector, the Organization’s approach to gender-based programming between 1988 and 2007 had been developed under two principal phases:

Phase 1: Establishment of formal institutional structures and awareness-building through the Medium-term Plan for the Integration of Women in the Maritime Sector (1988 to 1996); and

Phase 2: Supporting capacity-building and fostering regional co-operation (from 1997 to 2008).

Support through the allocation of fellowships has remained a constant element of the Women in Development (WID) strategy since its inception and throughout all phases of implementation.

IMTCP and MDG linkage

The Committee endorsed the steps taken by the Secretariat to implement resolution A.1006 on the linkage between the Integrated Technical Co-operation Programme (ITCP) and the MDGs, by developing technical assistance activities, for inclusion in the ITCP for the 2008-2009 biennium, which not only promote the early ratification and effective implementation of IMO instruments but also contribute to the attainment of the MDGs. Improvements in maritime capacity, supported by the work of IMO and the ITCP, have a major and direct impact on at least five MDGs:

• MDG 1 – Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger;
• MDG 3 – Promote gender equality and empower women;
• MDG 6 – Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases;
• MDG 7 – Ensure environmental sustainability; and
• MDG 8 – Develop a global partnership for development.

The regional and global programmes for the ITCP for the 2008-2009 biennium include some activities whose main objective is to foster capacity-building in the maritime sector in order to contribute to the achievement of the MDGs, including a new assessment study of HIV/AIDS in three selected ports in Africa; a strengthened programme on the IWMS, and a strengthened programme on partnerships and ITCP resource mobilization.

High priority has been given to the special needs of the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and Small Island Developing States (SIDS), with a new global programme to support SIDS and LDCs addressing the issue of sustainable livelihoods and poverty alleviation through capacity-building activities in the shipping sector. Some of the activities planned under this programme include an advisory mission on the evaluation and assessment of Search and Rescue (SAR) and Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS) facilities for the establishment of a regional Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre (MRCC) and Maritime Rescue Sub-Centre (MRSC) in the Caribbean and a training course on hydrography with a view to increasing the knowledge of regional experts on the methods of carrying out hydrographic surveys, on the principles used in “scheming” nautical charts to

1 MENA: Middle East and North Africa.
improve navigation safety and on modern navigation aids.

High priority has also been given to the particular transport needs of Africa and the integration of women in the maritime sector.

With regard to “ensuring environmental sustainability” (MDG 7), the Secretariat has continued to co-ordinate and manage environmental programmes and to deliver activities connected with the protection of the marine environment through the ITCP. A number of activities are planned to take place during the 2008-2009 biennium, aimed at assisting countries in the implementation of the provisions of the relevant IMO Conventions – such as the Ballast Water Management Convention, the Protocol on Preparedness, Response and Co-operation to Pollution Incidents by Hazardous and Noxious Substances, 2000 (OPRC-HNS), the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL) with emphasis on the revised annex II and the International Bulk Chemical Code – and development of national and regional action plans for the GloBallast programme.

Although significant progress has been made in the field of environmental sustainability, more action is required to protect natural resources. In most countries, environmental sustainability has been included within national development plans. To improve alleviation of extreme poverty and hunger, the level of which is still high in some countries, many UN agencies are helping national institutions to adopt an MDG-based development strategy that would facilitate poverty reduction.

Regional co-ordination: a success

The Committee noted the success of the regional presence project in Africa and east Asia and also in the Caribbean through the Regional Maritime Adviser, as well as the continuing efforts to develop and improve partnership arrangements for technical co-operation and delivery of the ITCP.

The Committee was informed that the Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) that established the IMO regional presence in Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana and Kenya for Africa and in the Philippines for east Asia had been extended; and that the current ITCP funding for this purpose will last to the end of 2009.

The major results achieved in 2007 by the regional presence offices and by the Regional Maritime Adviser were presented to the Committee, including their contribution to the delivery of regional meetings in Brazzaville, Congo, and of two meetings in Lagos, Nigeria, where a sub-regional multilateral agreement on maritime search and rescue was signed on 27 May 2008, for the establishment of the Lagos MRCC, covering nine countries in west and central Africa.

As well as through the regional co-ordination scheme in Africa and east Asia, progress was also made towards achieving the objective of decentralizing the implementation of the ITCP through partnership arrangements with regional organizations and institutions in other regions. The Committee noted that, to date, there were 56 partnership arrangements in operation, including some ten new partnerships established with four Member States and six institutions and industry organizations since TC 57 in June 2007.

Long-term financing of the ITCP

The Committee endorsed measures taken by the Secretariat to implement the strategy for the long-term financing of the ITCP. During the past 12 months, there have been ten new partnership arrangements established, four with bilateral donors, three with UN agencies and governmental institutions and the rest with industry organizations, namely, Interferry/Worldwide Ferry Safety Association, the International Petroleum Industry Environmental Conservation Association and Videotel Marine International.

Since the adoption of the strategy, IMO has received additional voluntary trust funds and cash donations to its technical co-operation activities. Several Member States have provided in-kind support mainly by way of providing hostship facilities for training events and sharing the cost of participants from developing countries and consultants in some instances.

Increasing demand for technical assistance, improved delivery and the competition for limited funds have all combined to heighten the importance of looking at alternative measures other than partnership-building for reducing the costs of delivery.

The primary means by which IMO delivers technical assistance is through the recruitment of consultants and deployment of Secretariat staff to serve as technical resource persons for regional meetings or as lecturers at regional and national seminars, workshops and training courses. The cost of country participation in regional events is usually borne by the ITCP. In addition, IMO provides publications and training materials. Fellowships are provided primarily to the World Maritime University and the International Maritime Law Institute.

Biennial report on 2006-2007

The Committee reviewed the biennial report on the status of ITCP implementation for the period 2006-2007, which showed US$25.5 million had been spent on projects, with an output of 108 advisory missions, 250 courses, seminars and workshops, resulting in the training of some 4,410 participants worldwide.

It was noted that the donor base was highly concentrated and dependent on a small number of major donors, with 29 sources of funding, but with the top seven donors accounting for some 88 per cent of the total. The Technical Co-operation (TC) Fund represented 35.7 per cent of expenditure over the 2006-2007 biennium.
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ECDIS carriage to become mandatory

Draft regulations to make mandatory the carriage of Electronic Chart Display and Information Systems (ECDIS) and Bridge Navigational Watch Alarm Systems (BNWAS), under SOLAS chapter V Safety of Navigation, were agreed by the Sub-Committee on Safety of Navigation (NAV) when it met for its 54th session. The proposed new regulations will be submitted to the Maritime Safety Committee (MSC) for approval at its 85th session in November-December 2008, with a view to adoption by MSC 86 in May 2009.

ECDIS carriage requirements

The draft amendment to SOLAS regulation V/19 would require ships engaged on international voyages to be fitted with ECDIS according to the following timetable (the dates in square brackets were agreed in principle by the Sub-Committee):

- passenger ships of 500 gross tonnage and upwards constructed on or after a proposed date of [1 July 2012];
- tankers of 3,000 gross tonnage and upwards constructed on or after a proposed date of [1 July 2012];
- cargo ships, other than tankers, of 10,000 gross tonnage and upwards constructed on or after a proposed date of [1 July 2013];
- cargo ships, other than tankers, of 3,000 gross tonnage and upwards but less than 10,000 gross tonnage constructed on or after a proposed date of [1 July 2014];
- passenger ships of 500 gross tonnage and upwards constructed before [1 July 2012], not later than the first survey on or after a proposed date of [1 July 2014];
- tankers of 3,000 gross tonnage and upwards constructed before [1 July 2012], not later than the first survey on or after a proposed date of [1 July 2015];
- cargo ships, other than tankers, of 50,000 gross tonnage and upwards constructed before [1 July 2013], not later than the first survey on or after a proposed date of [1 July 2016];
- cargo ships, other than tankers, of 20,000 gross tonnage and upwards but less than 50,000 gross tonnage constructed before [1 January 2013], not later than the first survey on or after a proposed date of [1 July 2017];
- cargo ships, other than tankers, of 10,000 gross tonnage and upwards but less than 20,000 gross tonnage constructed before [1 July 2013], not later than the first survey on or after a proposed date of [1 July 2018].

Administrations may exempt ships from the application of the requirements when such ships will be taken permanently out of service within two years after the implementation date specified.

The Sub-Committee also agreed on an amendment of existing regulation V/19.2.1.4 to reflect that ECDIS is an acceptable alternative to nautical charts and nautical publications, yet retaining the proviso that, in a number of cases (for example ships not on international voyages, ships exempt from the carriage requirements because they were to be taken out of service permanently and cargo ships on international voyages but below the agreed tonnage limit), it could be appropriate to use only nautical charts and nautical publications.

To assist shipowners and operators in the implementation of the new requirement, the Sub-Committee agreed a draft SN/Circular on Transitioning from paper chart to electronic chart display and information systems (ECDIS) navigation.

The Sub-Committee also noted progress made in the availability of electronic navigational charts and nautical publications, a prerequisite for introducing mandatory ECDIS carriage requirements.

Bridge navigational watch alarm system regulation (BNWAS)

The draft amendment to SOLAS regulation V/19 will require carriage of a BNWAS, complying with IMO performance standards, on ships of 150 gross tonnage and upwards and passenger ships irrespective of size, with a phased carriage requirement for existing ships, as follows (the dates in square brackets were agreed in principle by the Sub-Committee):

- ships of 150 gross tonnage and upwards and passenger ships irrespective of size constructed on or after [1 July 2011];
- passenger ships irrespective of size constructed before [1 July 2011], not later than the first survey after [1 July 2012];
- ships of 3,000 gross tonnage and upwards constructed before [1 July 2011], not later than the first survey after [1 July 2012];
- ships, of 500 gross tonnage and upwards but less than 3,000 gross tonnage, constructed before [1 July 2011], not later than the first survey after [1 July 2013];
- ships, of 150 gross tonnage and upwards but less than 500 gross tonnage constructed before [1 July 2011], not later than the first survey after [1 July 2014].

The bridge navigational watch alarm system is required to be in operation whenever the ship is underway at sea.

E-navigation strategy completed

The Sub-Committee agreed a draft strategy for the development and implementation of e-navigation, including a draft framework for the implementation process for the e-navigation strategy along with a time frame, for submission to MSC 85, with a view to approval together with a policy decision on its implementation.

The draft strategy defines e-navigation as the harmonized collection, integration, exchange, presentation and analysis of marine information onboard and ashore by electronic means to enhance berth-to-berth navigation and related services for safety and security at sea and protection of the marine environment.

A comprehensive overview of e-navigation elements and objectives is given, along with proposals for its implementation. The implementation plan for e-navigation should include:

- transition planning, taking into account the phasing needed to deliver early benefits and to make the optimum use of existing systems and services in the short term. The implementation plan should be phased such that the first phase can be achieved by fully
integrating and standardizing existing technology and systems (the reduced architecture identified during the gap analysis) and using a reduced concept of operations. Subsequent phases should develop and implement any new technology that is required to deliver the preferred architecture and implement the overall concept of operations;

- identification of potential sources of funding for development and implementation, particularly for developing regions and countries and taking action to secure that funding; and
- implementation itself, in phases, perhaps based on a voluntary equipment of (integrated) existing systems to begin with, but with mandatory equipment and use of a full e-navigation solution in the longer term.

The final phase of the iterative implementation programme would be to review lessons learned and re-plan the subsequent phases of the plan, bearing in mind the fact that e-navigation is not a static concept, and that development of logical implementation phases will be ongoing as user requirements evolve and as technology develops, enabling more efficient and effective systems.

One annex provides a list of existing components of e-navigation, i.e. existing navigation and radio-communication equipment, which need to be evaluated in order to explain how they could be implemented in the e-navigation strategy or how it or the associated standards might need to be amended before it can be integrated. Other annexes give a list of responsibilities for ownership and control of the e-navigation concept and preliminary lists of e-navigation users classified into shipborne users and shore-based users.

The proposed time line for implementation of the e-navigation strategy foresees the following time table:

- by 2009 – identify initial user needs, review them and prioritize them;
- by 2009 – coordinated review of system architecture, which should include the hardware, data, information, communications technology and software needed to meet the user needs. The review should be completed by 2010;
- by 2010 – complete initial gap analyses. A preliminary gap analysis has already been started by the Sub-Committee. Taking into account the human element throughout the process, further gap analyses should focus on technical, regulatory, operational and training aspects;
- by 2011 – complete cost-benefit and risk analyses, which should be used to support strategic decisions as and when certain functions need to be enabled. The analyses should address financial and economic aspects as well as assess the impact on safety, security and the environment;
- 2012 – implementation of the e-navigation plan could begin in 2012 and should include identification of responsibilities of the appropriate organizations/parties; transition planning; and a phased implementation schedule along with possible roadmaps to clarify common understanding necessary for implementation.

**General Provisions on Ships’ Routeing amendments agreed**

Amendments to the General Provisions on Ships’ Routeing were agreed, to align them with the specifications for routeing measures, boundary symbology and charting of archipelagic sea lanes adopted by the International Hydrographic Organization (IHO). The draft amendments will be submitted to the MSC for adoption, subject to confirmation by the Assembly.

**Ships’ routeing and ship reporting measures approved**

The Sub-Committee approved the following new and amended ships’ routeing and ship reporting measures for submission to the MSC for adoption:

- **Traffic separation schemes (TSSs)**
  - new traffic separation scheme “In the Approaches to the port of Thessaloniki” (Greece);
  - new traffic separation schemes, “North Åland Sea”, and “South Åland Sea” (Finland and Sweden);
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- new traffic separation scheme “In Liverpool Bay” (United Kingdom);
- amendments to the north-south leg of the existing traffic separation scheme “In the approach to Boston, Massachusetts” (United States);
- amended traffic separation scheme “Off Land’s End, between Seven Stones and Longships” (United Kingdom);
- amended traffic separation scheme “In the approaches to the River Humber” (United Kingdom);
- amended traffic separation scheme “At Hatter Barn” (Denmark);

Routing measures other than traffic separation schemes (TSSs)

- new recommendatory seasonal Area to be Avoided “In the Great South Channel” (United States);
- new Area to be Avoided and two mandatory No Anchoring Areas in the vicinity of the proposed “Excelsior Northeast Gateway Energy Bridge Deepwater Port” (United States), which has still to be built;
- new deep-water routes inside the borders of the “North Åland Sea” and “South Åland” TSSs;

Mandatory ship reporting systems

- new mandatory ship reporting system “Off the Coast of Portugal – COPREP”;
- amendments to the existing ship reporting system for the Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument, “CORAL SHIPREP” (United States);

Guidelines for Integrated Bridge Systems (IBS)

Draft guidelines for Integrated Bridge Systems (IBS) and draft performance standards for bridge alert management were reviewed and the Sub-Committee agreed to broaden the scope of the proposed guidelines to Guidelines for bridge equipment and systems, their arrangement and integration. A correspondence group was re-established to finalize the draft guidelines and draft performance standards for submission to the next session, and to liaise with the Sub-Committee on Ship Design and Equipment (DE) to ensure consistent treatment of alerts, including alarms and indicators.

Meanwhile, the Sub-committee agreed a draft SN/Circular on guidelines for the application of the modular concept to performance standards, which are intended to assist in the consistent and logically structured drafting of new and revised performance standards for systems and equipment according to the modular concept. With the modular concept, operational/functional and sensor/source modules are specified, allowing clear separation between operational requirements for the task-oriented use and presentation of information on equipment and systems, and between the sensor-specific technical performance requirements.

Assuring safety during demonstrations on the high seas

The Sub-Committee agreed a provisional draft MSC resolution on Assuring safety during demonstrations on the high seas, as a work in progress, and invited the Sub-Committee on Flag State Implementation (FSI) to consider the text for advice, so it can be finalized at NAV 55 in 2009.

Pilot transfer arrangements

A correspondence group was established to develop amendments to SOLAS regulation V/23 and resolution A.889(21) on Pilot transfer arrangements, to improve the safety aspects for pilot transfer. The correspondence group will present an interim report to DE 52 and it is expected that the issue will be reviewed again at NAV 55.

Impact of revised MARPOL Annex II on guidelines for AIS shipborne installations

The Sub-Committee agreed an amendment to annex 2 (type of ship table) of the Guidelines for the installation of a Shipborne Automatic Identification System (AIS) (SN/Circ.227), to reflect the entry into force, on 1 January 2007, of the Revised Annex II of MARPOL 73/78, including the change in the categorization and listing of Noxious Liquid Substances and other substances. Taking into account the fact that the number of categories to be reported remained the same, the Sub-Committee agreed that as a cargo re-evaluation had led to a substantive change from an operational perspective, there was a need to make users aware that the categories nomenclature A, B, C and D had been changed to X, Y, Z and OS.

New symbol for AIS-SART

The Sub-Committee agreed a presentation symbol for an AIS Search and Rescue Transmitter (AIS-SART), including an amendment to SN/Circ.243 for approval by MSC 85.

The Sub-Committee reviewed draft guidelines for Integrated Bridge Systems and draft performance standards for bridge alert management.
Explanatory notes for new subdivision and damage stability regs agreed

Explanatory notes for the revised SOLAS chapter II-1, which enters into force on 1 January 2009, were agreed by the Sub-Committee on Stability and Load Lines and on Fishing Vessels’ Safety (SLF), when it met for its 51st session. The explanatory notes will be submitted to the Maritime Safety Committee (MSC) 85th session in November-December 2008 for adoption. A draft circular on Guidelines for flooding detection systems was also finalized, for submission to MSC 85, for approval.

The revised SOLAS chapter II-1 harmonizes the provisions on subdivision and damage stability for passenger and cargo ships. The revised provisions in parts A, B and B-1 will be applicable to new ships built after the entry-into-force date of 1 January 2009.

The revisions were based on the “probabilistic” method of determining damage stability, which is itself based on the detailed study of data collected by IMO relating to collisions. Because it is based on statistical evidence concerning what actually happens when ships collide, the probabilistic concept is believed to be far more realistic than the previously-used “deterministic” method.

Damage stability regulations for ro-ro passenger ships

A correspondence group was established to examine the impact of the damage stability requirements of the revised SOLAS chapter II-1 amendments on ro-ro passenger ships, in comparison with the SOLAS 1990 regulations in association with the Stockholm Agreement, in order to identify whether their level of safety is generally equivalent.

Implementation of the 1993 Torremolinos Protocol – action plan agreed

The Sub-Committee agreed an action to tackle the lack of sufficient ratifications to the 1993 Torremolinos Protocol in order to bring this important treaty on fishing vessel safety into force.

The action plan proposes sending out a questionnaire to countries with a large fishing fleet to request information on the technical (and any other) issues that pose a barrier to ratification. For example, states will be asked: Currently the 1993 Torremolinos Protocol is applicable to all seagoing fishing vessels of 24m in length and over. If Article 3 was amended, so that it would only be applicable to fishing vessels fishing on the high seas or in the waters of another State, would this reduce an obstacle to ratification?

On the basis of the responses, an Agreement could be drafted during 2010, which could be approved by the MSC and eventually adopted by the IMO Assembly (27th session) in 2011. Following this, countries could consider ratification of the 1993 Torremolinos Protocol under the terms and conditions contained in the Agreement (Countries will declare that they accept the 1993 Torremolinos Protocol under the Agreement, when they deposit an instrument of ratification). This could enable the Torremolinos Protocol to come into force within a few years.

The Torremolinos Protocol has been ratified by 15 States representing 9.85 per cent of world merchant shipping tonnage, with an aggregate fishing vessel fleet of around 3,000 vessels of 24 metres in length and over. It will enter into force one year after 15 States with at least an aggregate fleet of 14,000 vessels of 24 metres in length and over, have ratified the Protocol.

Safety of small fishing vessels – recommendations progressed

Work on developing the draft Safety recommendations for decked fishing vessels of less than 12m in length and undecked fishing vessels continued. The Sub-Committee agreed that the work should be completed during 2008/2009, including work on relevant chapters by other Sub-Committees, with a view to the final draft of the safety recommendations being submitted to the MSC for adoption in 2010.

Development of guidelines to assist authorities in implementing fishing vessel safety

A correspondence group was instructed to further develop draft Guidelines to assist Competent Authorities on the implementation of Part B of the Fishing Vessel Safety Code, the Voluntary Guidelines and the Safety Recommendations (i.e. the revised Code of Safety for Fishermen and Fishing Vessels, 2005, the Voluntary Guidelines for the Design, Construction and Equipment of Small Fishing Vessels, 2005 and the Safety recommendations for decked fishing vessels of less than 12 metres in length and undedcked fishing vessels.)

A preliminary list of contents was agreed, to include legal implications; administrative requirements; capacity-building; enforcement; operational safety; understanding technical provisions; and the human element.

Damage stability provisions of draft guidelines for drainage systems agreed

The Sub-Committee agreed specifications for the drainage capacity and the “scupper
From the meetings  
Sub-Committee on Stability and Load Lines and on Fishing Vessels’ Safety (SLF)

51st session
14-18 July 2008

Work on developing the draft Safety recommendations for decked fishing vessels of less than 12m in length and undcked fishing vessels continued

...ing” construction for inclusion in the draft Guidelines for drainage systems in closed vehicle and ro-ro spaces and special category spaces, which are being developed to support the amendments to SOLAS regulation II-2/220 (Protection of vehicle, special category and ro-ro spaces), adopted by the MSC at its 84th session in May 2008. The amendments adopted relate to drainage of special category and ro-ro spaces to prevent accumulation of water on the vehicle deck of ro-ro ships.

The proposed specifications were forwarded to the Sub-Committee on Fire Protection (FP), which is co-coordinating the development of the draft guidelines.

Early application of 2008 IS Code

The Sub-Committee agreed a draft MSC circular on Early application of the International Code on Intact Stability, 2008 (2008 IS Code), to encourage its implementation, for submission to MSC 85 for approval. The revised draft International Code on Intact Stability, 2008 (2008 IS Code) and the associated draft amendments to the 1988 LL Protocol and 1974 SOLAS Convention to make the 2008 IS Code mandatory, were approved at MSC 83 for adoption at MSC 85.

It was agreed future work on intact stability-related matters would be carried out under the re-named agenda item “Development of new generation intact stability criteria”, based on a framework for the new generation intact stability criteria and draft terminology for the new generation intact stability criteria, which were agreed in principle during the session. The Correspondence Group on Intact Stability was re-established to work intersessionally on developing new generation intact stability criteria.

Improving the 1969 TM Convention

The Sub-Committee discussed ways to facilitate the future adoption of amendments to the International Convention on Tonnage Measurement of Ships, 1969 and noted that it would be desirable to introduce a tacit amendment procedure into the Convention.

This would facilitate resolution of the difficulties posed in applying the Convention in a uniform and transparent manner to ship types that were not prevalent when the Convention was adopted and might obviate the need for a large number of uniform interpretations, disseminated by means of TM circulars. This problem is applicable to many ship types, including: open-top containerships; offshore supply vessels; ro-ro vessels, especially car carriers; submersible heavy lift vessels; and the many novel types developed since the enforcement of the Convention in 1984.

A correspondence group was established to consider the various options and make recommendations.
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IMO: 60 YEARS IN THE SERVICE OF SHIPPING
Background paper

Origins
The year 2008 contains a number of key milestones and anniversaries for IMO. March 6th was the 60th anniversary of the adoption of the IMO Convention, by a conference held in Geneva in 1948, under the auspices of the United Nations; March 17th was the 50th anniversary of that Convention entering into force in 1958; and June saw the 100th meeting of the IMO Council, the executive organ of IMO, which is responsible, under the Assembly, for supervising the work of the Organization in between successive sessions of the latter.

IMO – originally known as the Inter-governmental Maritime Consultative Organization, or IMCO – held its first meeting in London in 1959. The purposes of the Organization, as summarized by Article 1(a) of its constitutive Convention, are “to provide machinery for co-operation among Governments in the field of governmental regulation and practices relating to technical matters of all kinds affecting shipping engaged in international trade; to encourage and facilitate the general adoption of the highest practicable standards in matters concerning maritime safety, efficiency of navigation and prevention and control of marine pollution from ships”. The Organization is also empowered to deal with administrative and legal matters related to these purposes.

The need for an international agency for shipping stems from the fact that shipping is perhaps the most international of all the world’s global industries. The ownership and management chain surrounding any particular vessel can embrace many different countries; it is not unusual to find that the owners, operators, shippers, charterers, insurers and the classification society, not to mention the officers and crew, are all of different nationalities and that none of these is from the country whose flag flies at the ship’s stern. And, shipping’s prime physical assets – the ships themselves – move permanently between countries and between different jurisdictions; hence the need for universal standards that can be applied to and recognized by all.

Shipping is also an inherently dangerous occupation, with ships having to confront the worst that the elements can throw at them. Sometimes, disaster strikes – as witnessed by high-profile incidents of the type involving ships such as Torrey Canyon, Exxon Valdez, Estonia, Erika and Prestige.

There is, therefore, an over-arching logic in favour of a framework of international standards to regulate shipping. Without internationally recognized and accepted standards, you might have the ludicrous situation that a ship leaves country A bound with cargo for country B, fully compliant with country A’s requirements for ship design, construction, equipment, manning and operation, only to find that country B has its own, different requirements. Clearly there has to be a common approach, so that ships can ply their trade around the world and that countries receiving foreign ships can be confident that, in accepting them, they do not place their own safety, security and environmental integrity at an unreasonable risk.

The recognition that the best way of improving safety at sea is by developing international regulations that can be followed by all shipping nations pre-dates the formation of IMO. From the mid-19th century onwards a number of such international treaties were adopted. One example is the 1863 rules of the road at sea – known as articles – which were adopted by more than 30 maritime countries.

It was the Titanic disaster of 1912 which prompted the adoption, in 1914, of the first International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea, known then, as now, as SOLAS, after the United Kingdom had called an international conference in the wake of the disaster.
Feature

It was the first convention to lay down international rules governing the safety of shipping, including construction of ships, maintaining a 24-hour listening watch for distress alerts, and making sure enough lifeboats and lifejackets are available on board for everybody on board. After the adoption of the first version, subsequent versions were adopted in 1929, 1948 and, under the auspices of IMO, in 1960. Today, albeit much revised and updated, SOLAS remains the most important of the international conventions regulating maritime safety. Nearly 160 countries are Parties to the SOLAS Convention and its provisions apply to almost 99 per cent of the world fleet.

But it was not until the establishment of the United Nations itself that a permanent international body was created to promote maritime safety more effectively – and that body is IMO. Since its formation, IMO’s main task has been to develop and maintain a comprehensive regulatory framework for international shipping. Its mandate was originally limited to safety-related issues but, subsequently, its remit has expanded to embrace, among other things, environmental considerations, legal matters, technical co-operation, issues that affect the overall efficiency of shipping - such as how to deal with stowaways or how a cargo manifest should be transmitted to the authorities ashore; piracy and armed robbery against ships, and maritime security.

Maritime safety and security

One of the first tasks facing the newly established IMO was to review and revise the 1948 SOLAS Convention. It was in May 1960 that IMO convened its first international diplomatic conference to consider a new SOLAS Convention.

The SOLAS Convention adopted by the 1960 conference (which entered into force in 1965) covered a wide range of measures designed to improve the safety of shipping, including subdivision and stability; machinery and electrical installations; fire protection, detection and extinction; lifesaving appliances; radio; the safety of navigation; the carriage of grain; the carriage of dangerous goods, and nuclear ships. The same conference also adopted a new set of International Regulations for the Prevention of Collisions at Sea, to replace earlier regulations of 1948, and adopted 56 resolutions, many of them calling for action by IMO and, in effect, providing the work programme of the Organization for more than a decade.

The intention was to keep the SOLAS Convention up-to-date by periodic amendments but, in practice, the amendments procedure proved to be very slow. It became clear that it would be impossible to secure the entry into force of amendments within a reasonable period of time.

As a result, a completely new Convention was adopted in 1974 which included not only the amendments agreed up to that date but a new amendment procedure – the tacit acceptance procedure – designed to ensure that changes could be made within a specified (and acceptably short) period of time.

Instead of requiring that an amendment shall enter into force after being accepted by, for example, two thirds of the Parties, the tacit acceptance procedure provides that an amendment shall enter into force on a specified date unless, before that date, objections to it are received from an agreed number of Parties.

As a result, the 1974 Convention has been updated and amended on numerous occasions and the Convention in force today is...
sometimes referred to as ‘SOLAS, 1974, as amended’. Several new chapters have subsequently been added, for example, on Management for the Safe Operation of Ships; Safety Measures for High-speed Craft; Special measures to enhance maritime safety; special measures to enhance maritime security; and additional safety measures for bulk carriers.

The 1960 Safety of Life at Sea Conference also recommended that Governments should adopt a uniform international code for the transport of dangerous goods by sea, to supplement the regulations contained in the SOLAS Convention. In this context, “dangerous goods” includes, among others, explosive, flammable, toxic, infectious, radioactive and corrosive substances. It was agreed that the proposed code should cover such matters as packing, container traffic and stowage, with particular reference to the segregation of incompatible substances.

A working group of IMO’s Maritime Safety Committee began preparing the Code in 1961, in close co-operation with the United Nations Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods, which had established minimum requirements for the transport of such goods by all modes of transport. The resultant International Maritime Dangerous Goods Code was adopted by IMO in 1965. Since then, it has undergone many changes, both in appearance and content, to keep pace with the ever-changing needs of industry.

Although the IMDG Code was originally recommendatory, it quickly became the accepted standard for the shipping industry. Eventually, amendments to SOLAS, adopted in May 2002, made the IMDG Code mandatory from 1 January 2004.

Anyone familiar with ships will be familiar with the markings painted on the side of ships’ hulls to indicate how deeply a ship has been loaded. It has long been recognized that limits on the draught to which a ship may be loaded make a significant contribution to its safety. The first International Convention on Load Lines was adopted in 1930. In 1966, IMO adopted a new Load Lines Convention, in which provisions are made to determine the freeboard of ships by subdivision and damage stability calculations.

It also takes into account the potential hazards present in different geographical zones and different seasons and contains several additional safety measures concerning doors, freeing ports, hatchways and other items. The main purpose of these measures is to ensure the watertight integrity of ships’ hulls below the freeboard deck. And, it requires the familiar marking of all assigned load lines and the deck line on each side of the ship.

The International Convention on Load Lines entered into force in 1968 and has subsequently been amended on several occasions.

In a similar vein, at the time of IMO’s formation, several systems of tonnage measurement for ships had been developed over the years, but none had become universally recognized. IMO began work on this subject soon after coming into being and, in 1969, the first ever International Convention on Tonnage was adopted.
It is an indication of the complexity of this subject that the Convention, which had a very high requirement for entry into force (25 States with not less than 65 per cent of the world’s gross tonnage of merchant shipping) did not receive the required number of acceptances until mid-1980. It entered into force in 1982.

When IMO was formed, the now-familiar bulk carrier, often described as the “workhorse” of the world fleet, was a relatively new ship type. These ubiquitous vessels can carry a variety of different cargoes but commodities such as coal, grains and mineral ores account for the largest proportion of bulk carrier cargoes. Although relatively unsophisticated, these are nevertheless highly efficient ships which also embody inherent risks and dangers if not designed, built and operated to the highest standards.

In 1965, therefore, IMO adopted the international Code of Safe Practice for Solid Bulk Cargoes (BC Code) and this has been updated at regular intervals ever since.

In the early 1990s, there was a spate of bulk carrier casualties which, because of the often dense nature of the cargoes carried by such vessels, were frequently characterized by rapid sinking and a high mortality rate among the crews involved in such incidents. In November 1997, therefore, IMO adopted a special chapter of the SOLAS Convention on bulk carrier safety (chapter XII), covering such topics as damage stability, structural strength, surveys and loading. At the same time, a Code of Practice for the safe unloading and loading of bulk carriers (the BLU Code) was also adopted.

Following the 1998 publication of the report into the sinking of the bulk carrier Derbyshire,IMO initiated a further review of bulk carrier safety. In 2002, amendments to SOLAS and the 1988 Load Lines Protocol were adopted and a number of further recommendations to improve bulk carrier safety were agreed. In December 2004, IMO adopted a new text for SOLAS chapter XII, incorporating revisions to some regulations and new requirements relating to double-side-skin bulk carriers. These amendments entered into force on 1 July 2006.

In 1971 IMO adopted the first of several measures designed to address specifically the question of safety aboard passenger vessels. In this case the Special Trade Passenger Ships Agreement was adopted to safeguard ships and passengers engaged in “pilgrim” trade, and this came into force three years later. A Protocol to this agreement, adopted in 1973, came into force in 1977.

Passenger ships in operation today are subject to a vast array of regulations and standards covering every aspect of ship construction and operation. Indeed, passenger ships – usually defined as a ship carrying more than 12 passengers – on international voyages must comply with all relevant IMO regulations, including those in the SOLAS and Load Lines Conventions.

In addition, a number of incidents over the years have led to improvements in safety requirements, including those relating to fire safety measures – such as escape routes and fire
protection systems for the large atrium typical of cruise ships – and life-saving appliances and arrangements.

The partial capsize of the roll-on, roll-off (ro-ro) ferry Herald of Free Enterprise in 1987, for example, led to a series of amendments to SOLAS designed to prevent such an accident recurring. These included requirements for open-door indicators, and monitors to detect the presence of water, vehicle movement, fire and unauthorized passenger access. Subsequent amendments, adopted in the late 1980s and early 1990s, dealt with a variety of aspects, such as emergency lighting, damaged and intact stability, locking of cargo loading doors, surveys, openings in watertight bulkheads, fire safety and a number of other important considerations.

Towards the end of the 20th century, a new breed of giant passenger vessel was beginning to find its way from naval architects’ drawing boards and into service with many of the leading operators. These massive ships were the size of small villages, often with several thousand passengers, crew and hotel staff on board. While there was no doubt that such ships were being built, designed and operated in compliance with applicable IMO standards, the time had come for IMO to undertake a holistic consideration of safety issues pertaining to passenger ships. As a result, a comprehensive review of passenger ship safety was initiated in 2000, with the aim of assessing whether the existing regulations were still adequate.

It was agreed that future large passenger ships should be designed for improved survivability based on the time-honoured principle that “a ship is its own best lifeboat”. This approach envisages that passengers and crew should normally be able to evacuate to a safe haven on board and stay there. In addition, it envisages that a ship should always be able to proceed to port at a minimum safe speed.

In 2006, IMO adopted a package of amendments to SOLAS, based on a guiding philosophy that the regulatory framework should place more emphasis on the prevention of a casualty from occurring in the first place. The amendments include new concepts such as the incorporation of criteria for the amount of damage a ship is able to withstand, according to the design basis, and still safely return to port. They also provide regulatory flexibility, so that ship designers can meet any safety challenges the future may bring.

A convention adopted by IMO in 1972 dealt with the subject of containers. These had, by then, become an important feature of international maritime trade, and the Convention was designed not only to facilitate this trade, by providing uniform international regulations, but also to maintain a high level of safety in the carriage of containers by setting out generally acceptable test procedures and related strength requirements. The Convention entered into force in 1977.

The safety of fishing vessels has been a matter of concern to IMO since the Organization’s inception, but the differences in design and operation between fishing vessels and other types of ship have proved to be an obstacle to their inclusion in many of the conventions adopted by IMO, which cannot be made applicable to fishing vessels. Besides, the technical
specifications of fishing vessels depend on the areas in which they operate and many other local factors, making the adoption of international regulations relating to their safety extremely complex.

Thus, despite fishing being one of the world’s oldest industries, it was not until 1977 that the first international convention dealing with the safety of fishing vessels – the Torremolinos Convention – was finally adopted.

For various reasons, the Torremolinos Convention did not secure sufficient acceptances to enter into force and, by the early 1990s, it was clear that, even if it did, it would be technically out of date. As a result, in 1993, IMO adopted a Protocol to the Convention which removed some of the provisions that had caused difficulties in the parent treaty and also brought it up to date technically.

Nevertheless, even this Protocol has yet to enter into force, as has the 1995 International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Fishing Vessel Personnel. The fact remains that the fishing sector, which reportedly suffers around 24,000 human losses annually, is still lacking the international mandatory safety regime that these measures would provide.

To try and address the issue, IMO has engaged in a variety of technical co-operation activities on fishing vessel safety – including regional seminars to raise awareness of the problems. Moreover, in collaboration with the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the International Labour Organization (ILO), IMO developed the revised Code of Safety for Fishermen and Fishing Vessels, 2005, and Voluntary Guidelines for the Design, Construction and Equipment of Small Fishing Vessels, 2005, while the SLF Sub-Committee is developing guidance on the safety of fishing vessels under 12 metres and the Standards of Training and Watchkeeping (STW) Sub-Committee is working on guidance for the training of personnel serving aboard small fishing vessels – but none of these voluntary measures would have the impact of a mandatory convention.

By the 1970s, the conventional radio spectrum used by ships to communicate with each other and with the shore was becoming increasingly congested and it was physically impossible to increase the number of wavelengths available. But these difficulties could be overcome by using satellites, in space. In 1976, therefore, IMO adopted an international convention to establish the International Mobile Satellite Organization (IMSO), which came into force in 1979.

Quite apart from addressing the problem of congestion, satellites have been of great benefit in commercial and other aspects of ship operation, but their greatest advantage is in safety, for improved communications enable distress messages to be transmitted and received much more effectively than terrestrial methods.

Ship distress and safety communication entered a new era on 1 February 1999 with the full implementation of the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS) - an integrated communication system using both satellite and terrestrial radio-communication to ensure that, no matter where a ship may be in distress, its distress call can be received by the appropriate authorities and help can be dispatched.

1 The original body established by the Convention was the International Maritime Satellite Organization (INMARSAT), which later split into the private sector company, Inmarsat, and the International Mobile Satellite Organization (IMSO), the intergovernmental organization that oversees certain public satellite safety and security communication services provided via the Inmarsat satellites (and by any other future providers of satellite services).
The GMDSS was developed by IMO in close co-operation with the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and other international organizations, notably the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), the International Hydrographic Organization (IHO) and the COSPAS-SARSAT partners.

Under the GMDSS, ships have to carry specified satellite and radio-communication equipment for sending and receiving distress alerts and maritime safety information, and for general communication. The GMDSS requirements are contained in Chapter IV of SOLAS and were adopted in 1988. They entered into force on 1 February 1992 but provided for a phase-in period before the final implementation date of 1 February 1999.

Closely linked to the development of the GMDSS was the adoption, in April 1979, of the International Convention on Maritime Search and Rescue. As its name implies, this Convention was designed to improve arrangements for carrying out search and rescue operations following accidents at sea. Although many countries had established their own plans for such emergencies, this was the first time that international procedures were adopted. It entered into force in 1985, was revised in 1988 and again in 2004.

Concurrently with the revision of the SAR Convention, the IMO and the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) jointly developed the International Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue (IAMSAR) Manual, which revised and replaced the IMO Merchant Ship Search and Rescue Manual (MERSAR), first published in 1971, and the IMO Search and Rescue Manual (IMOSAR), first published in 1978. It is designed primarily to aid the master of any vessel who might be called upon to conduct SAR operations at sea for persons in distress, and has been revised and updated on a number of occasions.

IMO has always paid great attention to the improvement of navigational safety and, since 1959, a whole series of measures have been introduced, in the form of conventions, recommendations and other instruments. There are two conventions that are particularly relevant to navigation. These are the SOLAS Convention, which has an entire chapter (chapter V) devoted to navigational safety, and the Convention on the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea, 1972 (COLREGs).

In its many regulations, chapter V of SOLAS includes carriage requirements for shipboard navigational equipment, such as compasses (magnetic and gyro), radar, automatic radar plotting aids, echo sounders, devices to indicate speed and distance, devices to indicate rudder angle, propeller revolutions, rate-of-turn indicators and radio-direction finders. It also identifies certain navigation safety services which should be provided by Contracting Governments such as the maintenance of meteorological services for ships; the ice patrol service; routeing of ships; and the maintenance of search and rescue services. Such equipment must comply with the performance standards set out in various IMO Assembly resolutions.

Chapter V has been amended and updated many times, and in December 2000, a fully revised version was adopted, incorporating several new requirements, which entered into force in 2002. Among other things, this latest version made mandatory the carriage of voyage data recorders (VDRs) and...
automatic ship identification systems (AIS) aboard certain ships. Further amendments have been adopted since then, including the introduction of Long Range Identification and Tracking (LRIT) systems for ships, adopted in 2006.

Besides Conventions, IMO has also issued a series of resolutions and codes, including guidelines on navigation issues and performance standards for shipborne navigational and radio-communication equipment. Some are simply recommendations - though such is their wide acceptance that they effectively mark international policy - while others are referred to by relevant Regulations of specific Conventions, thereby giving them the same weight as the Convention regulations themselves.

The human element in shipping is a complex, multi-dimensional issue that affects maritime safety, security and marine environmental protection, involving the entire spectrum of human activities performed by ships’ crews, shore based management, regulatory bodies and others. IMO’s concern with the human element is long established and has been intensified in recent years.

In 1978, IMO adopted the first Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (STCW). This Convention entered into force in 1984. The 1978 STCW Convention was the first to establish basic requirements on training, certification and watchkeeping for seafarers on an international level. Previously, standards for officers and ratings were established by individual Governments, usually without reference to practices in other countries. As a result, standards and procedures varied widely.

The STCW Convention was revised in 1995 to bring it fully up to date. The revised Convention placed the emphasis firmly on demonstrating competence, rather than simply undertaking training. Its most radical feature was that it gave IMO some responsibility for ensuring that its requirements were met. Parties to the Convention were required to submit information to IMO concerning their training, certification and other procedures so that their ability to implement the Convention could be assessed. The so called “White List” of Parties deemed to be giving full and complete effect to the Convention was first published in 2000 and is regularly updated. This was the first time that IMO had ever been given such authority over Governments and was seen, not only as recognition of the importance of enforcing standards internationally, but also of IMO’s own ability to ensure that this is done.

The STCW Convention and Code is currently undergoing another major review, considering what amendments or new regulations are needed in order to ensure that the Convention meets the new challenges facing the shipping industry including, but not limited to, rapid technological advances today and in years to come. It is intended to hold a conference in 2010 to consider the revised STCW Convention and Code for adoption.

In 1994 a new chapter added to the SOLAS Convention made mandatory the International Safety Management (ISM) Code, designed to make safety a first priority for shipping company management. It became obligatory for passenger ships, tankers, bulk carriers and some other ships on 1 July 1998 and for all
Maritime security issues first came to prominence on the IMO agenda following the hijacking of the Italian cruise ship Achille Lauro, in October 1985. The following year, the Organization issued guidance on measures to prevent unlawful acts against passengers and crew on board ships.

In March 1988, the Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Maritime Navigation (the SUA Convention) was adopted, with a protocol extending its requirements to unlawful acts against fixed platforms located on the continental shelf. Both were updated and revised in 2005.

Recently, in the light of terrorist atrocities around the world, several of which have been aimed at transport infrastructures, IMO adopted a comprehensive set of maritime security measures in 2002, which came into force in July 2004.

The most important and far reaching of these is the International Ship and Port Facility (ISPS) Code. Among its requirements are that Governments should undertake risk assessments to establish the level of security threat in their ports, that both ships and ports should appoint dedicated security officers and have formal security plans drawn up and approved by their Governments.

IMO has adopted other maritime security instruments, including guidelines for administrations and the shipping industry on combating acts of piracy and armed robbery against ships; recommendations on security measures for passenger ferries on international voyages shorter than 24 hours, and on security measures for ports; guidelines on the allocation of responsibilities to seek the successful resolution of stowaway cases; and guidelines for the prevention and suppression of the smuggling of drugs, psychotropic substances and precursor...
chemicals on ships engaged in international maritime traffic. In 2005, the number of reported attacks on ships off the coast of Somalia prompted IMO to adopt a resolution bringing the matter to the attention of the UN Security Council. This action resulted in a UN Security Council Presidential Statement, issued on 15 March 2006, encouraging UN Member States with naval vessels and military aircraft operating in international waters and airspace adjacent to the coast of Somalia to be vigilant for piracy incidents and to take appropriate action to protect merchant shipping. In 2007 IMO adopted a new resolution on the same subject, which appealed directly to the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) of Somalia, requesting it, among other things, to advise the UN Security Council that it consents to warships or military aircraft entering its territorial sea when engaging in operations against pirates or suspected pirates and armed robbers.

In June 2008, the United Nations Security Council adopted resolution 1816 (2008), under which the Security Council decided that, following receipt of a letter from Somalia to the President of the UN Security Council giving the consent of Somalia’s Transitional Federal Government (TFG), States cooperating with the TFG would be allowed, for a period of six months, to enter the country’s territorial waters and use "all necessary means" to repress acts of piracy and armed robbery at sea, in a manner consistent with relevant provisions of international law.

**Protecting the marine environment**

When the IMO Convention was adopted in 1948, marine pollution was regarded as little more than a local problem. Some areas, notably those near ports and on major shipping routes, had experienced occasional oil pollution, but it was not regarded as a matter of international concern. But, by the 1950s, world trade was growing and oil pollution was increasing. The International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution of the Sea by Oil, 1954 (OILPOL 1954) was one positive outcome of such concern.

IMO became operational in 1959, just before the big boom in international oil trade. Within less than two decades, the world tanker fleet had increased in tonnage by ten times and tankers themselves had grown in size by the same amount: in the late 1950s, tankers averaged around 30,000 dwt; by the late 1970s, several had been built of over 500,000 dwt.

One result of this was an alarming increase in pollution of the seas, especially oil pollution, which was caused not simply by tanker accidents but as a result of routine shipping operations, such as the cleaning of cargo tanks. It was a normal practice at the time simply to wash the tanks out with water and then pump the resulting mixture of oil and water into the sea.

The 1954 OILPOL Convention attempted to curb the effects of this by prohibiting the dumping of oily wastes within a certain distance from land and in “special areas” where the danger to the environment was especially acute. In 1962 the limits were extended by means of an amendment to the treaty.

But it was the Torrey Canyon disaster of 1967 that focused the attention of the world on the real danger to the environment posed by the growth in tanker traffic. The Torrey Canyon ran aground while entering the English Channel and spilled her entire cargo of 120,000 tons of crude oil into the sea. This resulted in the biggest oil pollution incident ever recorded up to
that time. The incident raised questions about measures to prevent oil pollution from ships and also exposed a number of deficiencies in the existing system for providing compensation following accidents at sea.

IMO’s response was swift. A plan of action was drawn up which resulted in the adoption of a series of conventions on the legal questions that were raised by the incident.

It was recognized, however, that, although accidental pollution might be spectacular, operational pollution was the bigger threat. In 1969, therefore, the 1954 OILPOL Convention was again amended, this time to introduce a procedure known as ‘load on top’ which had been developed by the oil industry and had the double advantage of saving oil and reducing pollution. Under the system, the washings resulting from tank cleaning are pumped into a special tank. During the voyage back to the loading terminal the oil and water separate. The water at the bottom of the tank is pumped overboard and, at the terminal, oil is pumped on to the oil left in the tank. The amendment entered into force in 1978.

In 1973, a much more ambitious convention was adopted - the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL). This Convention attempted to counter pollution by oil, chemicals, sewage, garbage and other harmful substances and represented the most determined attempt so far to deal with vessel-source pollution.

In practice, certain technical problems meant that progress towards ratifying this Convention was very slow, and a series of tanker accidents that occurred in the winter of 1976-1977 led to demands for further action. The result was the convening of the Conference on Tanker Safety and Pollution Prevention in February 1978. The measures adopted led to great changes in tanker design and operations.


MARPOL 73/78 greatly limits the amount of oil which may be discharged into the sea during routine operations and bans it completely in some areas. It requires Governments to provide reception facilities for oily wastes (from all ships, not just tankers) and the Organization has developed guidelines on how these should be provided and has held seminars and workshops around the world to provide further technical guidance on installing them.

The 1978 MARPOL Protocol introduced the concept known as protective location of segregated ballast tanks. It means that the ballast tanks (which are empty on the cargo carrying leg of the voyage and only loaded with water ballast for the return leg) are positioned where the impact of a collision or grounding is likely to be greatest. In this way the amount of cargo spilled after such an accident will be greatly reduced. The subsequent MARPOL amendments of 1983 ban the carriage of oil in the
forepeak tank - the ship’s most vulnerable point in the event of a collision. Operational techniques such as load-on-top, crude-oil washing and inert gas systems are also enshrined in MARPOL or SOLAS.

In 1989, the tanker Exxon Valdez went aground on the coast of Alaska. In terms of oil lost, the resulting oil spill was relatively small, but it led to demands for action from politicians, press and the public. In the United States, legislation was introduced making it mandatory for tankers to be fitted with double hulls and, in 1992, IMO amended MARPOL 73/78 to make mandatory double hulls or an approved alternative. A phase-in programme was approved for existing tankers. Amendments to Annex I of MARPOL, adopted in 2001 following the sinking of the tanker Erika off the Brittany coast, introduced a new global timetable for accelerating the phase-out of single-hull oil tankers. This was subsequently revised again by further amendments, adopted in 2003, after the sinking of the Prestige.

In 1990, IMO adopted the International Convention on Oil Pollution Preparedness, Response and Co-operation (OPRC), which was designed to introduce a global system for responding to major oil spills. It entered into force in 1995.

The Convention helps to facilitate international co-operation and mutual assistance in preparing for and responding to major oil pollution incidents and encourages States to develop and maintain adequate capability to deal with oil pollution emergencies.

In 2000, IMO adopted the Protocol on Preparedness, Response and Co-operation to Pollution Incidents by Hazardous and Noxious Substances (the OPRC-HNS Protocol) which follows the principles of the OPRC Convention for hazardous and noxious substances other than oil. It entered into force in 2007. The underlying principle in both the Convention and its Protocol is that of co-operation and mutual assistance. IMO has recognized for a long time that pollution arising from maritime accidents is best mitigated by co-operative action between neighbouring countries.

In 1976, in co-operation with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), IMO established the Regional Marine Pollution Emergency Response Centre for the Mediterranean Sea (REMPEC), located in Malta, to co-ordinate anti-pollution activities among the Mediterranean States. Similarly, the Regional Marine Pollution Emergency, Information and Training Centre for the Wider Caribbean (REMPEITC-Carib) was established in 1995 and is based Curacao, Netherlands Antilles. Both centres are supported by IMO, through its technical co-operation programme, and by partner Governments, industry and organizations and donors.

Formally launched in 1996, the Global Initiative (GI) is another co-operative programme under which IMO and the oil industry (through IPIECA), together with other partners, are working to encourage and facilitate the development and implementation of oil spill contingency plans and increase the ratification of oil spill-related international conventions.

A flagship of this initiative is the two-year rolling programme for the West and Central Africa region (GI-WACAF), to complement the preparedness and response activities being undertaken in the region by IMO under its technical co-operation programme.
in conjunction with the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) under the Global Environment Facility (GEF/UNEP) funded project “Combating living marine resources depletion and coastal areas degradation in the Guinea Current Large Marine Ecosystem (GCLME) through ecosystem-based regional actions”.

The carriage of chemicals in bulk is covered by regulations in both SOLAS and Annex II of MARPOL - Regulations for the Control of Pollution by Noxious Liquid Substances in Bulk. Both Conventions require chemical tankers built after 1 July 1986 to comply with the International Bulk Chemical Code (IBC Code), which gives international standards for the safe transport by sea in bulk of liquid dangerous chemicals, by prescribing the design and construction standards of ships involved in such transport and the equipment they should carry so as to minimize the risks to the ship, its crew and to the environment, having regard to the nature of the products carried. The basic philosophy is that designated ship types are directly related to the products covered by the Code, according to the nature of the hazard. Each of the products may have one or more hazard properties which include flammability, toxicity, corrosivity and reactivity.

The IBC Code lists chemicals and their hazards and gives both the ship type required to carry that product as well as the environmental hazard rating. A revised MARPOL Annex II was adopted in October 2004 and entered into force on 1 January 2007. It includes a new, four-category system, for categorizing noxious and liquid substances.

Regulations for the Prevention of Pollution by Harmful Substances Carried by Sea in Packaged Form are contained in Annex III of MARPOL 73/78, which came into force in 1992. Annex III contains general requirements for the issuing of detailed standards on packing, marking, labelling, documentation, stowage, quantity limitations, exceptions and notifications for preventing pollution by harmful substances. In October 2006, IMO adopted a revised MARPOL Annex III, in order to harmonize the regulations with the criteria for defining marine pollutants adopted by the UN Transport of Dangerous Goods (TDG) Sub-Committee, based on the United Nations Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals (GHS).

The regulations were developed to identify marine pollutants so that they could be packed and stowed on board ship in such a way as to minimize accidental pollution as well as to aid recovery by using clear marks to distinguish them from other (less harmful) cargoes.

The discharge of raw sewage into the sea can create a health hazard while, in coastal areas, sewage can also lead to oxygen depletion and an obvious visual pollution - a major problem for countries with large tourist industries. Annex IV of MARPOL 73/78 contains a set of regulations regarding the discharge of sewage into the sea; ships’ equipment and systems for the control of sewage discharge; the provision of facilities at ports and terminals for the reception of sewage; and requirements for survey and certification. It also includes a model International
Sewage Pollution Prevention Certificate to be issued by national shipping administrations to ships under their jurisdiction. The Annex entered into force in 2003. A revised Annex was adopted in 2004, and this in turn entered into force on 1 August 2005.

Garbage from ships can be just as deadly to marine life as oil or chemicals. The greatest danger comes from plastic, which can float for years. Fish and marine mammals can, in some cases, mistake plastics for food and they can also become trapped in plastic ropes, nets, bags and other items.

The 1973 MARPOL Convention sought to eliminate and reduce the amount of garbage being dumped into the sea from ships. Under Annex V of the Convention, garbage includes all kinds of food, domestic and operational waste, excluding fresh fish, generated during the normal operation of the vessel and liable to be disposed of continuously or periodically. Annex V totally prohibits the disposal of plastics anywhere into the sea, and severely restricts discharges of other garbage from ships into coastal waters and “Special Areas”. The Annex also obliges Governments to ensure the provision of facilities at ports and terminals for the reception of garbage. It entered into force on 31 December 1988 and is currently under review.

Although the prevention of pollution of the sea from the land is not IMO’s responsibility, the Organization does carry out secretariat functions in respect of the Convention on the Prevention of Marine Pollution by Dumping of Wastes and Other Matter (London Convention). This Convention was adopted in 1972 at a conference held under the auspices of the United Kingdom. As well as regulating the dumping of wastes into the sea, it also deals with incineration at sea.

Over the years, opinion has moved steadily against using the sea as a dumping site for waste materials and this attitude was reflected in amendments to the Convention that were adopted in a Protocol of 1996, which entered into force in 2006. This represents a major change of approach to the question of how to regulate the use of the sea as a depository for waste materials in that, in essence, dumping is now prohibited, except for materials on an approved list, and some practices, such as incineration at sea, have been totally banned.

For decades, maritime salvage operations had been carried out in accordance with a treaty adopted in 1910. This system had generally worked well and was based on the well-known principle of ‘no cure, no pay’. If a salvage operation is successful, the salvor is entitled to a reward based on the value of the ship and its cargo. However, this system did not take into account damage caused by pollution. This meant, for example, that salvors could expect no reward for an operation that failed to save the ship, even though in the process they prevented a major oil spill. To remedy this, in 1989 IMO adopted the International Convention on Salvage, which entered into force in 1996.

The spread of invasive species has been recognized as one of the greatest threats to the world’s oceans and a major problem
The problem was first raised at IMO in 1988. Guidelines to address the problem were adopted in 1997. Subsequently, further technical advances were sought, leading eventually to the adoption, in February 2004, of the International Convention for the Control and Management of Ships’ Ballast Water and Sediments - a new international instrument to prevent the potentially devastating effects of the spread of harmful aquatic organisms carried by ships’ ballast water.

In recognition of another, equally important, vector for the transfer of invasive aquatic species by ships, IMO has recently initiated the development of measures to minimize the translocation of species through bio-fouling of ships – in other words, the adherence of sealife such as algae and molluscs to the ships’ hulls.

The International Convention on the Control of Harmful Anti-Fouling Systems on Ships (AFS Convention) was adopted on 5 October 2001 to protect marine life from the negative effects of metallic compounds in paints used to coat the bottom of ships, and will enter into force on 17 September 2008.

When the Convention is in force, ships will no longer be permitted to apply or re-apply organotin compounds which act as biocides in their anti-fouling systems; ships either shall not bear such compounds on their hulls or external parts or surface or, for ships already carrying such compounds on their hulls, a coating that forms a barrier to such compounds will have to be applied to prevent them leaching from the underlying non-compliant anti-fouling systems. The Convention also establishes a mechanism to evaluate and assess other anti-fouling systems and prevent the potential future use of other harmful substances in these systems.

The issue of ship recycling has also become a growing concern, not only from the environmental point of view but also with regard to the occupational health and safety of workers in the industry. In the process of recycling ships, virtually nothing goes to waste - materials and equipment are almost entirely reused, and recycling thus makes a positive contribution to the global conservation of energy and resources. Properly handled, ship recycling is, without question, a ‘green’ industry. However, concerns have been raised about the working and environmental conditions at many of the world’s ship scrapping locations. Ships sold for scrapping may contain environmentally hazardous substances such as asbestos, heavy metals, hydrocarbons, ozone depleting substances and others.

IMO adopted Guidelines on Ship Recycling in December 2003. They recognize that, while ultimate responsibility for conditions in recycling facilities lies with the countries in which they are situated, other stakeholders, including administrations of ship building and maritime equipment supplying countries, flag, port and recycling States, as well as intergovernmental organizations and commercial bodies such as shipowners, ship builders, and repairers must be encouraged to contribute towards minimizing potential problems.

In 2005, it was agreed that IMO should develop a new, legally-
binding instrument on ship recycling for adoption during the 2008-2009 biennium and a special conference will be convened for this purpose in Hong Kong, China, in May 2009. Meanwhile, IMO continues to co-operate on this topic with the International Labour Organization and the relevant bodies of the Basel Convention on Transboundary Movement of Wastes, and a joint Working Group on the subject, embracing all three Organizations, has been established.

In 2007, IMO adopted a new Convention on the removal of wrecks that may present either a hazard to navigation or a threat to the marine and coastal environments, or both. Once in force, the Convention will fill a gap in the existing international legal framework by providing the first set of uniform international rules aimed at ensuring the prompt and effective removal of wrecks located beyond the territorial sea.

Protecting the atmosphere

Perhaps the most significant threat to our environment today concerns atmospheric pollution. Although the shipping industry is but a small contributor to the total volume of gas emissions – compared to road vehicles, aviation and public utilities, such as power stations – atmospheric pollution from ships has, nevertheless, been significantly reduced in the last decade and IMO continues to work towards further reductions as the evidence mounts and the world becomes more aware and more concerned about the damage that might be caused.

The issue of controlling air pollution from ships - in particular, noxious gases from ships’ exhausts - was first discussed in the lead-up to the adoption of the 1973 MARPOL Convention. However, it was decided not to include regulations concerning air pollution at that time.

Later, in the mid-1980s, IMO had been reviewing the quality of fuel oils in relation to discharge requirements in Annex I and the issue of air pollution was discussed. In 1988, it was agreed to include air pollution in the work programme following a submission from Norway on the scale of the problem. In addition, the Second International Conference on the Protection of the North Sea, held in November 1987, had issued a declaration in which the ministers of North Sea States agreed to initiate actions within appropriate bodies, such as IMO, “leading to improved quality standards of heavy fuels and to actively support this work aimed at reducing marine and atmospheric pollution.”

In March 1989, various countries submitted papers to the MEPC referring to fuel oil quality and atmospheric pollution, and it was agreed to look at the prevention of air pollution from ships - as well as fuel oil quality - as part of the Marine Environment Protection Committee’s long-term work programme, starting in March 1990. Discussions in the MEPC led to the adoption, in 1991, of a resolution calling on the Committee to develop an Annex VI to MARPOL 73/78 on the prevention of air pollution. Annex VI was developed over the next six years and adopted at a Conference in 1997. With its entry into force in 2005, it set limits on sulphur oxide (SOx) and nitrogen oxide (NOx) emissions from ship exhausts. The annex includes a global cap on the sulphur content of fuel oil and calls on IMO to monitor the worldwide average sulphur content of fuel.

Annex VI also contains provisions allowing for special SOx
Emission Control Areas (SECA) to be established with more stringent controls on sulphur emissions; prohibits deliberate emissions of ozone-depleting substances, which include halons and chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs), and the incineration onboard ship of certain products, such as contaminated packaging materials and polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs). It also sets limits on emissions of nitrogen oxides (NOx) from diesel engines. A mandatory NOx Technical Code, which defines how this shall be done, was also adopted.

In July 2005, two months after Annex VI of MARPOL 73/78 entered into force, IMO agreed on the need to review it and the NOx Technical Code with a view to revising the regulations to take account of current technology and the need to further reduce emissions from ships.

As a result of that review process, in April 2008 the MEPC approved proposed amendments to MARPOL Annex VI. The main changes would see a progressive reduction in SOx emissions from ships, a reduction of the limits applicable in SECA, and progressive reductions in NOx emissions from marine engines. The revised Annex VI will also allow, in certain circumstances, for an Emission Control Area to be designated for SOx and particulate matter, or NOx, or all three types of emissions from ships.

The amendments to Annex VI are expected to be formally adopted in October 2008 by the MEPC and to enter into force 16 months thereafter.

Annex VI does not cover the emission of greenhouse gases (GHGs) from ships, but IMO has, nevertheless, given ample consideration to the matter. Indeed, IMO has a mandate, through the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), to pursue the limitation or reduction of emissions of greenhouse gases from ships. The Organization developed an action plan to that end and is now working towards the establishment of a robust regime that will regulate shipping at the global level and protect the marine and atmospheric environment.

In the first years of the new millennium, IMO’s work related to the reduction of GHG emissions from ships was focused on the development of a GHG Indexing Scheme for ships. Interim Guidelines for Voluntary Ship CO2 Emission Indexing for Use in Trials were approved in July 2005, with the objective of establishing a common approach for trials on voluntary CO2 emission indexing, which will enable shipowners to evaluate the performance of their fleet with regard to such emissions. As the amount of CO2 emitted from a ship is directly related to the consumption of bunker fuel oil, CO2 indexing will also provide useful information on a ship’s performance with regard to fuel efficiency.

IMO’s 2000 Study on Greenhouse Gas Emissions from Ships is now being updated to assist in the development of both short-term and long-term measures to address CO2 emissions from ships. Short-term measures include a proposal to establish a global levy scheme on marine bunker fuel; improvement of specific fuel consumption; energy efficiency design of new-build ships; use of onshore power supply for ships in port; use of wind power; strict limitations on leakage rates of refrigerant gases; vessel speed reductions and measures to improve traffic control, fleet management, cargo handling operations and energy efficiency.

Longer-term measures identified include: technical measures for...
ship design; use of alternative fuels; a CO₂ Design Index for new ships; external verification scheme for CO₂ operational index; an Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS) and/or Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) and inclusion of a mandatory CO₂ element in port infrastructure charging.

It is expected that certain key elements of IMO’s revised greenhouse gas study and other parts of the work programme would now be ready in sufficient time for the MEPC to make decisions on this topic at its 58th session, in the Autumn of 2008, with remaining elements being finalized and approved in July 2009, in accordance with the agreed action plan and timetable.

Facilitation

With the increase in international maritime traffic since the 1950s, the lack of internationally standardised documentation procedures was imposing a heavy burden upon both shipborne and shore-based personnel and causing considerable delays.

Traditionally, large numbers of documents are required by customs, immigration, health and other public authorities pertaining to a ship, its crew and passengers, baggage, cargo and mail. Unnecessary paperwork is a problem in most industries, but the potential for red tape is probably greater in shipping than in other industries, because of its international nature and the traditional acceptance of formalities and procedures on the arrival, stay and departure of ships.

IMO started working on these problems soon after coming into existence and, in 1965, adopted the Convention on Facilitation of International Maritime Traffic (FAL Convention). Its primary objectives are to prevent unnecessary delays in maritime traffic, to aid co-operation between Governments and to secure the highest practicable degree of uniformity in formalities and procedures by simplifying and harmonizing documents and procedures. The Convention came into force in 1967.

IMO’s Facilitation Committee, established in 1968, addresses issues relating to implementation of the FAL Convention. The Ship-Port Interface Working Group, which meets during the Facilitation Committee sessions and reports to the Facilitation, Maritime Safety and Marine Environment Protection Committees, works on specific issues such as the development of guidelines and manuals for terminal personnel. In 2002, amendments were adopted to the FAL Convention to address stowaways.

The Facilitation Committee will be formally institutionalized in December 2008, with the entry into force of amendments to the IMO convention adopted in 1991.

Liability and compensation

IMO is primarily concerned with the safety of shipping and the prevention of marine pollution, but the Organization has also introduced regulations covering liability and compensation for damage, such as pollution, caused by ships. The Torrey Canyon disaster of 1967, which led to an intensification of IMO’s technical work in preventing pollution, was also the catalyst for work on liability and compensation.

In 1969, IMO adopted the International Convention on Civil Liability for Oil Pollution Damage (CLC Convention) which ensured that adequate compensation was paid to victims and the liability was placed on the shipowner. In 1971 the Convention establishing an International Fund for
Compensation for Oil Pollution Damage (Fund Convention), which set higher limits than the CLC Convention, was adopted. This came into force in 1978 and the Fund has its own headquarters in London. Unlike the Civil Liability Convention, which puts the onus on the shipowner, the Fund is made up of contributions from oil importers. The idea is that, if an accident at sea results in pollution damage which exceeds the compensation available under the Civil Liability Convention, the Fund will be available to pay an additional amount, while the burden of compensation will be spread more evenly between shipowner and cargo interests. The limits of liability in the two conventions have subsequently been increased through amendments adopted 1992 and 2000.

An additional, third tier of compensation for oil pollution damage was established through the adoption of the 2003 Protocol on the Establishment of a Supplementary Fund for Oil Pollution Damage. Participation in the Supplementary Fund is optional and is open to all Contracting States to the 1992 Protocol to the Fund Convention.

In 1971 IMO, in association with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and the European Nuclear Energy Agency of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), adopted the Convention relating to Civil Liability in the field of Maritime Carriage of Nuclear Material. Then, in 1974, IMO adopted the Athens Convention relating to the Carriage of Passengers and their Luggage by Sea, which declares the carrier liable for damage or loss suffered by passengers if the incident is due to the fault or the neglect of the carrier.


Implementation

While IMO’s first priority was to adopt international treaty instruments incorporating global standards for maritime safety, security, efficiency of navigation and pollution prevention, it quickly became apparent that, by themselves, these legal instruments were of little use unless they were properly put into effect. As more and more developing countries began building up their own fleets, it was considered necessary and useful to provide appropriate advice and technical co-operation to these countries.

Within a few years of coming into being, therefore, IMO formed a technical co-operation programme, the main purpose of which would be to help developing countries ratify IMO conventions and to reach the standards contained in those and other instruments. The first technical mission was made in 1966. In the 1970s, the programme assumed much greater importance and, in 1977, IMO became the first United Nations agency to institutionalize its Technical Co-operation Committee.

The emphasis of much of IMO’s technical co-operation work is on training and perhaps the best examples of this are the World
Maritime University in Malmo, Sweden and the IMO International Maritime Law Institute, in Malta, which were established in 1983 and in 1988, respectively, and provide advanced training in maritime administration, maritime law, education and shipping management.

Implementation is a collective responsibility, which involves Governments, the maritime industry and seafarers themselves. Unless all of them play their part, implementation will not be effective. Financial support for IMO projects that provide assistance for global and uniform implementation and enforcement of standards is provided in various ways, for example, through the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the World Bank, the Global Environment Fund (GEF) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). In addition, individual Governments, non-governmental organizations, commercial companies and foundations provide generous support for IMO projects.

A number of other notable initiatives have been particularly important in this context. 1993, for example, saw the first meeting of the Sub-Committee on Flag State Implementation (FSI). Its purpose is to assist flag States to implement IMO conventions and other instruments. When flag States ratify an IMO convention, they undertake to make it part of their own national law and thereby agree to enforce it.

Many of IMO’s more important technical conventions contain provisions for ships to be inspected when they visit foreign ports to ensure that they meet IMO requirements. These Port State Control inspections were originally intended to be a back up to flag State implementation, but experience has shown that they can be extremely effective in their own right, especially if organized regionally. IMO has encouraged the establishment of regional port State control organizations in many parts of the world with a view to raising shipping standards and quality throughout the globe.

Of special importance, the Voluntary IMO Member State Audit Scheme is intended to provide an audited Member State with a comprehensive and objective assessment of how effectively it administers and implements those mandatory IMO instruments which are covered by the scheme.

The scheme, adopted in 2005, heralded a new era for IMO, in which the Organization has at its disposal, for the first time, a tool to achieve harmonized and consistent global implementation of IMO standards, which is key to realizing the IMO objectives of safe, secure and efficient shipping on clean oceans.

The scheme addresses issues such as conformance in enacting appropriate legislation for the IMO instruments to which a Member State is a Party; the administration and enforcement of the applicable laws and regulations by the Member State; the delegation of authority to recognized organizations; the related control and monitoring mechanism of the survey and certification processes by the Member States. The first audits were carried out in 2006.

**Conclusion**

There is no doubt that IMO has come a very long way since its inception all those years ago. The Organization was born into a world weary from war and in which the old colonial powers still held sway in terms of global prosperity and trade. As a consequence, these were also major powers in shipping and, as
the leading maritime nations, they tended to create their own standards with regard to vessel construction, safety, manning and so on. But, in 1948, the new spirit of global unity that was in the air and the first glimpses of a new world order on the horizon combined to cause a number of far-sighted nations to draw up the blueprint for an international organization that would develop standards for shipping – for adoption and universal implementation throughout the entire industry. For it was becoming generally accepted that a situation in which each shipping nation had its own maritime laws was counterproductive in ensuring safety in shipping operations worldwide. Not only were standards different, but some were far higher than others. Conscientious safety-minded shipowners were at an economic disadvantage vis-à-vis their competitors who spent relatively little money on safety, and this was a threat to any serious attempt to improve safety at sea and to international seaborne trade as a whole.

Now, of course, all this has changed. Globalization has transformed international trade, new powers have emerged in shipping and the plethora of measures established by IMO has provided the bedrock on which a safer and cleaner industry can continue to develop and flourish. Moreover, IMO’s work has demonstrated beyond doubt that international standards – developed, agreed, implemented and enforced universally – are the only effective way to regulate such a diverse and truly international industry as shipping.

The Organization’s standards are now firmly embedded in shipping’s consciousness and practice and they shape the industry of today. Indeed, the comprehensive body of IMO conventions (some 50 in total), supported by literally hundreds of codes, guidelines and recommendations, govern just about every facet of the industry – from the design, construction, equipment and operation of ships to the training of seafarers, or from the drawing board to the scrapyard.

Many of the main IMO treaties (including, for example, SOLAS, the Tonnage and Load Lines Conventions, the Collision Regulations, the STCW Convention and Annexes I and II of MARPOL), have all been ratified by States that are, collectively, responsible for more than 98 per cent of the world’s fleet.

It is because of the extensive network of global regulations that IMO has developed and adopted over the years that, today, shipping is a safe and secure mode of transport; clean; environment-friendly; and very energy-efficient. There is no doubt that shipping’s environmental consciousness continues to grow. This is illustrated not only by its wide acceptance of IMO’s environmental standards and the initiatives that the industry itself has put in place to prevent its operations having a negative impact on the environment, but also by its eagerness to challenge and reverse shipping’s unwarranted negative image and, through a variety of media, enhance its environmental credentials, highlighting its ever-improving record and contribution to sustainable development.

And so, IMO stands united, focussed on the challenges ahead and continuously relevant to the industry it has been serving for so long. Shipping is, par excellence, a significant contributor to, and facilitator of, economic growth on a worldwide basis. As such, the mission of IMO (that of promoting its safety and security, its efficiency and its environmental credentials) is one that reaches out far beyond the Organization’s immediate constituency and touches the life of nearly everyone on the planet.
Business centres have been provided for delegates as part of the £62 million-plus refurbishment.

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N a t a l l t
A wide range of nautical instruments and accessories including binoculars, compasses, clocks, barometers, flags, sextants and chart plotting tools.
On Monday, 16 June, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, gave a special address, highlighting the work of IMO not just in terms of the service it provides in regulating the maritime industry, but also in the wider context of the international agenda set by the United Nations, including IMO’s work to support the Millennium Development Goals, protect the environment and promote sustainable development. Addressing the IMO Council and staff, Mr. Ban said: “When the IMO was first established, it filled a crying need for international standards to regulate shipping. And, in the fifty years since then, this Organization has broadened its activities to keep pace with emerging global demands.”

Referring to the Organization’s recent focus on environmental concerns, Mr. Ban praised IMO’s efforts and reiterated how crucial it is that all concerned rise to meet the challenge posed by the threat of climate change. “IMO has carried out laudable work to deal with pollution and reduce greenhouse gas emissions from ships,” he said, “but it is clear that more needs to be done. We need strong policies and, at the same time, it is essential to help developing countries implement such measures. I have confidence that IMO will play its part in this global campaign to address the problem of climate change.”

Regarding IMO’s place within the UN family and its contribution to the system’s delivery of mandates as ‘one United Nations’, Mr. Ban said “You already have a solid track record of working closely with other partners in the UN family to tackle a range of complex issues. IMO is not only working with partners to address environmental and security concerns - it is also supporting sustainable development, including efforts to reach the Millennium Development Goals, our set of targets for addressing a range of social ills by the year 2015. Trade is critical to poverty eradication. Even in today’s high-tech world, where we send information electronically in seconds, shipping remains one of the world’s most international industries, serving more than 90 per cent of global trade. It provides an important source of income and employment for many poor States. IMO is assisting developing countries in building safe, secure and efficient shipping services while protecting their waters and coasts. Helping developing countries to boost their shipping, while preserving the environment, contributes to the prosperity of humanity as a whole. Here again we see how IMO is central to our broader United Nations mission to achieve peace and progress.”

He added, “Let me warmly congratulate this valuable Organization and its Members and staff on this milestone anniversary … and for their continued efforts and co-operation. I am looking to even more advances from you in the years to come.”

The host Government’s Secretary of State for Transport, the Right Honourable Mrs. Ruth Kelly MP, also addressed the special session. She said “We are very proud of London’s tradition as a maritime city. And we are proud that London is home to the IMO. As demand for seaborn trade continues to grow in the future, I believe London will consolidate its position as one of the world’s pre-eminent shipping cities - and as a natural base for the IMO.”

“Thanks to you, our seas are safer and less polluted today than at any time in living memory. But this week is not simply an exercise in nostalgia. As you settle into your new surroundings, this is also a time to look forward - to a changing maritime industry, and how it..."
responds to changing patterns of demand,” Mrs. Kelly said.

Mrs. Kelly concluded by pledging the United Kingdom’s continuing support to IMO in the years ahead as the Organization works to make the seas cleaner and safer, and wished the Organization a happy future in its refurbished Headquarters.

On Tuesday 17 June, the Headquarters building was officially reopened by His Royal Highness The Duke of Gloucester. Mr. Jim Fitzpatrick MP, the United Kingdom’s Shipping Minister, also participated in the ceremony, representing the host Government.

The IMO Headquarters, located on London’s Albert Embankment on the south bank of the River Thames, was purpose-built by the United Kingdom Government for the Organization during the 1970s and opened in 1983 by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. A major refurbishment of the building was begun in mid-2006 and completed in April 2008, creating a fully modernized facility, properly suited to the needs of the 320-strong Secretariat and the hundreds of delegates from the Organization’s Member States, Associate Members and observers from a wide network of intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations who regularly attend meetings there.

“I am delighted, as a retired architect, to see that you have decided to refurbish your building as I know that having the right building, having the right facilities, makes it much easier to carry out complicated tasks, particularly in this era of rapid communication. So I am delighted to play a role in the history of your maritime Organization by declaring your refurbished home officially open,” HRH The Duke of Gloucester said. Mr. Fitzpatrick added, “Not only do we now have a building that the international delegates can enjoy, long into the future, but together we have built a ‘home’ for the IMO of which we can all be proud.”

More than 90 per cent of the total project cost was met by the United Kingdom Government, from which the building is leased by the Organization. During the re-opening ceremony, IMO Secretary-General Mitropoulos extended particular thanks to the host Government, “which demonstrated, once again, its strong commitment to IMO through its leadership and funding of the refurbishment, to which should be added the contribution also made by those Governments who hosted some of our meetings during the project’s life”, he said, adding his appreciation also “to all those who have played a part in what has been a massive and very successful undertaking, including the IMO delegates and staff”.

On Tuesday evening, paintings of two IMO training institutes, WMU and IMLI, were unveiled by representatives of the two host Governments and of the two centres themselves.

Mr Mitropoulos said the paintings had been commissioned “as an expression of our strong wish that, through this opportunity, we celebrate, among the many other achievements of IMO, two institutes of excellence in their respective academic fields.”
WMU was established in Malmö, Sweden, 25 years ago and has become an outstanding institution, bringing together young people with various educational, cultural and social backgrounds to study and live together for two years. To date, 2,463 students from 153 countries and territories have graduated successfully from the University.

IMLI was established in 1988, in Malta, to help ensure that sufficient maritime law experts would be available to assist in the implementation and enforcement of international maritime law and, more particularly, the vast body of rules and regulations developed under the aegis of IMO especially within developing countries. To date, 467 individuals from 112 countries and territories have enrolled at or graduated from IMLI.

Mr. Mitropoulos took the opportunity to thank the host countries of the institutes, Sweden and Malta, as well as to express his gratitude for the support received over many years from a number of other sponsors and donors. He also paid tribute to two individuals, Dr. C.P. Srivastava and Mr. William O’Neil, both former Secretaries-General of IMO, who had been instrumental in the establishment and development of both WMU and IMLI. He went on to acknowledge the central role of the past Rectors and current President of WMU, and of the past and current Directors of IMLI, whose responsibility it has been to oversee the successful operation and continuing development of both centres.

On Wednesday, 18 June, shipping industry representatives participated in a panel
Local schoolchildren participated in an art competition on the theme of Shipping in the future.

The winning entry.
discussion on IMO/industry co-operation under the theme: IMO’s relationship with the maritime industry. The discussion was moderated by Mr. Chris Horrocks, former Secretary-General of the International Chamber of Shipping (ICS) and of the International Shipping Federation (ISF), and the panel included Mr. Spyros M. Polemis, Chairman of ICS and President of ISF; Mr. Ugo Salerno, former Chairman of IACS; Mr. Philippe A. Embiricos, President of BIMCO; Mr. David Cockroft, General Secretary of the International Transport Workers’ Federation; Mr. Roger Holt, Secretary-General of INTERCARGO, and Mr. Joe Angelo, Deputy Managing Director of INTERTANKO.

On Thursday, 19 June, local schoolchildren, who participated in an art competition organized by IMO on the theme of Shipping in the future, visited IMO to see their artwork on display. The winner and two runners-up were awarded special prizes.

Later that day, and bringing the week’s events to a close, a panel of speakers brainstormed on the challenges the Organization will face during the 21st century, with a series of speeches on IMO into the future. The speakers were: Secretary-General Mitropoulos; Mr. Kosuke Shibata, Vice-Minister of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism of Japan; IMO Council Chairman, Mr. Johan Franson; Council Vice-Chairman, Mr. Dumisani Ntuli; Maritime Safety Committee Chairman, Mr. Neil Ferrer; Marine Environment Protection Committee Chairman, Mr. Andreas Chrysostomou; IMO Assembly President, H.E. Mr. Gehad Madi, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Egypt; and the Deputy Under Secretary, Ministry of Transport of Turkey, Mr. Suat Hayri Aka.
C.P. Srivastava
IMO’s longest-serving Secretary-General, Mr C.P. Srivastava held the position from 1974 until his retirement on 31 December 1989, whereupon, in what was at the time a unique gesture, he was designated Secretary-General Emeritus of the International Maritime Organization.

The 16th Assembly of the IMO adopted a resolution on his retirement recording his services to IMO and to its Member States. Throughout his tenure, comprising four successive terms and lasting 16 years, Mr Srivastava rendered exceptionally meritorious services to the Organization with total commitment to its ideals and objectives.

The resolution recognized that, during his tenure, and as a result of his leadership, integrity, dedicated endeavour and initiative, the Membership of the Organization was greatly enhanced and its universality well established; many of the Organization’s conventions and protocols had received wide acceptance and were in force, promoting the objectives of the Organization for safer shipping and cleaner oceans; and that the IMO spirit of goodwill and co-operation had been sustained and enhanced.

Under Mr Srivastava’s leadership, a comprehensive, pragmatic and co-ordinated programme of technical co-operation was conceived and developed and effective steps were taken to promote its implementation, encouraging and assisting developing countries to become increasingly self-reliant in the maritime sector.

Mr Srivastava also played a pioneering role in the establishment of IMO’s educational institutions, including the World Maritime University in Malmö, Sweden, and the International Maritime Law Institute in Malta, both of which celebrated milestone anniversaries in 2008.

William O’Neil
Mr William O’Neil served IMO as Secretary-General from 1990 to 2003. During that time, he established a strong track record of personal intervention in the work of IMO that confirmed his passionate and genuine interest in the values that the Organization seeks to promote. In his early years in office, for example, there was a sharp and, in his view, unacceptable increase in the loss of bulk carriers. Mr O’Neil’s response was to present the IMO Assembly with a resolution on the matter, the first time such an initiative had come from a Secretary-General. It was not to be his last.

Throughout his career with IMO, Mr O’Neil took a detailed interest in all the work of the Organization, as one would expect. But certain issues prompted his particular attention and, over the years, the Organization benefited from his personal intervention in major work items such as ro-ro safety, large passenger vessels, the shift in emphasis onto the human element and, more recently, the massive efforts undertaken by the Organization to establish a regulatory framework for an effective security regime to cover international shipping and port activities against the threat of terrorism.

That the Organization has the scope and the resources to deal with these and all the myriad other issues that are brought before it is due in no small measure to the solid foundation provided by the permanent secretariat from the Organization’s Headquarters in London. Yet, when Mr O’Neil took up the reigns as Secretary-General, it is no exaggeration to say that the Organization was facing a desperate financial crisis. While the cost of providing the services to the Members was naturally increasing, the obligatory financial contributions from the Members at that time were falling dramatically short of what was needed. Secretary-General O’Neil undertook to resolve this situation and, since then, his commitment to improving the Organization’s financial framework has led to the achievement of contribution levels of 98 per cent, which now rank IMO as amongst the best in the United Nations system in this respect.

Mr. O’Neil’s association with IMO goes back to 1972, when he first attended the IMO Council as Canada’s representative. In 1979 he was elected Chairman of that body and held the post until his appointment by the Council to serve his first four-year term as Secretary-General, which began in 1990 and was subsequently extended to the end of 2003. Among the many international awards recognizing his contribution to the safety of life at sea and the protection of the marine environment, Mr O’Neil was awarded the International Maritime Prize for 2003.
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First addition to new-look IMO headquarters

The first major new adornment to IMO’s refurbished Headquarters has come in the shape of a gift from the Directorate-General of the Maritime Territory and Merchant Marine (DIRECTEMAR) of Chile. The gift is a display featuring three elements: a half-globe, showing Chile’s location on the south-western coast of South America and, more particularly, the massive sea area in the Pacific Ocean and off Antarctica for which the country has assumed SAR responsibilities; the offshore patrol vessel Piloto Pardo, of the Chilean Coastguard, that will serve in Chile’s SAR area and carry out search and rescue, anti-pollution and other operations related to the Coastguard function; and a stylized wave, symbolizing the seas in which the vessel will be serving, carrying on it a plaque dedicating the gift to IMO, the motto and mission of DIRECTEMAR, and a technical description of the vessel.

The gift was presented to IMO by Vice-Admiral Edmundo González Robles, Director-General of DIRECTEMAR, during the 100th session of the Council and as part of the Organization’s commemoration of a number of major milestones in the history of IMO. Chile has been a Member State of IMO since 1972 and is presently a Member of the IMO Council.

Performance Standards for Radiocommunications and Navigational Equipment - new edition now available

A new consolidated edition containing all IMO adopted performance standards for shipborne radiocommunications and navigational equipment is now available.

Performance Standards for Shipborne Radiocommunications and Navigational Equipment (2008 Edition) is essential reading for the shipbuilding industry, manufacturers of equipment, shipyards and Administrations. The new edition incorporates all existing and revised performance standards adopted up to November 2007, including:

- Electronic Chart Display and Information Systems (ECDIS);
- Integrated Navigation Systems;
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- Functional requirements for long-range identification and tracking of ships;
- Shipborne voyage data recorders (VDRs) and shipborne simplified voyage data recorders (S-VDRs);
- Navigation lights, navigation light controllers and associated equipment; and
- Provision of radio services for the GMDSS.


The new edition is now available from authorized distributors ofIMO publications (http://www.imo.org/Publications/mainframe.asp?topic_id=429) and via IMO’s Online Bookshop. For further information, please consult the IMO website at www.imo.org.

Technical details:

IMO to focus on climate change in 2009

The World Maritime Day theme for 2009 will be “Climate change: a challenge for IMO too?”, as unanimously agreed by the IMO Council at its 100th session.

According to IMO Secretary-General Michalos, “The choice of this theme will give us the opportunity to focus on an urgent issue of global dimensions and thus galvanize action at all appropriate levels of the Organization to add IMO’s contribution to world efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and, thus, present to next year’s climate change Conference in Copenhagen a robust position, reflecting the Organization’s determination to respond to its responsibilities decisively and effectively.”

The Council, which had previously approved the holding of the 2009 parallel event for the celebration of World Maritime Day in the United States, reiterated its appreciation to the United States Government for its offer to host it.

IPTA comes of age

IPTA (the International Parcel Tankers Association) celebrated its 21st anniversary earlier this year with a conference and reception at the Naval Club in London. Secretary-General Michalos, as guest of honour, praised the contribution IPTA has made to the work of IMO, especially its “vital contribution” to the revision of MARPOL Annex II, and highlighted two areas where its help will be needed in future: the working group on fires and explosions aboard chemical tankers, and ensuring sufficient onboard expertise at a time when there is expected to be a sharp rise in the number of chemical tankers in the world fleet.
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