WHY THE WHITE LIST IS WORKING

CASTOR RAISES REFUGE ISSUES

CAS SCHEME GOES FORWARD TO MEPC

“BLACK BOXES” TO BECOME MANDATORY
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The end of the beginning

The publication by the Maritime Safety Committee of the long awaited “White List” of Parties deemed to be giving full implementation to the STCW 95 convention has aroused a good deal of comment. A proportion of which, I am disappointed to say, has been negative.

The implication behind most of the criticism has been that this was little more than a paper exercise and a “rubber-stamping” of the status-quo. As is so often the case, however, it becomes clear when you look dispassionately at the facts that the White List is in fact doing the job it was created to do.

STCW 95 embodies a wholesale shift in the emphasis of maritime training from the demonstration of knowledge to the demonstration of competence. The implications of this are huge, not least for the long-term impact it may have on the maritime casualty statistics, which still suggest that some 80 per cent of accidents are attributable in some way to human error. Parties to STCW 95 undertake not simply to implement the Convention’s requirements but also to demonstrate that they are doing so. They do this by preparing a detailed report on the maritime training and associated legislative structures they have in place and submitting that information for review by a panel of independent, competent persons.

In that sense alone, therefore, this was indeed a paper exercise. But the process of putting together White List submissions required each Party to undertake such a thorough examination of its own training and legislative provisions that, for most, the procedure itself was the catalyst for genuine improvements.

If a panel of competent persons was in any doubt about any of the material presented to it for evaluation, it had the right to ask for clarification. The sheer weight of clarifications requested gives the lie to any suggestion that it was a “rubber stamping” exercise. In many cases, the process was long and painstaking, involving several meetings, the re-drafting of legislation and guidance and meetings between representatives of panels and Parties to thrash out differences. Getting on to the White List was no easy task; and the fact that more than 12 per cent of the Parties that filed their submissions by the first deadline are still working towards inclusion on the list provides the clearest evidence of this.

Of course, possession of a certificate of competency issued by a White List country does not completely guarantee that a seafarer is truly competent. But that was never what the White List was intended to do. A place on the White List does confirm that the country issuing the certificate is serious about improving and maintaining the quality of its seafarers, has taken action to bring its training regime in line with STCW 95 and, most importantly, has had that action and the resultant training regime verified by external, competent assessors.

In an endeavour as challenging as instigating wholesale, global improvement in the quality of the world’s seafarers, there is no quick fix solution. Publication of the first White List was never intended to be the final solution. It was never designed to provide a single-source, definitive checklist for seafarer competence. What it does represent, however, is the completion of the first, significant step down what will inevitably be a long road; not even the beginning of the end, just the end of the beginning. But an exercise which, nevertheless, should be viewed in its proper context, commended, and given the credit it deserves.
Tanker survey scheme places verification onus on Administrations
Working group agrees CAS details for MEPC approval

Preliminary details of the Condition Assessment Scheme (CAS) that will form a major plank of the regime for accelerated phasing out of single-hull tankers were agreed at a meeting in London in February.

An inter-sessional working group of the IMO’s Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC) agreed a draft MEPC resolution on the scheme and its provisions. It will go before the next meeting of the MEPC (MEPC 46) in April for consideration with a view to adoption. The CAS is designed to ensure that the structural condition of a single-hull tanker is acceptable for a period of time beyond that by which the ship would otherwise have to be withdrawn from service.

A key requirement of the draft CAS is that the national Administration shall establish procedures through which it can monitor the work of the organization performing the CAS survey. It will also be the responsibility of the Administration to review the CAS Final Report prior to issuing a Statement of Compliance. The Administration will be required to make sure that anyone assigned to monitor the execution of a CAS or to review the Final Report are not engaged in any way whatsoever with the CAS activities under scrutiny.

Under the terms of amendments to regulation 13G of Annex I to MARPOL (the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships) approved at MEPC 45 in October 2000, single-hull tankers will be phased out over a number of years, according to a timetable based on their year of delivery. But the proposed new regulation 13G allows national shipping administrations to extend the lifetime of a single-hull tanker for a limited period, provided the ship meets the requirements of a Condition Assessment Scheme.

Although the CAS does not specify structural standards in excess of the provisions of other IMO conventions, codes, and recommendations, its requirements stipulate more stringent and transparent verification of the reported structural condition of the ship and that documentary and survey procedures have been properly carried out and completed.

The CAS applies to category 1 and 2 oil tankers, commonly known as pre-MARPOL and MARPOL tankers respectively. The scheme assumes that compliance with the CAS will be assessed during the enhanced survey programme, concurrent with intermediate or renewal surveys already required.

CAS surveys will be carried out by at least two qualified exclusive surveyors of a “recognized organization” (RO), an organization recognized by the national Administration for the purpose. During a CAS survey, the hull structure in way of cargo tanks, pump rooms, cofferdams, pipe tunnels, void spaces within the cargo area and all ballast tanks will be examined. The RO will be required to keep records of the qualifications and experience of the surveyors and any other personnel assigned to carry out work for a CAS and to monitor and record their performance.

One of the main elements of the CAS is the extensive requirements defining the preparations of a CAS survey. Provisions have been made for early and detailed planning, including comprehensive documentation, which is considered a prerequisite for a successful survey in terms of safety. The ship operator is required to notify the RO and national Administration of its intention to proceed with a CAS not less than 6 months prior to planned survey date. The RO then issues a survey planning questionnaire in which structural details of the ship, its cargo and ballast history are logged. This document is used by the RO and the company as the basis for a detailed survey plan.

If the surveyors conclude that repairs are required, each item to be repaired shall be identified on a numbered list. Whenever repairs are carried out, details shall be reported by making specific reference to relevant items on the numbered list. If the surveyors believe hull repairs could be deferred beyond a due date previously assigned, they will be required to consult their head office for specific approval. The CAS survey is not complete unless all Recommendations/Conditions of Class which relate to hull structures under review by the CAS survey have been rectified to the satisfaction of the RO.

A survey report indicating details such as the date, location and, where relevant, whether or not the survey was carried out in dry-dock afloat or at sea will be made immediately after the survey. A CAS Final Report, including a summary as to where, when, by whom and how the survey was carried out, a summary of the findings of the overall surveys, statements identifying all the thickness measurement reports, the condition of the corrosion prevention systems, a summary of hull repairs carried out and an evaluation of the structural strength of the vessel will be issued on completion of the CAS survey.

A “Statement of Compliance”, shall be issued by the Administration to each ship which completes CAS to its satisfaction. A copy of the Statement of Compliance will be sent by the Administration to the RO and kept together with the CAS Final Report. All records relating to the CAS survey, including actions taken, will form an auditable documentary trail available to the Administration.

A ship that fails a CAS survey may be re-submitted for CAS assessment. The original deficiencies will be reviewed following completion of remedial actions. As a rule, the re-assessment shall be carried out by the RO and by the Administration which carried out previous CAS assessment. In the case of a ship which has failed the CAS survey
changing flag, the new Administration shall request copies of all CAS documentation from the previous Administration.

The Statement of Compliance will be valid from the completion of the CAS survey up to a maximum period of 39 months from the anniversary date of the applicable intermediate or renewal survey, or the applicable phase-out date indicated in the table detailed in revised regulation 13G(4), whichever is the shorter.

Shipping administrations will be required to lodge details of CAS implementation with IMO. They will be asked to submit particulars of the Statements of Compliance they issue, details of any suspension or withdrawal of Statements of Compliance and particulars of any ships to which it has declined to issue a Statement of Compliance. IMO will make this information available to all Parties to MARPOL 73/78.

Development of the CAS comes at a time when attention has repeatedly been drawn to the shipping industry’s need for a tighter safety-net to guard against sub-standard shipping. In this respect, CAS is intended to complement the requirements of Annex B of IMO resolution A.744(18), “Guidelines on the enhanced programme of inspections during surveys of bulk carriers and oil tankers”. In the longer term, the CAS may become an integrated part of a revised resolution A.744(18) with a view to constantly improving the IMO safety system.

IMO Secretary-General Mr. William A O’Neil has urged IMO Members to place the issue of offering refuge to disabled ships high on the Organization’s agenda in the coming year. The matter is due to be raised next at the 74th session of the Maritime Safety Committee in May / June.

The issue has been highlighted once again by the incident at the beginning of this year involving the fully laden 31,068 dwt tanker Castor, which developed a structural problem in the Mediterranean Sea en route from the Romanian port of Constanza to Lagos, Nigeria.

The ship suffered damage to the hull resulting in a 24m crack running from port to starboard halfway along its length. Following the incident, the classification society (American Bureau of shipping) withdrew the ship’s certificates. The ship was deemed to present a serious risk of explosion and rupture of the hull and the authorities of Morocco and Gibraltar prohibited its entry into waters or ports under their jurisdiction. Castor then sailed towards the vicinity of the south-eastern coast of Spain, accompanied by the Tsavliris tug Nicolay Chiker, with which the tanker’s owner had agreed to effect transhipment of the cargo under a commercial salvage contract.

The Spanish Maritime Authority requested the ship to keep at a distance from the Spanish coast. A report, issued following the inspection of the ship by the Spanish authorities, described the situation as one of extreme seriousness due to the high risk of explosion, and recommended that the ship should not enter any port and should keep at a distance from the coast to minimize the consequences of a possible catastrophe. Bringing the ship close to the Spanish coast for unloading, either by transhipment to another ship or by discharge to land installations was rejected as presenting a higher risk for the population, coastal properties and the environment than transhipment on the high seas. Spain stationed a helicopter, two salvage vessels, a maritime rescue rapid intervention craft as well as a Spanish Navy patrol boat in the area.

After units of the Spanish maritime rescue service had evacuated the 26 crew members, shipowners, salvage operators and other interested parties were informed that appropriate measures should be adopted to ensure that the ship withdrew from its current position and remained at a distance of at least 30 nautical miles from the Spanish coast, in the light of the unacceptable risk posed to Spanish coastal interests.

The CAS is a key part of the proposed new MARPOL regulation 13G aimed at fostering quality shipping throughout the tanker industry.

Castor’s inability to find sheltered waters has prompted an urgent appraisal of the issue.
lights plight of disabled ships tackled as matter of urgency

Eventually, after being similarly unable to find shelter off Algeria, the Castor was towed to a relatively sheltered spot off the coast of Tunisia where her cargo was safely unloaded.

During his opening remarks to the 45th session of the Sub-Committee on Fire Protection (8 to 12 January), IMO Secretary-General William Mr O’Neil called for the problem of sheltered waters to be tackled with some urgency. “It seems to me,” he told the meeting, “that the time has come for the Organization to undertake, as a matter of priority, a global consideration of this problem and to adopt any measures required to ensure that, in the interests of safety and environmental protection, coastal states review their contingency arrangements so that disabled ships are provided with assistance and facilities as may be required in the circumstances.”

The Spanish delegation to the meeting stated that the basic policy of its Government was the safeguarding of human life at sea and the combating of pollution in waters under its SAR responsibility, in compliance with its international obligations, and that it had accordingly proceeded to the successful rescue of the whole crew of the damaged ship. It stated that its Government had also an inescapable obligation to defend the safety of its coastal population and of property and environment along the Spanish coast, which should not be put at risk as a result of a commercial operation for the salvage and recovery of the ship’s cargo.

Spain endorsed the call for action to establish sheltered waters for disabled ships on terms acceptable to coastal States, stressing also the need for IMO as a matter of urgency to approve and facilitate preventive action such as the improvement of port State inspections, the responsibilities required of classification societies and the withdrawal from service of single hull oil tankers.
The so-called “White List” of countries deemed to be giving “full and complete effect” to the revised STCW Convention (STCW 95) has been published by IMO. The 73rd session of the Organization’s Maritime Safety Committee (27 November to 6 December 2000), formally endorsed a report made by the Secretary-General to the MSC, which revealed that 71 countries and one Associate Member of IMO had met the criteria for inclusion on the list.

A position on the White List entitles other Parties to accept, in principle, that certificates issued by or on behalf of the parties on the list are in compliance with the 1995 amendments to STCW which entered into force on 1 February 1997. It revised and updated the original 1978 Convention, setting out clearly defined minimum competency requirements for all seafarers and taking into account developments in technology since the 1978 Convention was adopted.

Panels of experts have spent much of the past two years engaged in rigorous assessment of information presented to them by Parties to the Convention concerning their ability to meet the standards enshrined in STCW 95. Panel members were selected, as far as possible, to give a wide geographical spread and a broad coverage of the different facets of the Convention - deck and engineering knowledge, for example. These panels submitted their findings to IMO Secretary-General William O’Neil, who in turn reported to the MSC, which has now approved and issued the list.

For most countries, preparation of the submissions to the Secretary-General represented a demanding and challenging task. It required not only reporting on national laws, training requirements, standards and systems in place, but also ensuring that all of those elements met the revised Convention requirements and could pass the scrutiny of persons with detailed knowledge of those requirements.

It was stressed at the meeting that giving “full and complete effect” to the revised Convention may not be the same for all Parties. Some may choose not to have any maritime training institutes at all and rely on recognition of certificates issued to seafarers by other states. Similarly, some Parties may only provide a limited scope of training, such as for ratings only.

A Flag state Party that is on the White List may, as a matter of policy, elect not to accept seafarers with certificates issued by non-White List countries for service on its ships. If it does accept such seafarers, they will be required by 1 February 2002 also to have an endorsement, issued by the flag state, to show that their certificate is recognized by the flag state. By 1 February 2002, masters and officers should hold STCW 95 certificates or endorsements issued by the flag State. Certificates issued and endorsed under the provisions of the 1978 STCW Convention will be valid until their expiry date. The fact that a Party is not on the White List does not, however, invalidate certificates or endorsements issued by that Party. Nothing in the STCW Convention prevents the employment of any seafarer who holds a valid certificate or endorsement issued by a

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parties included on the “White List” at 6 December 2000</th>
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| Argentina, Australia, Bahamas, Bangladesh, Belgium, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Colombia, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus,
  China, Canada, Greece, Honduras, Iceland, Indonesia, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Kiribati, Latvia,
  Liberia, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Maldives, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mexico, Morocco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Pakistan, Panama, Perú, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Russian, Russian,... |
Ships to carry "black boxes" under new regulations

Aircraft-style accident investigation aids to become mandatory

Passenger ships and ships other than passenger ships of 3000 gross tonnage and upwards constructed on or after 1 July 2002 will have to carry voyage data recorders (VDRs) to assist in accident investigations, under new regulations adopted by the International Maritime Organization (IMO). The mandatory regulations were among a raft of amendments to the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea, 1974 (SOLAS) adopted by IM O’s Maritime Safety Committee (MSC), at its 73rd session from 27 November to 6 December 2000.

Like the black boxes carried on aircraft, VDRs enable accident investigators to review procedures and instructions in the moments before an incident and help to identify the cause of any accident. The regulations for VDRs are contained in a revised Chapter V (Safety of Navigation) of SOLAS which also makes it mandatory for certain ships to carry an automatic identification system (AIS). Currently ships are recommended but not required to carry VDRs. Performance standards for VDRs were adopted in 1997.

The VDR requirements are part of a new revised Chapter V of SOLAS on Safety of Navigation. The following ships will be required to carry VDRs, under regulation 20 of the new SOLAS Chapter V:

- passenger ships constructed on or after 1 July 2002;
- ro-ro passenger ships constructed before 1 July 2002 not later than the first survey on or after 1 July 2002;
- passenger ships other than ro-ro passenger ships constructed before 1 July 2002 not later than 1 January 2004; and
- ships, other than passenger ships, of 3,000 gross tonnage and upwards constructed on or after 1 July 2002.

VDRs are required to meet performance standards “not inferior to those adopted by the Organization”. Performance standards for VDRs were adopted in 1997 and give details on data to be recorded and VDR specifications. They state that the VDR should continuously maintain sequential records of preselected data items relating to status and output of the ship’s equipment and command and control of the ship. The VDR should be installed in a protective capsule that is brightly coloured and fitted with an appropriate device to aid location. It should be entirely automatic in normal operation. Under the new regulation, all VDRs must undergo an annual performance test.

Administrations may exempt ships, other than ro-ro passenger ships, constructed before 1 July 2002, from being fitted with a VDR where it can be demonstrated that interfacing a VDR with the existing
The MSC adopted a resolution on the carriage of VDRs on existing cargo ships, which calls for a feasibility study to be carried out to ascertain the need for mandatory carriage of VDRs on these ships. The feasibility study, to be carried out by the Sub-Committee on Safety of Navigation (and other Sub-Committees as appropriate), will take into account such factors as practicability, technical problems relating to the retrofitting of VDRs, adequacy of existing performance standards including the possible development of simplified standards, experience in the use of VDRs on ships already fitted with them, including data that could not have been obtained without VDRs, and relevant financial implications, including a cost-benefit analysis.

The aim is to finalize the study by January 2004 so that, if the study demonstrates a compelling need for mandatory carriage of VDRs on existing cargo ships, relevant amendments to SOLAS Chapter V and the associated performance standards can be drafted. In the meantime, the resolution invites Governments to encourage shipowners to install VDRs on existing cargo ships voluntarily, so that wide experience of their use may be gained.

Korea pledges support
On 11 January 2001, His Excellency Mr. Choi Sung-Hong, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Korea to the United Kingdom, visited Mr. W.A. O’Neill, Secretary-General of IMO. The Ambassador expressed support of the Government of the Republic of Korea for IMO’s Integrated Technical Co-operation Programme and also presented to the Secretary-General, on behalf of his Government, a cheque for the amount of US$50,000 in support of the project on implementation of the revised STCW Convention in Sub-Saharan Africa.
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Why the **White List** is working

The simple list of Parties giving full and complete effect to STCW 95 hides a long and detailed body of work. IMO News reports

Flick through the pages of any of the leading shipping industry magazines today and you will discover a wealth of technical innovation designed to make ships more efficient and safer. In the modern ship, everything from the propulsion plant, through the hull design to the navigation suite is the result of intense research and development activity. The only exception to this rule is, ironically, the one key component on which everything else so often depends – the officers and crew.

It is widely quoted that 80 per cent of transport accidents are due to human error. It is the human element on board ship that can either provide the skills that may prevent a disaster, or the frailty or plain lack of competence that can cause one. And, while the capability, complexity and sheer power of technology seems to be accelerating exponentially, the human element remains a basic component with all its strengths and all its weaknesses.

That is why the international maritime community has now evolved from an approach which traditionally seeks technical solutions to safety-related problems and is focussing instead on the role of human factors in maritime safety.

The 1995 STCW Convention is one of several key initiatives that underpin this new philosophy at IMO. It seeks to establish a baseline standard for the training and education of seafarers throughout the world and, by placing an emphasis on quality control and competence-based training, it establishes a structure that can ensure not only that the required standard is met, but that it is seen to be met.

One of the key differences between STCW 95 and the previous Convention is the emphasis on competence rather than knowledge. STCW 95 stipulates in detail the required competences associated with different tasks, the knowledge and understanding required to perform them, methods for demonstrating competence and criteria for evaluating it. The Convention embodies provision for “hands-on” training and the development of basic skills through use of simulators, laboratory training equipment and other practical training aids. Although experience at sea will remain an important part of a seafarers overall career development, it will no longer be enough simply to “serve your time.”

STCW 95 will reach a crucial stage of implementation in 2002, when all seafarers must be trained in compliance with its provisions and carry certificates to that effect. The authority for assessing that individual Member States are in full compliance with STCW has been delegated by the Member States to IMO in what represents a significant new role for the Organization. For the first time, IMO has been asked to take a central role in verifying that the measures it stipulates are effectively put in place. The first publicly visible step in this process has been the issuing of the so-called “White List.” What the White List reveals is those Parties currently deemed to be giving full effect to the provisions of STCW 95. But a simple list such as this cannot reveal the huge body of work at all levels that has gone into – and is still going into – achieving White List status.

The process began with Article IV and regulation 1/7 of STCW 95, in which Parties were required to submit to the IMO Secretary-General information to show that they are giving full and complete effect to the Convention (see box). This information is then handed over for evaluation to panels of “competent persons” approved by the IMO’s Maritime Safety Committee. Based on the outcome of this evaluation, the Secretary-General reports to the MSC on those members that are giving full effect to the Convention.

It is a tough process and certainly no rubber-stamping exercise. Some 82 Parties met the first deadline for submitting their information to IMO. Of these, more than 12 per cent were still trying to achieve White List status at the time the Committee agreed that the Secretary-General should make his report. And, of those that did make the list (see page 8) many found that their initial submissions were not accepted, prompting what for some became a thoroughlygoing series of clarifications, meetings and re-submissions.

**Quality standards systems**

In the Philippines, for example, the country’s labour secretary Bienvenido Laguesma told the influential Philippines Business World that the Philippines had been working for inclusion on the White List for more than three years. The changes it implemented during that period were significant. As well as adopting revised syllabi meeting STCW 95 requirements, it introduced quality standards systems in training institutes and in the agencies involved with STCW implementation, established national assessment centres and, with the assistance of IMO, trained a group of national assessors. It also reduced the number of approved training programmes and institutes from more than 100 to around 50.
A panel made up of competent persons from Australia, Japan, Norway, Singapore and the United States was appointed to evaluate the Philippines report. After the initial assessment had revealed a number of problems, two further meetings, one in Singapore and one in Japan, were needed before the panel were satisfied that all the difficulties had been ironed out.

The extensive work undertaken in the Philippines is typical of many. A number of Parties used the evaluation process to help identify shortcomings in their training or legislative structures and several enlisted the help of the IMO’s technical co-operation resources to overcome them. Others took the opportunity to instigate a thorough review of their entire maritime education and training provisions and make whatever adjustments were necessary to embrace the new Convention.

In India, for example, the legislative process was simplified to allow the incorporation of amendments without amending an act or approaching the Parliament; a new electronic database of all certificates pertaining to training and certification was introduced to enable single-point verification of the validity and authenticity of any certificate and a formal quality assurance scheme was introduced, ensuring independent evaluation of all aspects of training, assessment and certification of seafarers can be effectively carried out.

The UK also established an electronic database of certificates, as well as simplifying and consolidating all the appropriate legislation and guidance. The certification structure was simplified to come fully into line with STCW 95 requirements and the arrangements for approving training institutes was revised and updated. Not least, the principle of competence-based training, one of the major planks of STCW 95, was formally accepted as fulfilling all the education and training requirements for issuing a certificate of competency.

In Sri Lanka, too, there was a sharp decrease in the number of approved training institutes and in others, limitations placed on the level of approved training. Both the national Administration and the country’s training institutes had a quality standards system established, and the training syllabi were revised to include provisions for competence-based training as set out in the STCW Code. Perhaps most importantly, an Examination Unit within the Administration was established and given additional resources.

**STCW 95**

All of these measures are typical of the work that has been done by each of the White List members to ensure that their compliance with STCW 95 is real. There is no room on the White List for anyone who will settle for just paying lip-service to the Convention.

Although the first White List has now been published, the process of evaluation continues. Countries that made their submissions in time for the initial deadline but were not included on the first White List are now working to put right all the things the evaluations have highlighted as needing attention with a view to being added to the White List at the earliest possible date in the future. Other countries that missed the initial deadline but have subsequently communicated information are having their submissions assessed now. Still more countries are working on their initial submissions.

Even for those countries that did make the initial list, the work of improving and maintaining standards will continue. STCW 95 requires their training provisions to be independently evaluated every five years and the result of that evaluation reported to IMO. Their continued presence on the White List will thus be under constant scrutiny and, where appropriate, the list will be updated by the IMO’s Maritime Safety Committee.

***White List*** checklist

Each IMO Member on the White List has submitted and had verified the following information:

- the name, postal address and telephone and facsimile numbers and organization chart of the ministry, department or governmental agency responsible for administering the Convention;
- a concise explanation of the legal and administrative measures provided and taken to ensure compliance, particularly with (STCW) regulations I/6 and I/9;
- a clear statement of the education, training, examination, competency assessment and certification policies adopted;
- a concise summary of the courses, training programmes, examinations and assessments provided for each certificate issued pursuant to the Convention;
- a concise outline of the procedures followed to authorize, accredit or approve training and examinations, medical fitness and competency assessments required by the Convention, the conditions attaching thereto, and a list of the authorizations, accreditations and approvals granted;
- a concise summary of the procedures followed in granting any dispensation under article VIII of the Convention; and
- the results of the comparison carried out pursuant to (STCW) regulation I/11 and a concise outline of the refresher and upgrading training mandated

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Training under STCW 95 places the emphasis firmly on demonstration of competence rather than simply knowledge
The 73rd meeting of the IMO's senior technical body, the Maritime Safety Committee (MSC), concluded on 6 December 2000 what Secretary-General William O'Neil referred to as a session "without parallel" in IMO's history. The eight-day meeting successfully completed a demanding work programme that saw significant progress made on a wide diversity of key maritime safety issues. Among the highlights were the publication of the eagerly anticipated STCW "White List", carriage requirements for "black boxes" and the start of work on a series of measures related to tanker safety that arose from the Marine Environment Protection Committee's consideration of the Erika incident.

Important work was also carried out in the continuing fight against piracy and armed robbery against ships, and a broad-based assessment of the safety of large passenger ships, both today and in the future.

In his opening remarks, the Secretary-General said that never before had the Committee, or the Organization as a whole, been asked to adopt so many new mandatory codes or amendments to so many important IMO instruments as at this session.

**"Black box" carriage requirements adopted**

The MSC adopted mandatory regulations to require ships to carry voyage data recorders (VDRs). The regulations will come into force on 1 July 2002 and all new ships built on or after that date will have to be fitted with VDRs. Existing passenger ships and ro-ro ships will also be required to fit VDRs, while a study will be carried out to examine the need for mandatory carriage of VDRs on existing cargo ships.

The VDR regulations were amongst a raft of amendments to the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea, 1974 (SOLAS) adopted during the session.

Like the black boxes carried on aircraft, VDRs enable accident investigators to review procedures and instructions in the moments before an incident and help to identify the cause of any accident. The regulations for VDRs are contained in a revised Chapter V (Safety of Navigation) of SOLAS.

Currently ships are recommended but not required to carry VDRs. Performance standards for VDRs were adopted by IMO in 1997. The revised Chapter V also makes it mandatory for certain ships to carry an automatic identification system (AIS).

**Revised STCW - "White List" agreed**

The MSC agreed a list of parties deemed to be fully in compliance with the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (STCW), as amended. A total of 71 member States and one associate member have been included in the initial "White List."

**Elimination of sub-standard oil tankers**

An MSC Working Group developed a proposed list of measures to eliminate sub-standard ships, and the MSC agreed to refer the list of measures to the Organization's Sub-committees and to the Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC), for general consideration. This work followed agreement at the Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC) in October 2000 to accelerate the current phase-out schedule for single-hull oil tankers. The actual finalized revised phase-out schedule is expected to be adopted in April 2001.

**Safety of large passenger ships**

The MSC agreed to establish a correspondence group to work on issues related to large passenger ship safety, following intensive work by a working group during the session. The aim is to identify the extent to which current regulations should be reviewed, in the light of the sheer size of these vessels and the numbers of persons carried on board, and in particular with regards to emergency situations and seafarer training.

The Working Group on Enhancing the Safety of Large Passenger Ships began a global consideration of safety issues pertaining to passenger ships, with particular emphasis on large cruise ships, in response to a proposal to MSC 72 by IMO Secretary-General, Mr. William A. O'Neil.

During the current session, the Working Group reviewed the current safety regime as it relates to large passenger ships and identified areas of concern relating to:

- the ship - including construction and equipment, evacuation, operation and management;
- the people - including crew, passengers, rescue personnel, training, crisis and crowd management;
- the environment - including search and rescue services, operation in remote areas and weather conditions.
Ship is its own best lifeboat

The MSC endorsed the working group’s decision that future large passenger ships should be designed for improved survivability based on the time-honoured philosophy 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, this philosophy also envisages that a ship should always be able to proceed to port at a minimum safe speed.

To achieve the above philosophies, the group agreed that special design requirements for future large passenger ships would have to be developed to achieve this “safe haven as ship proceeds back to port” philosophy and that the consideration of new concepts would be essential. The group also was of the view that this philosophical approach would address the risks associated with evacuating and rescuing a large number of survivors by reducing the need to abandon the ship in the first place.

However, notwithstanding the above philosophy, the group recognized that ship abandonment will continue to occur and agreed that future ships should be equipped with effective life-saving equipment and appliances that are designed for survival in the area of operation and take into account the availability of SAR systems.

Preliminary work plan

The MSC endorsed a preliminary work plan as developed by the working group, which includes elements relating to the following areas of concern:

- Collision and grounding
- Equipment failure
- Escape, evacuation and rescue
- Fire safety
- Medical emergency
- Operations and management
- Vessel surveys
- Search and rescue
- Ship survivability
- Evacuation, life-saving systems and arrangements

The correspondence group will work on finalizing the preliminary list of concerns and further developing the philosophical approach, goals and objectives for dealing with matters relating to future large passenger ships. It will also assess how areas of concern should be analysed taking into consideration tools such as formal safety assessment, the human element analyzing process, cost/benefit analysis and risk assessment, with a view to linking these tools to each area of concern. A report will be submitted to the next MSC scheduled for May/June 2001.

Piracy and armed robbery against ships - code approved

The MSC approved the text of a code of practice for the investigation of the crime of piracy and armed robbery against ships.

The Code will be issued as an MSC Circular immediately, with the intention that it should be adopted by the 22nd Assembly in November 2001 via an Assembly resolution.

The Code is intended to provide IMO member states with an aide memoire to facilitate the investigation of the crimes of piracy and armed robbery against ships. The Code gives detailed guidance on investigation of the crimes of piracy and armed robbery against ships under the following headings:

- Prior considerations - in which States are encouraged to ratify the 1982 United nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, the 1988 convention for the Suppression of Unlawful acts against the safety of Naviagation and the 1988 Protocol for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts Against the Safety of Fixed Platforms Located on the Continental Shelf. It also encourages bilateral or multilateral agreements to facilitate the investigation of piracy and armed robbery against ships.

- Training of investigators - gives primary purposes of an intervention or investigation, emphasising the safe release of any persons held should take precedence over other investigation.

- Investigative strategy - including overall management: the Code encourages liaison and cooperation with relevant organizations such as Interpol, and the ICC International Maritime Bureau at an early stage.

- Dealing with an initial report - covering the responsibilities of those who first attend crime scenes, which are identified as preservation of life, prevention of the escape of offenders, warnings to other ships, protection of crime scenes and securing evidence.

- The investigation - covering proportionality (the investigating agency’s assessment of the “seriousness” of an incident), establishing and recording all relevant facts, recording individual witness accounts, detailed forensic examination of crime scenes, searching intelligence databases and the distribution of information and intelligence to appropriate agencies;
The text for the Code was developed by a Correspondence Group after series of expert missions, seminars and workshops around the world was organized by IMO during 1998 and 1999. Participants at the seminars recommended that Governments needed to intensify their efforts to combat piracy and armed robbery against ships and that IMO should consider developing a code of practice or instrument for the investigation of piracy and armed robbery against ships.

**Phantom ships resolution developed**

In other crime related measures, the MSC developed a draft Assembly resolution addressing the issue of “phantom ships”, in other words, fraudulent registration, certification and identification of ships.

The draft Assembly resolution encourages flag States to ensure that proper checks are made when registering a ship, in order to reduce the number of “phantom ships” and hijackings. The MSC referred the draft to the Sub-Committee on Flag State Implementation for further development before approval at MSC 74 in June 2001 with the aim of submitting it for adoption at the 22nd Assembly in November 2001.

**Standardized test report forms for life-saving appliances approved**

The MSC approved standardized evaluation and test report forms for all life-saving appliances, from rescue boats to life-jackets, contained in a 850-page document. The forms give detailed test procedures for lifesaving appliances required under SOLAS chapter III (Life-Saving Appliances and Arrangements) of SOLAS and its associated International Life-Saving Appliance (LSA) Code. The procedures update resolution A. 689(17) Recommendation on testing of life-saving appliances and incorporate the subsequent amendments to that resolution in a new, user-friendly format. The standardized tests are an important tool in facilitating and harmonising international approval procedures for these appliances.

**IMDG Code to be made mandatory**

The MSC decided, in principle, to make parts of the International Maritime Dangerous Goods (IMDG) Code mandatory, aiming at an entry-into-force date of 1 January 2004, and instructed the Sub-Committee on Dangerous Goods, Solid Cargoes and Containers at its sixth session in July 2001 and the Secretariat to prepare relevant documents such as draft amendments to SOLAS.

The MSC agreed that some chapters of the IMDG Code would remain recommendatory in nature – including chapter 1.3 (Training); chapter 2.1 (Explosives - Notes 1 to 4); 2.3.3 of chapter 2.3 (Determination of flashpoint); chapter 3.2 (Columns 15 and 17 of the Dangerous Goods List); chapter 3.5 (Transport Schedules); 5.4.5 of chapter 5.4 (Multimodal dangerous goods form); and chapter 7.3 (Special provisions in the event of an incident and fire precautions involving dangerous goods).

The IMDG Code was introduced by IMO in 1965 as a uniform international code for the transport of dangerous goods by sea covering such matters as packing, container traffic and stowage, with particular reference to the segregation of incompatible substances. At its 72nd session, the MSC adopted a revised and reformatted International Maritime Dangerous Goods (IMDG) Code, known as “Amendment 30”.

**Passenger submersibles - guidelines approved**

The MSC approved Guidelines for the design, construction and operation of passenger submersible craft aimed at facilitating the international movement, acceptance and safe operation of such craft and providing a minimum acceptable standard of safety for passengers.

Because it is recognized that submersible craft designs and operational parameters may depend on the geographical area of operation, environmental conditions, intended passenger carrying capability of the craft, and on the degree of surface support provided, the Guidelines do not attempt to specify which particular type of passenger submersible craft should be employed. They recommend that operators examine and identify a most suitable option for the area and type of operation in which they are engaged.
Amendments to COLREGs approved

The Committee approved draft amendments to the Convention on the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea, 1972 (COLREGs), to be put forward to the 22nd IMO Assembly in November 2001 for final adoption. The amendments concern:

- whistles and sound signals (Rules 33 and 35);
- action to avoid collision (Rule 8 (a)) - to make it clear that any action to avoid collision should be taken in accordance with the relevant rules in the COLREGs;
- amendments with respect to high-speed craft (relating to the vertical separation of masthead lights); and
- amendments with relation to WIG (Wing-In-Ground) craft, to include a rule that WIG craft should keep well clear of all other vessels and another rule that WIG craft should exhibit a high-intensity all-round flashing red light when taking off, landing and in-flight near the surface.

Trafficking or transport of illegal migrants by sea

The MSC agreed to implement a reporting procedure to keep track of incidents of unsafe practices associated with the trafficking or transport of illegal migrants by sea and urged Governments and international organizations to report promptly such practices they become aware of. A circular giving details of incidents reported will be issued biannually.

The reports should include, where available, ship and shipowner's details, voyage details, date, time and position of the incident, a description of the incident and measures taken, and information concerning the migrants including number, nationality, sex, any whether any are minors.

Further information on the study can be obtained from the Seafarers International Research Centre, Cardiff, United Kingdom, in the final stages having completed the data collection phase and a final report is being produced.

The MSC noted, however, that, of the total number of reported cases, 12,000 had been reported by one single administration in South East Asia, and that all these cases were currently being analysed to assess the level and nature of forgery involved.

A total of 1384 seafarers and 22 employers had participated in the survey. 50%of respondents were manning agents, 32%shipowners and 18%ship managers employing an average of 615 ratings and 1091 officers in their companies. 82%percent of the respondents had detected forged certificates of competency in the last five years. Of these, 41% reported having detected forged basic safety training certificates, 27%had reported forged sea service record books and 18%had detected forged OOW (deck) certificates. 14%had also reported false GM DSS (GOC) certificates.

Further information on the study can be obtained from the Seafarers International Research Centre (SIRC), web site: http://www.cf.ac.uk/uwcc/masts/.

Relevant provisions of MSC/Circ.896 are reflected in chapter I1 on “Smuggling of Migrants by Sea” of the Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Air and Sea, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime. The protocol was adopted by the UN General Assembly on 15 November 2000 and was officially signed at a ceremony in Palermo, Italy, from 12 to 15 December 2000. (see http://www.undp.org/palermo/convmain.html)

Study reveals seafarer certificate forgery is rife

The Committee heard that the preliminary results of an IMO research study to establish the nature and extent of unlawful practices associated with certificates of competency had revealed 12,535 cases of forgery in certificates of competency and equivalent endorsements. The study, being carried out by the Seafarers International Research Centre, Cardiff, United Kingdom, is in the final stages having completed the data collection phase and a final report is being produced.

During the study, a total of 97 maritime administrations were contacted for information on various aspects of the issue of unlawful practices associated with certificates of competency and equivalent endorsements, of which 54 had responded to questionnaires giving a response rate of 56%. Of those, 39%had reported a total of 12,635 detected cases of forgery in certificates of competency and equivalent endorsements. The Committee noted, however, that, of the total number of reported cases, 12,000 had been reported by one single administration in South East Asia, and that all these cases were currently being analysed to assess the level and nature of forgery involved.

A revised SOLAS chapter II-2 (Construction, - Fire protection, fire detection and fire extinction) and a new International Code for Fire Safety Systems (FSS Code). Entry into force 1 July 2002 under tacit acceptance. The revised chapter is intended to be clear, concise and user-friendly, incorporating the substantial changes introduced in recent years following a number of serious fire casualties. The revised chapter includes seven parts, each including requirements applicable to all or specified ship types, covering the Fire Safety Systems (FSS) Code, which is made mandatory under
From the meetings

• 73rd session:
• 27 November - 6 December 2000

New criteria for the longitudinal of hull girders for oil tankers (above) are included in a new Annex 12 of the guidelines on the enhanced survey programme.

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the new chapter, includes detailed specifications for fire safety systems in 15 Chapters.

A new regulation 3-5 in SOLAS Chapter II-1 (Construction - Structure, subdivision and stability, machinery and electrical installations) to prohibit the new installation of materials which contain asbestos on all ships. Entry into force 1 July 2002 under tacit acceptance. The regulation states that for all ships, new installation of materials which contain asbestos shall be prohibited except for various used in rotary vane compressors and rotary vane vacuum pumps, watertight joints and linings used for the circulation of fluids when, at high temperature or pressure there is a risk of fire, corrosion or toxicity, and supple and flexible thermal insulation assemblies used for temperatures above 1000ºC.

Amendments to the 1988 SOLAS Protocol in particular to the details of navigational systems and equipment referred to in the records of equipment attached to certificates. Entry into force 1 July 2002 under tacit acceptance. The amendments reflect the changes to SOLAS chapter V.

Amendments to the International Code for the Application of Fire Test Procedures (FTP Code) to add new parts 10 and 11 to annex 1 on tests for fire-resisting material for high-speed craft and tests for fire-resisting divisions of high-speed craft. Entry into force 1 July 2002 under tacit acceptance.

Amendments to the International Code for the Construction and Equipment of Ships carrying Dangerous Chemicals in bulk (IBC Code) and the Code for the Construction and Equipment of Ships carrying Dangerous Chemicals in Bulk (BCH Code) relating to cargo hose requirements, protection of personnel and carriage of carbon disulfide.

Amendments to the International Safety Management Code (ISM Code) including the replacement of Chapter 13 (on certification, verification and control) with a new Chapter 13 (on certification) and additional Chapters 14 (Interim certification), 15 (Forms of certificate) and 16 Verification; as well as a new appendix giving forms of documents and certificates. Entry into force 1 July 2002 under tacit acceptance.

Amendments to the Code for the Construction and equipment of ships carrying dangerous chemicals in bulk (BCH Code) relating to ship’s cargo hoses, tank vent systems, safety equipment, operational requirements; and amendments to the Code for the construction and equipment of ships carrying liquefied gases in bulk (GC Code) relating to ship’s cargo hoses, personnel protection and operating requirements.

New and amended ships’ routing and ship reporting systems, including: new mandatory ship-reporting system “Of the Casquets and the adjacent coastal area” (central English Channel to supplement the existing mandatory ship-reporting systems already established at Ouessant and in the Pas de Calais; three mandatory no-anchoring areas on coral reef banks (Flower Garden Banks) in the north-western Gulf of Mexico; four new traffic separation schemes along the Peruvian coast; new traffic separation schemes and associated routing measures in the approaches to the River Humber on the east coast of England; amendments to the existing traffic separation scheme in Prince William Sound (United States). The new measures take effect from 0000 hours UTC on 1 June 2001.

Amendments to the General Provisions on Ships’ Routings (resolution A.572(14)) as amended to incorporate “no-anchoring areas”. Amendments to the guidelines on the enhanced programme of inspections during surveys of bulk carriers and oil tankers (resolution A.744(18)) with relation to the evaluation of the longitudinal strength of the hull girder of oil tankers. The amendments include a new annex 12 containing criteria for longitudinal strength of hull-girder for oil tankers.

Amendments to the guidelines and criteria for Ship Reporting Systems (MSC resolution MSC.43(64)) concerning section 3, “Criteria for planning, proposing and implementing adopted ship-reporting systems by contracting Governments”. Amendments to the COLREGs concerning provisions for whistles and sound signals for small vessels; amendments with respect to Wing-in-Ground (WIG) craft and vertical separation of streaming lights for High-Speed Craft. Entry into force 1 July 2002 under tacit acceptance.

New and amended performance standards for:
- shipborne global positioning system (GPS) receiver equipment;
- shipborne GLONASS receiver equipment;
- shipborne DGPS and DGLONASS maritime radio beacon receiver equipment;
- shipborne combined GPS/GLONASS receiver equipment; and
- marine transmitting heading devices (THDs).

Other measures:
The MSC also:
- Approved a draft revision of resolution A.860(20) Maritime policy for a future global navigation satellite system (GNSS) to update the user requirements for general navigation and positioning and introduce user requirements for non-general navigation and positioning. For submission to the 22nd Assembly in November 2001.
- Approved in principle draft guidelines on the operational use of shipborne automatic identification systems (AIS), for finalization by the Sub-Committee on Safety of Navigation and submission to the 22nd session of the IM O Assembly for adoption.
- Approved in principle a draft proposed framework of guidelines for recording events related to navigation, for finalization by the Sub-Committee on Safety of Navigation and submission to the 22nd session of the IMO Assembly for adoption.
- Approved a draft MSC/M EPC circular on the beneficial impact of the ISM Code and its role as an indicator of safe operation and environmental protection, to be submitted to the M EPC for final approval and publication. The circular was developed at a meeting convened by the Secretary-General in February 2000 to discuss possible solutions to the problems caused by the proliferation of ship inspections by various interests representing flag and port States, insurers, cargo owners, charterers etc.

List of circulars approved by MSC 73

MSC circulars

MSC/Circ.978 Parties to the International Convention on Standards, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (STCW), 1978, as amended, confirmed by the M artime Safety Committee to have communicated information which demonstrates that full and complete effect is given to the relevant provisions of the Convention MSC/Circ.979 Preparation of reports pursuant to STCW regulation 1/7, paragraph 2

MSC/Circ.980 Standardized life-saving appliance evaluation and test report forms

MSC/Circ.981 Guidelines for the design, construction and operation of passenger submersible craft

MSC/Circ.982 Guidelines on ergonomic criteria for bridge equipment and layout

MSC/Circ.983 Amendments to the International Code of Signals

MSC/Circ.984 Code of practice for the investigation of the crimes of piracy and armed robbery against ships

Other circulars

COLREG.2/Circ.49 New and amended traffic separation schemes and associated routing measures

SN/Circ.214 M andatory ship reporting system

SN/Circ.215 Amendments to the General Provisions on Ships’ Routings

SN/Circ.216 Routine measures other than traffic separation schemes
Regional approach to African SAR endorsed

The regional approach to the provision of search and rescue facilities in western, southern and eastern parts of Africa put forward at the October 2000 Florence Conference on SAR and the GMDSS has been endorsed in principle by the Sub-Committee on Radiocommunications and Search and Rescue (COMSAR).

The Florence Conference adopted a resolution proposing the establishment of five sub-regional maritime rescue co-ordination centres which would work co-operatively to provide SAR coverage in what had previously been identified as one of the areas suffering most from a lack of SAR and GM DSS facilities. Establishment of facilities in this under-resourced part of the world is seen as a key component in the implementation of the Global SAR Plan which had been agreed at the 1998 Fremantle Conference.

It was agreed that fact-finding missions to each of the five sub-regions were needed, with a view to advising on the real needs of each in terms of personnel, equipment, training and finance. Based on this information, consideration could be given as to how an International SAR Fund to support the five proposed RCCs might be established and operated. The results of the fact-finding missions will be collectively submitted to the next meeting of COM SAR (COMSAR 6) in February 2002 for consideration.

NAVTEX services approaching overload

The NAVTEX infrastructure for automatically distributing maritime safety information to ships continues to expand, with the volume of information disseminated through the International NAVTEX service on 518 kHz increasing. Although the system currently provides a generally effective service, it is becoming overloaded in an increasing number of geographical areas, as shown by the increasing instances of interference between stations with adjoining time slots.

COMSAR agreed a draft circular including recommendations aimed at reducing interference and the volume of information carried by the International NAVTEX Service. This document is to be forwarded to the International Hydrographic Organization (IHO) with a view to issuing an IHO Circular Letter for discussion on GM DSS matters at IHO Regional Hydrographic Commissions.

COMSAR agreed that it was important to encourage Administrations to migrate non-English language broadcasts, and broadcasts of information provided specifically for non-SOLAS vessels from 518 kHz to 490 kHz or 4209.5 kHz, as appropriate. It urged that Administrations aim to complete this migration by 1st January 2005.

The Sub-Committee also heard concerns regarding the quality of data transmitted, and that current technology could be used to provide a simpler NAVTEX user interface, offering facilities to sort, store and display received safety information in a more user-friendly manner than the paper printout. Changes to the NAVTEX performance standards may be required to accommodate this new technology and could be considered at COMSAR 6.

Finally, COMSAR agreed amendments to the joint IMO / IHO / WMO manual on maritime safety information (MSI) which clarify the differences between MSI and search and rescue communications.

New satellite systems in the GMDSS?

The prospect of new satellite communication systems being part of the GM DSS at some stage in the future was addressed, in particular the question of allocating telephone numbers under any such new system.

COMSAR endorsed a UK proposal to amend the International Telecommunications Union (ITU) Radio Regulations to clarify numbering for future satellite systems that could participate in the GM DSS and agreed a COMSAR circular on operational and service implications for numbering plan formats for mobile-satellite systems participating in the GM DSS.

It was agreed that the Maritime Mobile Service Identity (MMSI) number resource is, in principle, sufficient for all existing mobile systems participating in the GM DSS provided that simple administrative measures are applied to conserve the numbering resource. It was, however, felt that retaining the existing regional numbering structure could have an adverse impact on the mobile ID number resource.

It was also agreed that the MMSI resource is not sufficient to cater for additional mobile-satellite systems if the original practice of embedding MIDs and MMSIs within the ship’s telephone number is continued. The introduction of free-form numbering would facilitate the participation of future generations of mobile communication systems in the GM DSS.

Threat to the radar spectrum

COMSAR agreed to invite the Maritime Safety Committee to note the continued threat to the radio spectrum used by maritime navigational radars and
from the meetings

Sub-Committee on Radiocommunications and Search and Rescue (COMSAR)

• 5th session:
• 11-15 December 2000

From the meetings

New proposals from Norway have led to the establishment of a correspondence group aimed at reducing the number of false distress alerts that continue to plague MRCC controllers.

To instruct the NAV Sub-Committee to review current requirements.

The Sub-Committee heard that there is growing pressure on the areas of the radio spectrum currently used by navigation radars. A real danger exists that parts of these bands may be re-allocated by the ITU to other services, and marine navigation radars will be limited to a much smaller part of the spectrum and / or forced to share it. Either outcome will be extremely detrimental to the safety of navigation, COM SAR was told, and will necessitate the use of more expensive radar equipment.

Radar meeting IMO requirements are required to have narrow pulses which lead to wide spectrum. New-technology radars using non-pulse signals may lead to unwanted consequences, like failure in triggering SARTs and racons. While welcoming actions leading to more efficient use of the frequency spectrum, COM SAR noted a concern that it might take some time to modify radar equipment to implement changes in the present requirements. It agreed that the technical consequences of changes in the present radar requirements as well as introducing sharing with other services should be thoroughly studied before any changes are made.

**IMSO gives reassurance over satellite recovery time**

The International Maritime Satellite Organization (IMSO) offered the Sub-Committee reassurance over the question of possible delays in the restoration of full GM DSS services if a prime satellite were to fail. IMSO informed COM SAR that Inmarsat Ltd had responded quickly and comprehensively to amend certain operating procedures dealing with the restoration of GM DSS services, following two live incidents that had showed some shortcomings in the procedures previously in force.

In a report on the operational status and performance of the Inmarsat network, IMSO said that the operations of Inmarsat Ltd have continued to provide a sufficient quality of service within the GM DSS to meet the company’s obligations under the terms of the Public Services Agreement.

However, the business of maintaining and developing commercial mobile-satellite communication services continued to be a particularly volatile environment and it was increasingly difficult to foresee the shape of the industry more than a short period ahead. IMSO said it could foresee developments in communications methods and media in the near future that would drive the introduction of new satellites and services for the business market but which might not be of immediate benefit to mariners. In this situation, IMSO believed it would be vital for COM SAR to establish a mechanism for the periodical review of resolution A.888(21) - Criteria for the provision of mobile-satellite communication systems in the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GM DSS) to maintain its currency and relevance.

**Phase-out plan for 121.5 MHz Satellite Alerting Service agreed**

The Sub-Committee heard that the COSPAS-SARSAT Council had approved in October 2000 a comprehensive phase-out plan for 121.5 MHz satellite-alerting services, with a planned cut-off date of 1 February 2009. While these devices are not accepted as part of the GM DSS, they are installed aboard a large number of aircraft and are used at sea on small craft and fishing vessels.

Although 121.5 MHz beacons are available at very low cost, this out-dated technology is the source of a very large number of false alerts (more than 98 per cent of all 121.5 MHz COSPAS-SARSAT distress alerts are false). The absence of an automatic capability for identifying 121.5 MHz alerts is also a serious limitation of the 121.5 MHz systems which significantly increases the workload of Rescue Co-ordination Centres. This situation impacts on the efficiency of SAR operations and led to a request by IMO for a termination of the 121.5 MHz systems.

About 600,000 beacons operating at 121.5 MHz will have to be replaced either by 406 MHz equipment or other means of alerting, prior to the planned cut-off date of the 121.5 MHz satellite-alerting service. Therefore, a major aspect of the phase-out preparation is to ensure the availability of 406 M Hz ELTs for use as replacement of the 121.5 M Hz beacons, and the management of the 406 M Hz beacon population growth prior to the cut-off date. Preliminary studies have indicated that the COSPAS-SARSAT GEOSAR and LEOSAR systems have sufficient capacity to accommodate a significant growth of the 406 M Hz beacon population, provided the carrier frequency is adequately spread over the assigned bandwidth (i.e. 406.0 - 406.1 M Hz).

To provide for future growth of the 406 M Hz beacon population and ensure efficient management of the available spectrum in the 406.0 - 406.1 M Hz frequency band, COSPAS-SARSAT is
developing a 10-year 406 MHz Channel Assignment Plan. The plan will define the frequency channels in which new beacon models submitted for COSPAS-SARSAT type approval testing in future years will be required to operate, ensuring that the carrier frequencies of beacon models in production will be appropriately spread and that the capacity of each channel is not exceeded.

**Liferaft investigation confirms operation rules**

An investigation conducted by the national Administration of France following the sinking of a French fishing vessel in February 1999 confirmed the importance of adhering to proper procedures in the operation of Emergency Position-Indicating Radio Beacons (EPIRBS), COM SAR was told. The investigation revealed that, during the incident, a signal from the beacon had been detected initially but could not subsequently be detected when deployed in the liferaft. The bottom of liferafts of this type are reinforced with aluminium film to provide increased protection against moisture and the cold, giving rise to questions concerning whether there was any connection between the material and the malfunctioning of the beacon.

A test was carried out to ascertain whether the aluminium film impairs the radio signal when a beacon is activated inside the liferaft. Four similar EPIRBS were activated over a 24-hour period, one on the top of a building, one in the water beside the liferaft, one inside on the bottom of the liferaft and one inside along the liferaft’s vertical wall. The liferaft was kept at anchor in a bay throughout the test.

All the beacons, except that positioned on the bottom of the liferaft, were correctly detected and located. The test highlights the importance of the way in which an EPIRB on board a liferaft is used and confirms that the correct position for the beacon is either on the inside, in an upright position, with the antenna unobstructed or in the water, with a lanyard securing it to the liferaft.

**Battle against false distress alerts continues**

In the wake of false distress alert figures that continue to be unacceptably high, work has begun on the development of a standard questionnaire on false distress alerts, to be developed for the COM SAR’s next session. Proposals from Norway that a systematic monitoring and reporting programme be established were endorsed, and a correspondence group was established to examine issues such as what types of data should be collected for each distress alert, how many specific different reports were needed, appropriate formats for reporting and how best to analyse the results.

The Correspondence Group will develop draft guidelines to administrations, procedures on how to collect data on false alerts and how to report information to the monitoring and reporting programme, examples of how the programme should derive “lessons learned” and procedures for feedback.

For year 1999, there were 5,258 confirmed 406 MHz alerts passed to SAR forces by COSPAS-SARSAT participants, of which 425 were real distress activations and 4,833 false alerts. In addition, there were an additional 1,957 alerts transmitted to SAR forces for which no feedback information was received and, therefore, the nature of the alert was undetermined.

Although Inmarsat Ltd cannot identify which distress alert calls over its system are false, COM SAR was told that the company has developed a Distress Alert Quality Control System that enables it to identify those mobile earth stations that use the distress alert facility on Inmarsat equipment. Inmarsat has already begun to take pro-active steps to reduce the number of false distress alerts over its system by contacting those ships responsible for making these transmissions and it is expected that this will lead to a significant and early reduction in the number of false distress alerts over the Inmarsat system.

**Harmonization of maritime and aeronautical SAR provisions**

An integrated “systems approach” is to be developed to address the capability of SAR services to respond to cases in which large numbers of people my be in distress. COM SAR endorsed a recommendation to that effect of the ICAO/IMO Joint Working Group on Harmonization of Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue at its seventh session in last April. The recommendation comes in the light of the trend towards ever larger passenger ships and existing ships from which mass evacuation may be problematical. Provisions for advice on mass rescue operations are to be
Draft Guidelines for the evacuation analysis of high-speed passenger craft agreed

Developed by the next session of the Joint Working Group.

Detailed amendments to the International Maritime Search and Rescue (IAMSAR) manual were agreed by COM SAR and included in a draft MSC circular for submission to ICAO and the 74th session of the MSC.

In recognition of the growing importance of a co-operative approach to SAR, COM SAR unanimously agreed that Volume III (Mobile Facilities) of the IAMSAR Manual should be carried on all ships to which SOLAS chapter V applies. It drafted amendments to SOLAS regulation V/21 that seek to limit Governments’ granting of exemptions from paragraph 3 of resolution A.894(21), which says that “Governments are invited to ensure that ships entitled to fly the flag of their countries carry on board a copy of Volume III of IAMSAR Manual.” The draft amendments will be presented to MSC 74.

Amendments to SOLAS Chapter IV

The Sub-Committee reviewed SOLAS regulations IV/3.2.3 (Exemptions), IV/7.2, 7.3 and 7.4 (Radio equipment: General) and IV/12.3 and 12.4 (Watches) which became no longer applicable as of 1 February 1999 and agreed that these regulations could be deleted. It also decided that paragraphs 3 to 7 of regulation 1 could be deleted and instructed the Secretariat to review and update references to the relevant MSC and Assembly Resolutions.

Draft guidelines to help high-speed craft designers build safer passenger craft have been agreed by IM O’s Sub-Committee on Fire Protection (FP) at its 45th session.

The Guidelines for designers to improve evacuation provisions for high-speed craft were agreed by the fire protection sub-committee from the meetings Sub-Committee on Fire Protection (FP)

45th session:
8-12 January 2001

Evacuation analysis guidelines for all passenger ships

The Sub-Committee had agreed in principle to the draft guidelines at the previous session, but a working group at the current session was able to agree a final draft, taking into account the outcome of work by an intersessional correspondence group established at the last session (FP 44) to work on the issue. The draft guidelines will be considered by the Maritime Safety Committee’s 74th session (MSC 74), to be held in May 2001.

Evacuation analysis guidelines for all passenger ships

The Sub-Committee again discussed the development of a single set of evacuation analysis guidelines to cover all types of passenger ships, including ro-ro passenger ships.

The Sub-Committee noted that, while the purpose of the guidelines for evacuation analysis in new passenger ships is mainly to provide suggestions for improvement in the design of the ship in question, the intention in applying similar guidelines to existing passenger ships would be to provide suggestions for improving procedures on board.
Guidance on use of microscopic methodology for evacuation analysis

The Sub-Committee also reviewed proposals relating to the development of guidance on the use of microscopic methodology for evacuation analysis. The microscopic approach is based on single persons and is intended to account for human factors by modelling each person individually in a given situation using a set of parameters. This individual approach assumes that the passenger population will consist of a range of individuals that have differing physical limitations.

Correspondence Group on Evacuation Analysis re-established

The Sub-Committee agreed to re-establish the Correspondence Group on Evacuation Analysis to continue to work on the draft guidelines and produce a report for consideration at the next session.

Alternative designs for fire safety - draft guidelines agreed

The Sub-Committee agreed a draft MSC circular on Guidelines on alternative design and arrangements for fire safety, for submission to MSC 74 for approval.

The guidelines are intended for the application of fire safety engineering design to provide technical justification for alternative design and arrangements to SOLAS chapter II-2.

The guidelines outline the methodology for the engineering analysis required by SOLAS regulation II-2/17 “Alternative design and arrangements”, applying to a specific fire safety system, design or arrangements for which the approval of an alternative design deviating from the prescriptive requirements of SOLAS chapter II-2 is sought. The regulation is contained in the revised chapter II-2 which was adopted in December 2000 and is expected to enter into force on 1 July 2002.

The chapter II-2 currently in force allows in regulation 22 for “acceptance of substitutes” whereby the Administration may permit appliances and arrangements not prescribed in the chapter, provided the Administration is satisfied that such appliances and arrangements are not less effective.

Draft guidelines on a simplified calculation for combustible materials agreed

The Sub-Committee agreed draft guidelines on a simplified calculation for the total amount of combustible materials per unit area in accommodation and service space, for submission to MSC 74 for approval.

The guidelines provide a formula for calculating the total mass of combustible materials in accommodation spaces, service spaces and control stations of all types of ships. The guidelines are intended for use by Administrations to calculate the maximum fire load on board ships, but are not intended to support the alternative design process.

FTP Code - draft interpretations agreed

The Sub-committee agreed, for submission to MSC 74, draft interpretations regarding procedures in cases of test failure; paragraph 5.1.6.5 of the FTP Code; the application of approved finish materials meeting the requirements of part 5 of annex 1 to the Code; conditions of re-test in paragraph 8.3.1 of annex to resolution A.653(16); average heat for heat sustained burning in paragraph 10 of annex to resolution A.653(16); the duration of testing in paragraph 2.2 of part 6 of annex 1 to the Code; and the construction of aluminium alloy fire divisions in fire resistance tests in paragraph 1.6 of annex to resolution A.754(18).

Draft interpretations to SOLAS II-2 agreed

The Sub-committee agreed, for submission to MSC 74, draft interpretations regarding application of “light weight construction” relating to SOLAS regulation II-2/3.3.1 and 3.3.2.

Fire test procedures for lifeboats - draft circular agreed

The Sub-Committee agreed a draft MSC circular, for submission to MSC 74 for approval, providing Guidelines on fire test procedures for acceptance of fire-retardant materials for the construction of lifeboats.

Fixed aerosol fire-extinguishing systems - draft guidelines agreed

The Sub-Committee agreed a draft MSC circular, for submission to MSC 74 for approval, giving Guidelines for the approval of fixed aerosol fire-extinguishing systems equivalent to fixed gas fire-extinguishing systems as referred to in SOLAS 74, for machinery spaces.
Recommendations on achieving compliance with the amended International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping (STCW 95) are included in new draft guidance developed by the Sub-Committee on Standards of Training and Watchkeeping at its 32nd session from 22-26 January 2001.

The draft guidance on the preparation and review of independent evaluations required by STCW regulation I/8 and section A-I/7 of the STCW Code clarifies the procedures to be followed by STCW Parties, competent persons who evaluate submissions, and by the Maritime Safety Committee (MSC) and IMO Secretary-General in implementing regulation I/8.

Regulation I/8 (Quality Standards) states that STCW Parties must ensure that all activities relating to training, assessment of competence, certificates, endorsement and revalidation are continuously monitored through a quality standards system. Evaluations should be periodical and the STCW Code A-I/8 states that an independent evaluation should be conducted at periods of not less than five years. Information relating to the evaluation should be communicated to the IMO secretary-General.

The draft guidance will be forwarded to the MSC’s 74th session (MSC 74) in May-June 2001 for approval.

**Update on study on unlawful practices linked to seafarer certificates**

The Sub-Committee was updated on the preliminary results of an IMO research study to establish the nature and extent of unlawful practices associated with certificates of competency. The results so far had revealed 12,535 cases of forgery in certificates of competency and equivalent endorsements. The study, being carried out by the Seafarers International Research Centre, Cardiff, United Kingdom, is in the final stages and a report is being produced.

The detection rate of 12,635 certificates over five years was considered to be statistically insignificant when compared to the total population of seafarers (estimated as 1.2 million), and when considered against the total number of certificates held, as any individual seafarer might typically hold at least five types of professional documents or certificates.

Nonetheless, the Sub-Committee agreed this was a serious and important problem and requested the MSC extend the target completion date for work on this issue to 2002, by which time the full report on the study would be available.

The Sub-Committee identified a list of areas which might be further examined as part of the effort to identify measures which could be put in place to reduce or eliminate unlawful practices associated with certificates of competency and other documents, including preventive measures, such as introduction of anti-fraud measures; improved information exchange, including access to national registries on a round-the-clock basis; and enforcement measures, including increased enforcement of regulations and verification procedures.

The Sub-committee noted that continued work on these issues would depend on the final report of the study as well as the view of the MSC.

**Guidance on ECDIS training**

The Sub-Committee agreed a draft STCW Circular giving Interim Guidance on Training and Assessment in the Operational Use of the Electronic Chart Display and Information Systems (ECDIS) simulators. The Circular will be forwarded to the MSC in May-June for approval.

**Standard Marine Communication Phrases (SMCP)**

The Sub-Committee agreed a number of amendments to the draft revised Standard Marine

The SM NV was developed for use by seafarers, following agreement that a common language - namely English - should be established for navigational purposes where language difficulties arise and the SMCP has been developed as a more comprehensive standardized safety language, taking into account changing conditions in modern seafaring and covering all major safety-related verbal communication.

The SM CP has been undergoing trials by governments, maritime training institutes and others involved in maritime communications following approval of the first draft version by the MSC in 1997.

The SM CP includes phrases which have been developed to cover the most important safety-related fields of verbal shore-to-ship (and vice-versa), ship-to-ship and on-board communications. The aim is to alleviate the problem of language barriers at sea and avoid misunderstandings which can cause accidents.

The SM CP builds on a basic knowledge of English and includes phrases for use in routine situations such as berthing as well as standard phrases and responses for use in emergency situations.

Under the STCW Convention, the ability to understand and use the SM CP is required for the certification of officers in charge of a navigational watch on ships of 500 gross tonnage or above (Section A-II/1 of the STCW Code).

The SM CP will be presented to the 22nd session of the IMO Assembly in November 2001 for adoption, after approval by the MSC.

The Sub-Committee also agreed a draft STCW.7 Circular, for approval by the MSC, giving Guidance to Parties on the application of the Standard Marine Communication Phrases as required by Section A-II/1 of the STCW Code.

GMDSS radio and electronics officer - model course now validated

Model courses validated
The Sub-Committee validated the following IMO model courses:

- GMDSS Second-Class Radio-electronics Officer
- On-board assessment
- Updated Model course 6.09 - Training for instructors.
Casting of the memorial to the world’s seafarers has begun at a foundry in southern England while IMO is preparing a dramatic and exciting programme to mark the unveiling of the sculpture on 27th September 2001.

The memorial, to be located at the front of the IMO headquarters on the banks of the River Thames in London, is being created by British sculptor Mr. Michael Sandle. His design was chosen from a final shortlist of submissions from three internationally renowned artists.

Based on the bow of a classic cargo ship, it will be cast in bronze and feature a figurative crew member, the “seafarer”, standing on the prow. At more than one storey high, the imposing finished sculpture will be clearly visible both to visitors and passers-by. The sculpture will primarily serve as a memorial to all seafarers who have been lost at sea, but it will also be a reminder of the pivotal role seafaring plays in world trade and development.

“The models for the ship’s mast are finished and are at the foundry, ready for casting,” said Mr. David Vallance, managing director of Morris Singer Limited, which is casting the memorial. “The bow sections are being finished at the patternmakers and will be delivered soon.”

The “patterns” – life-size models of the final sculpture – are being made in wood and polystyrene. “The foundry uses these models to make sand moulds into which the liquid bronze is poured and left to harden,” Mr. Vallance explained.

It is anticipated that the finished sculpture will be brought to its resting place in several sections and put together in situ. The IMO headquarters building is situated on a busy main road, so the sculpture sections must be delivered on a weekend, when traffic can be closed off without too much disruption.

Already IMO staff and interested passers-by have had a flavour of how the structure will transform the frontage of IMO’s London headquarters when a crude, life-size wooden replica of the sculpture was erected for the artist to check proportions and scale and for a series of experiments on the lighting to be made.
The Morris Singer Foundry, where the sculpture will be cast, was founded in 1927 when J.W. Singer & Sons of Somerset in south-west England amalgamated with the Morris Art Bronze Foundry of London. John Webb Singer had established his foundry in the 1880s and it already had a history of casting important statues for England and abroad. The Morris Art Bronze Foundry was at the time a relative newcomer, established in 1921.


The foundry uses sand casting methods which date back to the 18th century but were introduced to England after 1840. Sand casting meant that a sand mould was made of a model created by a sculptor - the molten metal, such as bronze, could then be poured into the mould. The process freed sculptors from the laborious process of cutting stone - and also allowed copies of their sculptures to be made. Sand casting is especially useful for larger pieces.

In 1963, after lengthy experiments, a new type of sand was adopted. This sand was hardened by injection of carbon dioxide gas and did away with the need for baking moulds. This proved a revolutionary step forward permitting fast production of high quality castings.

The models used for making the sand moulds are made out of various materials, including wood and polystyrene. The seafarers memorial models are being made by patternmakers G. F. James.

An IMO taskforce, headed by Conference Division Director Mrs. Monica Mbanefo and Head, External Relations, Ms. Olga Bósquez P., is organizing a programme of events to mark the unveiling of the memorial. Plans are already underway for a dramatic unveiling, including a floodlit ceremony and participation by riverboats, to be held in conjunction with World Maritime Day on 27 September 2001.

IMO Secretary-General Mr. William A. O’Neil said, “This will be the first ever truly international memorial to all seafarers who have lost their lives in the course of duty. The sculpture will transform the front of the IMO building and will capture the eye from street level as well as from inside the building. It will serve to remind everyone who sees it of the hazards faced daily by seafarers on the open seas,” Mr. O’Neil said.
“Above all, this striking sculpture will be a clear and permanent reminder to each and every visitor to IMO of what our work is all about – and in particular, the safety of life at sea,” he added.

The memorial project is being financed from a trust fund established two years ago to mark IMO’s 50th anniversary. Other projects earmarked for the fund include the establishment of an additional teaching chair at the World Maritime University in Sweden and fellowships for the training of seafarers.

**Further information:**

Seafarers memorial:  
http://www1.imo.org/seafarers/

Morris Singer Limited: Highfield Industrial Estate, Church Lane, Lasham, Hants, United Kingdom, GU34 58Q

G.F. James Ltd - Patternmakers:  
http://www.jamespatternmakers.co.uk

Some of London’s most famous and familiar bronzes have been cast by the Morris Singer foundry (above)  
Work on the bow sections of the sculpture underway at the pattern makers, GF James Ltd (below)
IMO provides FSI and PSC training for Indian Ocean countries

To help countries in the Indian Ocean region effectively implement flag and port State requirements and to ensure compliance with applicable international standards for maritime safety and marine environment protection, two sub-regional training courses on flag State implementation and port State control were held between October and December 2000 in Chennai, India, for South Asian countries and in Mombasa, Kenya, for Eastern and Southern African countries. Twelve participants from seven countries attended the training course in Chennai and 16 participants from 10 countries attended the training course in Mombasa.

The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on Port State Control for the Indian Ocean was signed by 15 countries in Pretoria, South Africa, on 5 June 1998.

International co-operation key element in spill response

IMO Secretary-General William O’Neil has stressed his support for international co-operation among all parties concerned in oil-spill response. In a keynote address to Interspill 2000, the first in a series of major international oil spill conferences and exhibitions to be held in Europe, Mr O’Neil told delegates that both oil and shipping industries needed to become engaged in preparing for and responding to spills.

He said, “Among the salient features of the OPRC Convention there is an explicit recognition of the importance of involving the oil and shipping industries in the preparedness and response process. And, although the Convention complements and encourages regional co-operation, there is also an acknowledgement of the value of international co-operation and mutual assistance at a global level, which must surely be the way forward.”

Mr O’Neil told an audience of oil-spill and salvage professionals, shipowners and government officials that since the adoption in 1990 of the OPRC Convention, pollution preparedness and response has become a regular item on the agenda of Environment Committee. He said, “IMO provides the forum where matters pertaining to the implementation of the OPRC and responses to spills of oil and hazardous and noxious substances (HNS) are dealt with. Experience is shared among a network of partnerships - between Member States, between Regional Agreements, between Governments and industry.”

Stressing the importance of striving to improve the ability of less developed countries to prepare and respond effectively, he added, “IMO also plays an important role in helping countries to understand and implement the OPRC Convention through its technical co-operation programme, which includes the provision of experts, the holding of seminars and the preparation of manuals, guidelines and model courses.”

Mr O’Neil drew attention to the good overall safety record of the tanker industry and the track record which indicated that measures undertaken in IMO to improve tanker safety over the years have been effective. “Despite what we might read in the general media,” he said, “the tanker industry is, by and large, a safe one. Year on year, there are more ship movements and fewer accidents. I am pleased to note that the ten-year trend for all ship losses is clearly downwards and the figures for tankers are consistently better than those for other vessels.”

IMO work to promote women in shipping bears fruit

A fellowship has been awarded to Capt. L. Manduwi under the IMO Women in Development Programme. Capt. Manduwi is a lecturer at the Malawi Marine Training College, and she was actively involved in the regional seminar on the Integration of Women in the Maritime Sector, conducted by IMO’s Mrs. Pamela Tansey at the Marine College in October 1997.

The success of that regional seminar was highlighted in the recent Impact Assessment Exercise undertaken under the IMO/Norway Co-operation Programme, which analysed the activities and results of the Norway-funded Women in Development Programme, including the establishment of an institutional framework (Action Plans for 1992-1996 and 1997-2001).

Capt. Manduwi is an excellent example of the impact which IMO’s programme has made, particularly in Least Developed Countries. In February this year, Capt. Manduwi met IMO Secretary-General William O’Neil while she was in IMO for a briefing prior to beginning her four-month training programme at the Glasgow College of Nautical Studies. The fellowship is funded under an IMO TC Fund project.
In his keynote address to the 20th annual "National Sea Day" organised by the Institut Français de la Mer at the French Senate in Paris, IMO Secretary-General William O'Neil told an audience of leading French political figures, together with influential French and foreign ship owners, about the far reaching effects of the sinking of the Erika off the coast of France towards the end of 1999.

Speaking publicly in France for the first time since the accident, Mr O'Neil said “Like ripples on a pond, the influence of the Erika has been felt far beyond the actual incident itself. The name has become a catalyst that has prompted a great deal of soul searching, of self-examination within the industry and of sheer hard work to make sure that the chances of anything like this happening again are minimized.”

Mr O'Neil told the audience how the Erika incident had highlighted the need to constantly review and upgrade the measures employed to eliminate sub-standard shipping and drawn attention to the need to re-assess the provisions for compensating those who unwittingly suffer the appalling consequences of pollution. He singled out moves to accelerate the phase out of single hull tankers and increase the compensation payable under the Civil Liability and IOPC Fund conventions as being among several important initiatives now under way in IMO as a response to the Erika sinking.

Expressing his sympathy for the people of France, Mr O'Neil said, “I know that the impact of even a single incident can be enormous. I am aware of how the French shipping community and the country as a whole have been shocked by the sinking of the Erika with the subsequent pollution of beaches and coastlines.”

Pilots make memorial donation

IMO Secretary-General William O’Neil receives a donation to the Seafarers Memorial Trust fund from the British Maritime Pilots’ Association. The donation was presented by Capt. J.J. Jones, founder and chairman of the Association, with Capt. G. Anderson, Hon. Treasurer and Capt. G. Taylor, Immediate past chairman.

A regional project for Asia on the training of port State control inspectors was completed with the holding of the fourth regional training course in Dalian, China, from 27 November to 15 December 2000. The other three regional training courses were held in Mumbai, India, Tehran, Iran, and Singapore from 1998 to 1999. A total of 50 participants from 13 countries have been trained under this project.

The International Transport Workers’ Federation (ITF) provided financial support for the project. Memoranda of Understanding with Singapore on Third Country Training Programme (TCTP) and with the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government of China on Technical Co-operation provided in-kind support. The host countries mentioned above also contributed to the successful running of the training courses.

Safety regulations for non-convention size ships developed for the Pacific Island Countries

A regional project assisting the Pacific Island Countries to develop the safety regulations for non-convention size ships was completed in 2000 with the finalized regulations now being printed.

The project was jointly developed and implemented by IMO and the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC). Consultants were recruited to draft and finalize the Regulations. Two regional workshops were held in Fiji in 1998 and 2000 respectively to consider and agree on the draft Regulations. Sixteen Pacific Island Countries/Territories sent delegates to the two workshops.
Singapore continues training support

A Memorandum of Understanding on Third Country Training Programme (TCTP) was signed between IMO and Singapore on 1 September 1998. According to the Agreement, the Government of Singapore provides two types of support for the training course covered by IMO’s Integrated Technical Co-operation Programme (ITCP), namely hosting regional training courses in Singapore and providing Singaporean lecturers for IMO-organized and funded training courses in other countries in Asia and Africa. No matter where the training courses are held, Singaporean lecturers are provided free of charge once agreed. For those training courses held in Singapore, the Government of Singapore also shares half of the cost for participants from outside Singapore.

Since the signing of the TCTP, six regional training courses have been held in Singapore for Asian countries and 13 Singaporean lecturers have participated in 8 regional or national training courses organized in other countries, including Ghana, India, Kenya, Nigeria, Philippines, and Sri Lanka. The Singaporean experts have successfully conducted training courses for instructors, examiners and assessors, as well as training courses on flag State implementation, port State control, implementation of MARPOL 73/78 and the OPRC Convention.

The TCTP was extended in June 2000 for an indefinite period. It is planned that in 2001 two regional training courses will be held in Singapore under the TCTP and the Government of Singapore will also support four training courses organized in other countries.

Inspection scheme strengthened

IMO Secretary-General William O’Neil presented the first SIRE Inspection Accreditation Certificate at the Oil Companies International Marine Forum (OCIMF) Executive Committee Dinner on 20th November 2000 at Trinity House, London, to Captain Tony Jones of BP Shipping who received the highest mark from this first examination.

The OCIMF Ship Inspection Report (SIRE) Programme was introduced in November 1994 with the objective of broadening the distribution of ship inspection information among OCIMF members, charterers, traders, terminal operators and other authorities who share concerns about tanker safety and pollution prevention.

Since its introduction, more than 25,000 inspection reports have been submitted to SIRE, and more than 20,000 reports have been accessed by users. On average, more than 700 reports are submitted to SIRE each month and a similar number accessed by 64 programme recipients.

The first Accreditation Course and examination to accredit SIRE inspectors by examination was held on 19th – 20th September 2000 at the Glasgow College of Nautical Studies. By the end of 2000, some 10 courses and examinations had been completed amounting to 126 candidates. The examination has been challenging and has resulted in an average failure rate of 9%.
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