WORLD MARITIME DAY 2002
- SAFER SHIPPING DEMANDS A SAFETY CULTURE

IMO STRATEGY REVIEW LOOKS TO THE FUTURE

LOAD LINE REVISIONS SLATED FOR 2005
ENTRY INTO FORCE
IMO News

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Opinion

World Maritime Day 2002
IMO's SAFER SHIPPING DEMANDS A SAFETY CULTURE

A

though the international shipping industry remains one of the most technologically vibrant and innovative businesses in the world today, as we move into the 21st Century the focus for those who are concerned with safety at sea is being placed ever more sharply on all aspects of human behaviour.

Each year, IMO and its 162 Member States celebrate World Maritime Day, the goals of the Organisation - safer shipping and the protection of the marine environment - are drawn to the attention of the broadest possible audience. It is a time when stock is taken of the current situation and, while reflecting on the gains which have been made, a look to the future is also made to determine which areas offer the greatest opportunities for further advances. In doing so, it has been recognized that there have been marked improvements in the casualty records and that fewer ships and fewer lives are being lost at sea than was the case a decade ago. The records also show that there has been a concurrent decline in the amount of pollution entering the marine environment from vessels transiting the oceans. These successes have been achieved mainly through improved standards and an enhanced regulatory regime involving the structural, mechanical and operational characteristics of ships as defined and supervised by the introduction of technologically advanced navigational systems.

However, it has also been recognized that the one area to which most accidents have been attributed - namely the human factor - while not being totally neglected in the past, was in need of greater attention. Therefore, the theme selected for World Maritime Day this year reflects the importance and advantages of creating a genuine safety culture in the people involved in all components of the shipping industry.

It is perhaps worth reflecting for a moment on what we understand the term safety culture to mean. One unambiguous definition which I consider to be appropriate is "The safety culture of an organization is the product of individual and group values, attitudes, perceptions, competencies and patterns of behaviour that determine the commitment to, and the style and profusion of, an organization's safety management." What this highlights is that, although the behaviour of individuals may be influenced by a set of rules, it is their attitude to the rules that really determines the culture. Do they comply because they want to, or because they have to? To truly be effective in achieving the goal of safer shipping, it is important that the shipping community as a whole should develop a "want-to" attitude.

Within any organization, including shipping companies, the culture is essentially defined by the priorities of the management. If the management is clearly seen to be giving safety the highest priority then that mindset will quickly permeate into the chain of command from the Board Chairman through the directors, the superintendent, to the ships' officers and crews. The message that an effective safety policy is considered to be a major contributing factor to the organisation's overall productivity, vitality and profitability will then be readily assimilated by everyone.

It therefore becomes evident that an effective safety culture requires the active collaboration between management and the workforce. Safety and productivity should never be seen as opposing or mutually exclusive objectives - because safety at the expense of commercial success is no more desirable than corporate success at the expense of safety. Crew members on board a ship will observe and be sensitive to as to whether the company not only complies legally with all the appropriate safety and environmental requirements, but also the manner in which it complies is appropriate. Does it set the target too high, or too low, or does it actively engage in efforts to promote and reward safe working practices and look to reduced accident levels? Does it, in other words, merely pay lip-service to safety, or does it truly embrace the concept of a safety culture?

At IMO, it has been recognized that instruments and standards will only be effective in the proper reporting of incidents, and that this is a proactive safety-orientated attitude must be established among all those involved with the operation and running of ships. That is why a draft resolution, to be submitted to the next IMO Assembly, has been developed to provide guidance to shipping companies as to how they can achieve an effective safety culture. It identifies a number of factors which should be included in the concept, among which are the existence of trust and commitment resulting in a ready willingness to learn; the freedom to speak up; and the absence of any retribution being transferred to the most knowledgeable person present in an emergency situation; the desire and ability to learn from experience and a readiness to implement improvements. It also emphasizes the need for clear lines of responsibility, and non-rigid and non-transparent behaviour and for working conditions, such as time pressure, fatigue, in-work and work and safety clarity and clarity in the rules, to be conducive to promoting the proper individual and organizational attitudes concerning the importance of safety.

The two measures most directly designed to influence the process aboard ships and within shipping companies both reached the final phases of their implementation this year. The first was the revised Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (STCW), which reached full implementation on February 1st. And the second was the International Safety Management or ISM Code, which had been in force for certain types of ships since 1998 and which, since this July, is applicable to all ships over 500 gross tons on international voyages.

The broad social and ethical diversity which results from some 60 per cent of the world's commercial shipping being carried by multinational crews is a phenomenon which has clear implications concerning the training, education and qualifications of seafarers. Have they, in fact, all learned the training, education and qualifications appropriate to their particular ship? Can they achieve an effective safety culture? It provides a framework for an effective management system and makes key key elements mandatory, such as the establishment of a formal safety management system and the appointment of a senior staff member responsible for safety matters.

Both of these measures, while in their early days of implementation, are already contributing to the mental attitude necessary for the nurturing of a safety culture. Some ships that have had the required STCW regulations and guidelines by themselves may not have seen the implementation and I would urge that an overview of the ISM Code must not become just a formality which is complied with by rote, and to recognize that STCW encompasses much more than simply the issuing of certificates. For, together, these two measures provide the wherewithal for ships to establish a set of practices and a safety regime which will underpin its continued success for the future.

The importance of developing a safety culture throughout the maritime transport chain is recognized by all IMO's Member States. Nevertheless, there are significant differences in their abilities to make the necessary institutional changes, which is why IMO's technical co-operation mission, designed to help developing countries improve their ability to comply with the international rules and standards, is focused on human resource development, with the emphasis on training and institutional capacity-building. Specific technical co-operation activities include, for example, the provision of technical and legal advisory services, needs assessments, the delivery of national, regional and global workshops, seminars and training courses and the preparation of model legislation.

There is no doubt that a safety culture must deal with the concept in its broadest possible sense. The safety of ships and of ships' personnel is certainly the most obvious considerations but the protection of the marine environment is also a key issue. And matters relating to maritime security, which includes taking positive steps to protect against unlawful acts such as terrorism, piracy, armed robbery, drug smuggling and swarooms, has a higher priority now than ever before.

It is a little more than a year since the terrorist attacks on the United States on September 11th and we should look to its core. Those tragic events were followed by a heightened awareness of the threats from terrorists that has never been seen before. It is therefore necessary to prepare thoroughly, so that in the future we can avoid these terrible occurrences which are not just accidents but deliberate acts of violence that were previously impossible to contemplate.

Since September 11th, IMO has been spurring no effort to ensure that maritime security is effectively addressed and various proposals have been made as to what precautions should be taken. These will all be brought together for consideration and action at a diplomatic conference to be held by IMO in London in December this year. It is anticipated that, in identifying the potential trouble spots, preventative measures will be introduced that will minimize the risk to shipping.

While this vital work is being undertaken, it is worth stressing the point once again that a strong regulatory framework does not in itself make for a viable safety culture. It does, however, provide the necessary platform from which such a culture can evolve - if it is properly cultivated. Only when IMO's extensive regulatory regime, along with internationally accepted standards and regulations, become ensnared in a culture that will ensure that their full potential is realized.

On the occasion of World Maritime Day 2002, I should like to thank all the Member States of IMO and the maritime industry as a whole for their continued support of the Organization’s work, and in particular of its efforts to foster and promote a maritime safety culture. I would encourage all who are able to play a part in preparing for the largest ever exercise of its kind, to use this global maritime safety culture, which, above all else, is the result of those who, on a daily basis, have the safety of the world’s ships and lives as their primary objective. If we resolve to work together we can, and will, succeed in building one 

A wake-up call to us in the maritime community would be to ensure that the concept of safety taking on a new dimension.

Safety and security have always been linked with shipping - but the need to expand to include the need for a heightened awareness of the threats from terrorists that have never been seen before. These security and safety initiatives are not just accidental but deliberate acts of violence that were previously impossible to contemplate.

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Safety and environmental audits for Member States - plan agreed

The IMO Council has approved in principle the concept of an IMO Model Audit Scheme, designed to help promote maritime safety and environmental protection by assessing how effectively Member States implement and enforce relevant IMO Convention standards, and by providing them with feedback and advice on their current performance.

In a submission presented by several Member States, it was suggested that a Model Audit Scheme at IMO could draw inspiration from the work that has already been done at the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO). In September 1995, ICAO endorsed the establishment of the ICAO Safety Oversight Programme. The programme became operational in March 1996, incorporating safety oversight assessments of Member States by ICAO initially on a voluntary basis, with an objective of offering follow-up advice and technical assistance as necessary to enable States to implement ICAO standards.

While it was recognised that the ICAO Safety Oversight Programme does not offer to IMO a precise model for direct transposition into maritime affairs, it was felt that it could provide reference material for study as the Organization develops its own appropriate counterpart.

The IMO Council decided to continue discussion on the proposed Scheme at its eighty-ninth session in November this year. It requested the Maritime Safety, Marine Environment Protection and Technical Co-operation Committees to give preliminary consideration to the issue during the current year, and to consider how the details of an IMO Model Audit Scheme could be developed and to advise on the safety and environmentally-critical areas they consider should be covered by the Scheme. The Council requested the TC Committee to consider also the issue from a capacity building point of view.

Liberia has ratified Annex VI of the MARPOL Convention, in a move which brings the prospect of a global regime for the control of air pollution from ships significantly closer. Annex VI, adopted in 1997, contains regulations on control of sulphur dioxide, nitrous oxides and ozone-depleting gas emissions from ships. It requires ratification by 15 states with 50 per cent of the world fleet before it can enter into force. Liberia’s ratification brings the total to six states with 26 per cent of the world fleet. The move has been broadly welcomed throughout the shipping industry.

IMO looks to the future with strategy review and new theme

IMO Council members have reflected the changing priorities of the Organization as it responds to new global requirements by provisionally endorsing a new theme and setting in train a comprehensive review of its future strategy.

The 88th meeting of the IMO Council, held at the Organization’s London Headquarters from 10th - 14th June, has established an ad hoc Council Working Group to prepare a draft strategic plan for the Organization, for the Council’s consideration. In line with a decision of the 22nd IMO Assembly, the plan will cover an initial five-year period and outline the strategy of the Organization for the following years.

The Council agreed that the strategic plan should take account of emerging trends, developments and challenges in the shipping and maritime world, particularly in the realms of safety, technology development, marine environment, globalization and maritime security. Strategic directions and defined objectives will be established and the strategic directions will be translated into high-level action plans, including a prioritisation of areas of work and assessment of results, over the initial five-year period. The plan will also provide a projection of the Organization’s prospective resource requirements and cater for flexibility, where necessary.

It was also agreed that the plan should incorporate a mission statement for the Organization and the Council gave provisional endorsement to a proposal from Secretary-General William O’Neil that the Organization’s theme should evolve from the current “Safer Shipping and Cleaner Oceans” to “Safe, secure and efficient shipping on clean oceans” to reflect the broader outlook of the Organization in the light of recent developments and to provide a blueprint for future action.

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IMO and customs organization conclude security co-operation agreement

IMO Secretary-General William O’Neill and his opposite number at WCO, Mr Michel Danet, (left) signed the agreement at WCO headquarters in Brussels in July. The document is designed to serve as a useful framework for future co-operation the two organizations as IMO continues its work to enhance the ship/port security interface and WCO starts to implement its Resolution on Security and Facilitation of the International Trade Supply Chain.

Under the terms of the Memorandum, IMO will attend a series of high-level meetings at WCO, beginning with the first meeting of the “Task Force” on Security and Facilitation, which will meet in Brussels on 5th and 6th September 2002. IMO is initiating a series of regional events aimed at improving security and the two organizations will explore opportunities for collaboration on these initiatives later this year and in 2003.

WCO will also contribute towards IMO’s Diplomatic Conference on maritime security in December this year. By that time, WCO’s Task Force will have completed two meetings and the organisation expects to be in a position to report some positive progress.

Every year, World Maritime Day is widely celebrated throughout the world, giving the international community and the shipping industry a point of focus when stock can be taken of the current situation and reflections made on the gains that have been achieved. It also provides an opportunity to look to the future, to assess which areas offer the greatest opportunities for further advances in the cause of maritime safety and security and pollution prevention. In doing so, it can clearly be recognized and acknowledged that there have been marked and lasting improvements, long term, in the shipping casualty records, and this should be a cause for some cautious satisfaction. Fewer ships and fewer lives are being lost at sea than was the case a decade ago and, if you look back a little further still, the advances that have been made are quite startling.

According to the annual casualty statistics from Lloyd’s Register, in the twenty years from 1986 to 1995 there were fewer than 300 ships lost annually. In 1978 and 1979 alone, a total of 538 ships were lost, representing a loss rate of no less than 6.7 ships per thousand in the world fleet. These represent the dark days of what one might call the modern era of shipping. Look back a decade further and we see little change, at least in terms of the rate at which ships were lost. In 1969, 254 ships were lost at 6.5 per thousand. And in 1959, the year IMO began, a significantly smaller world fleet was still losing vessels at a rate of five per thousand.

Both the number and the percentage of ships lost annually began to dip in 1980 and has continued on a more less downward curve ever since. In 1990 the number of ships lost went below 200 (at 2.4 per thousand) for the first time since 1961, when the fleet was numerically less than half the size. By 2000, the loss figure had decreased still further to 167, at a rate of 1.9 per thousand.

Some individual ship types have remained a cause for particular concern, notably bulk carriers, which undoubtedly have a high risk profile. But even here, the signs are encouraging. According to a report by the International Association of Dry Cargo-Shipowners (Intercargo) that was presented to IMO earlier this year, recent efforts to tighten the regulatory regime defining bulk carrier safety are paying dividends.

According to the report, which analyses bulk-carrier casualties over a ten year period from 1992 to 2001, the number of ships, lives and the amount of tonnage being lost are all decreasing. “All the rulemaking that has gone on in recent years seems to be having a demonstrably positive effect,” the report concludes.

It points out that estimates say the application of new inspection regimes, together with the provisions of the new chapter in the Safety of Life at Sea Convention (SOLAS) which deals specifically with bulk carrier safety, have reduced the risk of fatality on new and existing bulk carriers by 50 per cent and 25 per cent respectively.

The records also show that there has been a concurrent decline in the amount of pollution entering the marine environment from vessels transiting the oceans. Figures compiled by the Independent Tanker Owners’ Pollution Federation (ITOPF) show that the number of large oil spills has decreased significantly over the last 30 years.

The average number of large spills - defined as spills over 700 tonnes - per year during the 1950s was less than a third of that witnessed during the 1970s. In the years from 1970 to 1979, there was an average of 24.2 such spills each year. In the 1980s, the figure was down to 8.9 and in the 1990s decreased still further to 7.3 per annum.

These successes have been achieved mainly through improved standards and an enhanced regulatory regime involving the structural, mechanical and operational characteristics of ships, accompanied by the introduction of technologically advanced navigational systems.

However, it has also been recognized that the one area to which most accidents are usually attributed - namely the people involved, the ships’ crews - while not having been totally neglected in the past, was in
need of greater attention in all aspects. That is why the theme selected for World Maritime Day this year - "Safer Shipping demands a Safety Culture" - reflects the importance and advantages of creating a genuine safety culture throughout all components of the shipping industry.

The importance of a safety culture in shipping might at first appear to be a self-evident truth. However, although it is clearly an idea that one can instinctively support, nevertheless it begs a number of questions and demands closer examination. What exactly do we mean by a safety culture? Does such a culture already exist in shipping? If not, how have we managed to bring about a sustained improvement in maritime safety over the past thirty years or so, and why not stick to the old ways? How do you create a safety culture? Can a regulatory body do it - either on its own or with others?

There are several definitions of the word culture, but all are variations on the idea that a culture is the sum of the collective attitudes and actions of a group of people. It can apply to a nation, to a company, to a sports team or to the crew of a ship - indeed any collection of people that consists of sufficient numbers for some sort of group dynamic to emerge, might spawn a culture.

But, more specifically, what do we understand by a safety culture and, how, in particular, can it be applied within the shipping industry? It is not a term you will find formally defined in any IMO documentation - at least not yet - but at the 57th meeting of the IMO Maritime Safety Committee (MSC) in May 2002, a working group on the human element drafted a resolution addressing the whole question of "safety culture" that will eventually go before the Organization’s Assembly for adoption.

One frequently used definition describes the safety culture of an organization as "the product of individual and group values, attitudes, perceptions, competencies and patterns of behaviour that determine the commitment to, and the style and proficiency of, an organization's health and safety management".

It is worth looking at this definition closely to break it down into its constituent parts. In essence, this definition has three tiers. At the top of the pyramid, tier one, is the health and safety management of the organization. That, in theory at least, is something that should be capable of relatively straightforward definition - books, manuals, directives, reporting procedures and so on. All the familiar paraphernalia of management.

Level two is not so easy to pin down. Commitment, style and proficiency. These are the qualities at the very heart of a safety culture. Commitment: how far beyond just paying "lip service" to safety management does the organization go? How deep is the commitment from senior management, middle management and staff at other grades? Style: are the procedures rigorously applied, to the letter, or thoughtfully adapted to suit the current situation and to take into account commercial imperatives, or perhaps simply treated in a desultory fashion? Proficiency: ultimately, do they actually work? Are there measurable results? Answer these questions and you begin to build an accurate picture of the safety culture - or lack of it - in whatever organization you may be considering.

But it is the third tier, the grass roots level, that is perhaps the most interesting of the three, because these are the things which, if this definition is correct, actually determine the qualities addressed in level two. Values, attitudes, perceptions, competencies, patterns of behaviour - if you can influence these, you can begin to exert an influence on the safety culture as a whole.

The pyramid analogy as applied to this definition of safety culture works, but only up to a point - that being the point at which you begin to consider, in depth, which of the three groups of elements really belongs at the top. With a little thought, you can clearly make the case for all three. So, rather than a pyramid, perhaps we are better placed to think of a triangle of elements combining to create our safety culture, any one of which can provide the base from which the other two can be supported.

Efforts to influence a culture into having an awareness of safety and, more importantly, into an adoption of safety as one of its core values or aspirations, might therefore be targeted at any of the three essential elements to good effect.

But the perennial problem here is to identify practical actions that can really have a positive effect. How do you progress from the theoretical discussion to the concrete plan of action? How do you turn good intentions into practical steps that can really make a difference?

The evidence would seem to suggest that there are plenty of safety culture “pockets” out there in the shipping industry, plenty of companies trying hard to build the conditions conducive to safety awareness, to encourage and reward good practice and, most importantly for a commercial organization, to incorporate their espousal of safety culture into their overall commercial proposition. In other words, trying to persuade their customers that paying attention to safety makes them more attractive to do business with.

One major company, for example, which, among many activities, operates drillships, tankers, tank barges and FPSOs, has a safety and occupational health policy that states “We will conduct all our business throughout the world in a manner that protects the health, safety and well-being of our employees, contractors and neighbours. We will establish clear goals to improve continuously toward zero injuries and occupational illnesses, to systematically manage and integrate safety and occupational health into all our business decisions, plans and operations, to maintain compliance with all applicable laws, regulations and policies and to respond immediately and directly and openly to the concerns of employees, customers, shareholders and the public.”

Fine words, but how do they put them into practice? In this case, the corporate management is expected to demonstrate commitment to, and accountability for, safety and occupational health. And all employees and contractors are expected to recognize that working safely is a condition of employment and that they are accountable for their own safety and the safety of those around them.

The company has also registered its commitment to providing the means to achieve its safety goals, by developing and adhering to effective internal procedures and standards, assessing and managing the risks associated with its operations and products, verifying that all employees and contractors are trained to perform their jobs safely, maintaining and regularly testing emergency preparedness systems and promoting what it terms “stiff-the-job” safety, to extend and reinforce safety and health consciousness.

Moreover, the commitment is also clearly there to measure performance in this respect and to learn from it, by employing effective performance measures and openly communicating results, systematically auditing behaviours, work processes, management systems and equipment and promptly correcting any deficiencies, thoroughly investigating all incidents to determine contributing factors and improve prevention efforts and by fostering open communication at all levels about incidents, lessons learned and best practices. The company’s website has a whole section devoted solely to safety and environment issues.

All this clearly represents a strong commitment to the concept of a safety culture. But does it work? According to data compiled by the American Petroleum Institute (API) in its annual survey of Occupational Injuries and Illnesses in the Petroleum Industry, in 2001 this particular company was the safest major energy company in the United States, for the fifth consecutive year and the 17th time in 23 years. Its total recordable injury rate of 0.6 injuries or illnesses per 100 employees in the United States was more than twice as safe as the average of all companies that reported safety statistics to the API last year.

At another tanker operator, a rigorous incident reporting system is used to monitor and measure safety performance. Incidents - however minor - are reported, monitored and, wherever appropriate, corrective and preventative actions are taken. This system enables the company to set performance targets that drive continuous improvement. The company uses key performance indicators such as Lost Time Injury Frequency to assess the effectiveness of its safety management policies, processes and programmes.

According to the Marine Injury Reporting Guidelines issued by the Oil Companies International Marine Forum (OCIMF), any accident that renders a seafarer unable to perform his or her next scheduled work is defined as a “Lost Time Injury.” This company completes an incident report or fault analysis for any accident that meets this OCIMF definition.

Injury. This company completes an incident report or fault analysis for any accident that meets this OCIMF definition.
But, going beyond this, near-miss incidents are reported and investigated with similar vigilance and effort as actual accidents, according to the company. It asserts that, by having a safety culture which encourages near-miss reporting, improvements in risk awareness, revisions in policy, and installation of additional controls has resulted in the prevention of further near-misses and actual accidents. Near-miss reporting trends are measured for each ship team and the results used to improve continually its safety management system and to help determine proactive safety programmes. Hence having a positive near-miss reporting trend is indicative of an effective safety culture.

Another notable shipping company talks of “an effectively-promoted safety culture where the term ‘commitment’ includes everyone. It involves us all, in different ways and at different levels perhaps, but there are strictly no exceptions, from the ships’ crews, officers and masters to the department heads in the managing office.” It, too, uses the methods and definitions laid down in the OCIMF Guidance Frequency and Total Recordable Case Frequency statistics as one of the means by which it monitors its safety record and strives to improve it.

There are numerous other examples that could be quoted in similar detail. The point is not to highlight individual operators as being examples of best practice but to show that understanding and awareness of the need for a safety culture in shipping is nothing new. The task facing the industry now is perhaps more akin to putting an extension on an existing property rather than constructing an entirely new building on a greenfield site.

One fundamental question remains to be tackled beyond the simple, altruistic goals of improving safety for its staff and increasing the protection of the marine environment, what is it that a shipping company actually stands to gain through the establishment of a comprehensive safety culture? It is a harsh fact that the fulfilment of ethical and social responsibilities means less to some than it does to others. One of the tanker companies referred to earlier clearly sees the value of a safety culture in a commercial enterprise. In its official literature it states that its reputation is built upon the pride with which its personnel perform their traditional roles and its overall theme has been to develop a regulatory approach that seeks to modify the physical elements of the ship, its operation in such a way as to reduce the likelihood of accidents. Much of it, though by no means all, has been reactive. And it has, indeed, been remarkably effective.

Yet the creation of a safety culture per se has not, until now, been among the stated aspirations of the regulatory approach nor has it been a central component in achieving those aims. Where safety cultures have arisen, they have essentially been a by-product, almost a must welcomed by-product, of the regulatory process. So why change? Why shift the emphasis so strongly onto the human element, as we have now done within IMO, if the regulatory approach has served so well?

What has become clear is that the regulatory approach lends itself to the creation of a culture of compliance. In this culture of compliance, the broad spectrum of the shipping industry has stratified into three layers. At one end are the supremely safety conscious, the companies which comply with everything that is required of them and then go the extra mile because they choose to. These are the companies which create their own safety cultures and speak proudly to their employees and to their customers about them. At the other end of the spectrum are the sub-standard operators, who deliberately choose not to comply with regulations and who rely on the holes that occasionally appear in the regulatory process. And, in the middle, are the vast majority who comply with the appropriate standards but for whom safety is perhaps not the central thread that runs throughout their corporate life.

It is a regrettable but nonetheless unavoidable truth that simply adding to the welter of regulations does not pull the compliance-avoiders into the middle stratum, nor does it push those in the middle ranks up into the higher echelon. In fact, it could be argued that doing so actually adds to the burden of the safety conscious and gives the non-compliers a further commercial advantage. That is not to say that there should be a moratorium on new regulations; they must and will continue to be developed as and when the need arises. But there is a clear understanding now, throughout the shipping industry and within IMO, that, taken overall, better compliance with the current standards will achieve more. That is why the emphasis is now shifting toward the human element, and the creation of a universal safety culture is a key component in this new approach.

Much of the thinking behind this new approach was captured in a resolution adopted by IMO's 20th Assembly in 1997, setting out the Organisation's vision, principles and goals for the human element. It acknowledged that the human element in shipping is a complex multi-dimensional issue that involves the entire spectrum of human activities, whether performed by ships' crews, shore based management, regulatory bodies, recognized organizations, shipyards, legislators, or other relevant parties. Among its goals were to promote and communicate, through human element principles, a maritime safety culture and heightened marine environment awareness and to provide a framework to encourage the development of non-regulatory solutions and their assessment, based upon human element principles.

The new approach was further crystallised in a resolution - A.990 - adopted by the 21st IMO Assembly in 1999, which set out the objectives of the Organisation in the new millennium. Among other things, it instructed the Committees of IMO - and, by extension, their Sub-Committees - to focus their attention on shifting emphasis onto people, ensuring the effective uniform implementation of existing IMO standards and regulations, developing
a safety culture and an environmental conscience in all activities undertaken by the Organization and avoid obligations on regulation.

But what can a regulatory body do to create a safety culture? On its own, very little. The definition of a safety culture which was referred to earlier identifies the key elements on which a safety culture is founded: values, attitudes, perceptions, competencies, patterns of behaviour. You cannot control these things by regulation alone. But what a regulatory body can do, and what IMO is currently doing through a number of measures, is creating the conditions in which these elements can be influenced in a way that is conducive to the building of a safety culture.

Although IMO’s Member States can unanimously accept the importance of developing a safety culture throughout the maritime transport chain, there are significant differences in their ability to make the necessary institutional changes. IMO has recognized the need to reduce this disparity of capacity to ensure uniform implementation of its global maritime standards. Indeed, the Organization’s technical co-operation mission is to help developing countries improve their ability to comply with international rules and standards relating to maritime safety and security and the prevention and control of marine pollution. The technical co-operation programme is therefore focused on human resource development, particularly through training and institutional capacity-building.

Specific technical co-operation activities include, for example, the provision of technical and legal advisory services, needs assessments, the delivery of national, regional and global workshops, seminars and training courses and the preparation of model legislation. In 2001 alone, IMO carried out 145 advisory missions, prepared seven packages of model primary or secondary maritime legislation, and delivered 116 training courses and seminars, the latter events resulted in the training of almost 3,000 persons. In carrying out its technical co-operation programme, IMO has forged partnerships with interested Governments and international organizations as well as regional organizations and industry.

The World Maritime University in Malmö, Sweden, was established in 1983 as a centre of excellence for maritime education and training to promote the highest practicable standards in maritime transportation, safety and environmental protection, and to provide a mechanism for international exchange and transfer of knowledge and applications. To date, it has a total of 1,750 graduates; men and women graduates from 141 countries and territories around the world.

The IMO International Maritime Law Institute was established in 1988 in Malta under the auspices of the IMO to provide developing countries with the unique facilities for postgraduate training and research in international maritime law and legislation. International maritime law is a highly specialized field and IMU’s specialized concentrated training programme, previously unavailable elsewhere in the world, has trained a total of 251 men and women from 91 countries and territories globally.

The graduates from these well-recognized institutions return to key maritime positions in their countries where they are able to act as catalysts in promoting a safety culture.

Among the most valuable tools at their disposal are two measures that are at the heart of IMO’s commitment to addressing the human element in shipping, both of which have reached the final phases of their implementation this year. The first is the revised Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (STCW 95), which reached full implementation on 1 February 2002. The second was the International Safety Management orISM Code, which had already been in force for a certain type of ship since 1998 and, which, since July of this year, is now applicable to all ships over 500 gross tons on international voyages. These are the two measures that have been designed most directly to influence the culture, both aboard ships and within shipping companies.

The 1978 STCW Convention was the first to establish basic requirements on training, certification and watchkeeping for seafarers on an international level. Previously the standards had been established by individual Governments, usually without reference to practices in other countries. As a result, standards and procedures varied widely, which was clearly unsatisfactory given the international nature of shipping. The STCW Convention prescribes minimum standards which countries are obliged to meet or exceed.

The 1995 amendments to STCW represented a major revision of the Convention, in response to a recognized need to bring it up to date and to respond to critics who pointed out the many vague phrases, such as “to the satisfaction of the Administration”, which resulted in different interpretations being made. Others complained that the Convention was never uniformly applied and did not produce any significant changes in maritime practice. The 1995 amendments entered into force on 1 February 1997. However, until 1 February 2002, Parties could continue to issue recognize and endorse certificates which applied before that date in respect of seafarers who began training or seagoing service before 1 January 1998.

Some of the most important amendments adopted in 1995 concern the general provisions contained in Chapter I of the Convention. Parties to the Convention are now required to provide detailed information to IMO concerning administrative measures taken to ensure compliance with the Convention, such as education and training courses, certification procedures and other factors relevant to implementation. This represented the first time that IMO had been called upon to act in relation to compliance and implementation - generally, implementation is down to the flag States, while port State control also acts to ensure compliance.

The so-called “White List” of countries deemed to be giving “full and complete effect” to the revised STCW Convention - STCW 95 was published by IMO in 2000. 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 also to have an endorsement, issued by the flag State, to show that their certificate is recognized by the flag State. It is expected that shipping flags of countries that are not on the White List will be increasingly targeted by port State control inspectors.

The overall effect of the revised STCW Convention will be to ensure that the industry’s vital human resource - the bedrock of any culture, safety or otherwise - has a common standard of basic training and education and that the level of skill and proficiency required to achieve any given qualification reaches an agreed minimum level. It will not create a safety culture, but it should go some way towards providing the raw material from which one could be fashioned.

The same can be said of the ISM Code, although this deals with management and specifically with safety management structures and responsibilities. To give it its full title, the International Management and Organization of Ships and for Pollution Prevention - the ISM Code addresses the responsibilities of the people who manage and operate ships and provides an international standard for the safe management and operation of ships and for pollution prevention. It establishes safety-management objectives and requires a safety management system (SMS) to be established by “the Company”, which is defined as the shipowner or any person, such as the manager or bareboat charterer, who has assumed responsibility for operating the ship. The Company is then required to establish and implement a policy for achieving these objectives. This includes providing the necessary resources and shore-based support.

From 1 July 2002, all cargo ships (and mobile offshore drilling units) of 500 gross tonnage and above have had to comply with the requirements of the ISM Code. The Code requires every company to be issued with a Document of Compliance (DOC), issued by the Administration (flag State), by an organization recognized by the Administration, or by another Contracting Government to SOLAS at the request of the Administration, to show that it complies with the requirements of the ISM Code.

The DOC is issued for a period of five years subject to an annual verification audit. The Code also requires every ship to be issued with a Safety Management Certificate (SMC), which verifies that the company and its shipboard management operate in accordance with the approved safety management system. The Safety Management Certificate is issued to every ship by the Administration or a recognized organization.

In order to qualify for these certificates, the Company must develop, implement and maintain a safety-management system (SMS), which includes a number of functional requirements, such as a safety and environmental protection policy, instructions and procedures to ensure safe operation of ships and protection of the environment in compliance with relevant international and flag State legislation, defined levels of authority and lines of communication between, amongst, shore and shipboard personnel, procedures for reporting accidents and non-conformities with the provisions of this Code.
Global security programme gets underway

The Secretary-General reported that during the eighty-eighth session of Council, he had received some indication of interest in the establishment of a maritime security trust fund that would help Member States, organizations and individuals to make voluntary financial contributions for the ongoing provision of technical assistance on maritime and port security. Such a trust fund could be used to give further support on completion of the ongoing technical programme, to ensure effective compliance with the regulatory regime likely to come out of the Diplomatic Conference.

The successful initial phase of the pilot scheme on regional co-ordination of the technical co-operation delivery for Africa and about the first Annual Meeting of IMO Regional Coordinators in Africa was held in May. The Secretary-General told the Committee that, after the Council’s approval of additional funds for the scheme after the biennium 2003/2005, the Secretariat was looking to improve the IMO Regional Presence in Africa and enlarge the scheme to other developing regions.

Many delegations voiced the immediate need to train marine and port personnel on the security issues and affirmed their desire to host regional or national workshops. In this regard, the Committee thought it was crucial to start creating awareness on maritime security before the end of the Maritime Security Conference and the start of a new regulatory regime on the issue. It was noted that the effective installation of the new regime would need investment not just from Governments, but also from shippers, and thus it may be important to think about ways of supporting this.

The Committee noted that the Secretariat had recently organized two regional events concerned with security issues in Jamaica (for the Caribbean States) and Cameroon (for the members of the Port Management Association of West and Central Africa).

The ILD representative suggested that, in the best interest of the developing countries, IMO should also co-operate in technical assistance activities related to maritime security and other relevant issues. The representation of MOWCA addressed this when he referred to his organization’s readiness to co-operate with IMO on the same issues and provided information on recent proposals to integrate the coast guard services of the West and Central African countries so as to ensure the improved and coordinated prevention and suppression of unlawful acts.

The Director, TCD, provided additional information on the content of the regional workshops, the selection of regions and delivery schedule, co-operation with other organizations and the duration of the programme.

The Chairman stated that the issue of maritime security was firmly incorporated within the ITCP and would be on the Committee’s agenda for the near future.

The Integrated Technical Co-operation Programme

In 2001 the ITCP carried out 145 advisory missions, developed 7 packages of model primary or secondary legislation, held 138 courses, seminars and workshops at the national, regional and global levels; and consulted with almost 3,000 people.

In relation to the financial elements of the annual report, it was acknowledged that available resources increased in 2001 to some US$19 million, representing a significant rise of 17 per cent over 2000. Expenditure levels also rose to almost US$7.7 million, representing an equally significant rise of 15 per cent over the previous year and marking the highest expenditure level recorded by IMO in the last ten years.

The Director, TCD, made mention of document TC.51/INF/2, that provided data on the personnel engaged through the ITCP in 2001, for the first time. In conclusion, 43 per cent of such personnel were from developing countries, or countries with economies in transition, with 57 per cent from developed countries.
in academic reform and development, international recognition and collaboration, research and consultancy and student enrolment. The University’s popularity continued unhindered with demand for vacancies far outnumbering its capacity. However, the University was faced with serious financial challenges for the future. The Secretary-General noted that the response of Member States to the Assembly resolution on “Sustainable Financial Support for the World Maritime University” was muted, but hoped that more widely based and long-term financial support for WMU would be available in the near future.

The Secretary-General told the Committee that the Task Group on WMU Funding had been busy making contacts with shipowners and the representatives of the Governments of Denmark, Finland, Norway and the United Kingdom with respect to regular annual contributions to fellowships and the WMU’s core budget.

IMO International Maritime Law Institute
The Secretary-General informed the Committee that the Institute kept thriving with a total of 251 graduates from 91 States and territories. He acknowledged that due to the generous donations of the Institute’s operational hand and the donation of fellowships, the Institute was able to raise enough funds to cover its budget for the academic year 2001/2002.

IMO International Maritime Academy
The Committee was informed of several projects, such as the special projects for the Mediterranean countries and those for Uruguay, South America and the Black sea.

Thanks were expressed to the Italian Government for the help it provided to the Academy and advised the Committee that the Academy will present a document on the development of the above-mentioned projects at the next TCC.

Fellowships and other training activities
These training activities benefited both the developed countries and the global maritime industry by enhancing the maritime capacity of countries through the building up of their human resource capabilities, and by increasing the industry’s bank of technical expertise at national, regional and international levels. The Committee was also informed of the completion of the revision and updating of the model courses in the IMO STCW Model Course Programme.

The Director, TCD, reported on the progress made on the development and implementation of the Oil Pollution Preparedness and Response training programme. The course materials were being revised by consultants to meet the local needs of developing countries and will include additional exercises, case studies and an efficient feedback system. Review of the technical provisions of the 1966 LL Convention as modified by the 1988 LL Protocol
The Sub-Committee agreed to the draft amendments to Annex B to the 1988 LL Protocol, for approval by MSC 76 with a view to adoption by MSC 77. The Sub-Committee agreed to recommend to the Committee that the amendment procedure is scheduled to enter into force on 1 January 2005. The deliberations on specific issues in the context of the above-mentioned draft amendments are outlined in the following paragraphs.

Bow height and reserve buoyancy
The Sub-Committee agreed to the formula for minimum bow height based on deck wetness considerations rather than on the existing bow height formula. This implies that any ship with this minimum bow height would be subject to shipping water at the bow (forward perpendicular) at a common and acceptable long-term probability level. To this end, the Sub-Committee agreed on a new formula for minimum bow height for inclusion in draft regulation 39(2).

After almost a decade of deck wetness research, the new formula was considered an improvement over the existing bow height formula contained in the 1986 Load Line Convention for a variety of reasons. It is based on a probabilistic, long-term deck wetness analysis using validated ship motion prediction techniques; it provides a consistent level of deck wetness for all hull forms (more than the existing bow height formula which results in consistent water-on-deck levels only for some ships), and it takes into account ship size and local hull form characteristics in a more comprehensive way.

Its application will mean that the minimum required bow height of new smaller ships (length less than 100 m) will increase to some extent (of the order of 500 mm), and the minimum required bow heights for new large type “B” ships will be at least the same or greater than those calculated under the existing formula.

The Sub-Committee noted that the amount of enclosed volume above the summer load line determines the reserve buoyancy of a ship. Existing LL regulation 38 (Sheer) ensures approximately the same total reserve buoyancy for a ship with less than standard bow sheer compared to a ship with standard freeboard and sheer. However, it does not ensure an equivalent distribution of reserve buoyancy along the ship’s length, so that its application to ships with less than standard bow sheer can result in less reserve buoyancy in the forward part compared with the standard sheer case.

An analysis of existing ships shows that the deficiency of reserve buoyancy in the forward part is apparent for large type B ships with reduced freeboard and zero sheer and this applies in particular to panamax and capesize bulk carriers. The largest deficiencies are observed for capesize bulk carriers, which have around 25% to 30% less reserve buoyancy in the forward part compared with the standard sheer case.

The Sub-Committee supported the view that the LL Protocol should, in principle, ensure such equivalent distribution of reserve buoyancy. To this end, it agreed to the new formula and related provisions on reserve buoyancy set out in proposed regulation 39 (Minimum bow height and reserve buoyancy). The Sub-Committee also agreed that the new provisions should only apply to type B ships, with the qualification that the issue of type A ships might need further consideration in the future. Recognizing that some oil tankers, chemical tankers and gas carriers are assigned a type B freeboard, it was agreed to specifically exempt such ships from the provisions of draft regulation 39(a).

In considering the relationship between bow height and reserve buoyancy, it was noted that bow height affects the amount of water shipped over the bow (“deck wetness”) and magnitude of pressures, whereas the forward reserve buoyancy affects the frequency of the loads associated with such boarding seas. Reserve buoyancy at the bow will also influence the pitching motions in extreme seas in a favourable manner and it would provide additional buoyancy when the bow is submerged. Consequently, the Sub-Committee noted that both bow height and reserve buoyancy are important elements in improving the seakindliness of the ship, especially in head seas.

Hatch cover design environmental criteria
After extensive discussion, the Sub-Committee could not agree on maximum load levels and, therefore, left those loads in proposed regulation 36-1. Hatch covers for further consideration by the Maritime Safety Committee, taking into account that a Working Group on Bulk Carrier Safety would be expressly invited at MSC 76 and that experts in load line matters were invited to attend.

The Sub-Committee also agreed to add a new provision related to hatch cover.
horizontal loads to proposed regulation 16-1. IACS intends to make further information on the issue of horizontal loads available at MSC 76. It was suggested that the future revision of IACS UR S21 for bulk carriers should be considered for inclusion in proposed regulation 16-1 and that the application of UR S21 to other types of ships should also be considered. The revised IACS UR S21 for bulk carriers would be made available prior to MSC 76.

Elimination of reduced type B freeboard

The Sub-Committee noted the view that a ship with reduced freeboard can be made as safe as a ship with type B freeboard. The Sub-Committee also noted the opinion that the measures needed to ensure the same level of safety for the reduced freeboard ship may entail higher construction costs and that a full cost/benefit study (FBS) should be carried out to assess the consequences of eliminating reduced B freeboard for both new and existing ships.

Fishing vessel safety

The Sub-Committee established a Correspondence Group on Revision of the Fishing Vessel Safety Code, under the coordination of Bangladesh, to review part A of the Code. The Sub-Committee agreed that the scope of the revision of the Fishing Vessel Safety Code should be established at SLF 46 to collate all the contributions from the sub-committees on the revision of part B of the Safety Code and the Voluntary Guidelines together with the results from the correspondence group on part A of the Safety Code, so that a first consolidated version of the comprehensive text of both revised instruments may be prepared for consideration by the Sub-Committee.

It was agreed that a working group on fishing vessel safety should be established at SLF 46 to collate all the contributions from the sub-committees on the revision of part B of the Safety Code and the Voluntary Guidelines together with the results from the correspondence group on part A of the Safety Code, so that a first consolidated version of the comprehensive text of both revised instruments may be prepared for consideration by the Sub-Committee.

Revised Model Test Method for ro-ro passenger ships

The Sub-Committee agreed to the draft Revised Model Test Method under resolution 14 of the 1999 SOLAS Conference, and associated Guidance Notes. The revised model test method is a revision of the method contained in the Appendix to resolution 14 of the 1995 SOLAS Conference. Since the entry into force of the Stockholm Agreement developed and adopted on the basis of the aforementioned resolution 14 (under which the Governments of Denmark, Finland, Germany, Ireland, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and the United Kingdom require a thorough damage stability analysis of all new passenger ships operating into and out of their ports), a number of model tests have been carried out in accordance with the test method previously in force. During these tests a number of refinements in the procedures have been identified. This new model test method aims to include these refinements and, together with the appended Guidance Notes, provide a more robust procedure for the assessment of survivability of a damaged new passenger ship in a seaway.

Large passenger ship safety

In dealing with the tasks assigned to it by the Maritime Safety Committee under this heading, (i.e. to characterize the designed survivability of the ship to be able to link the design of the ship to the availability of SAR functions and area of operation and to combine the structural performance of the ship after damage with industry best practices and other available technology; awareness of structural integrity considerations at the design stage should be encouraged, and in accordance with the Committee’s guiding philosophy, any proposed regulatory action should be goal-based.

Raging damage issues for future ships

No significant progress had been made on this issue by the session, therefore the Sub-Committee agreed to continue considering the matter intersessionally.
Security measures take high priority at IMO navigation meeting

The guidance covers such matters as bridge procedures, emergency procedures, passage planning, and other measures necessary for the development and implementation of new technology and training.

Places of refuge
A draft Assembly resolution on guidelines on places of refuge for ships in need of assistance was agreed. The guidelines are intended for use when a ship is in need of assistance but safety of life is not involved. Where the safety of life is involved, the provisions of the SAR Convention should be followed.

The guidelines recognise that when a ship has suffered an incident, the best way of preventing damage or pollution from its progressive deterioration is to transfer its cargo and bunkers, and to repair the casualty. Such an operation is best carried out in a place of refuge. However, to bring such a ship into a place of refuge near a coast may endanger the coastal State, both economically and from the environmental point of view. Local authorities and populations may strongly object to the operation.

Therefore, granting access to a place of refuge could involve a political decision which can only be taken on a case-by-case basis with consideration of the balance between the advantage for the affected ship and the environment resulting from bringing the ship into a place of refuge and the risk to the environment resulting from that ship being near the coast.

The purpose of the guidelines is to provide shipmasters, shipowners (particularly in connection with the ISPS Code), salvors and Member Governments with a framework enabling them to respond effectively and in such a way that, in any given situation, the efforts of the master and owner of the ship and the efforts of the government authorities are complementary. In particular, an attempt has been made to arrive at a common framework for assessing the situation of ships in need of assistance.

In connection with the subject of places of refuge, another resolution on the establishment of Maritime Assistance Services was agreed, for information of the MSC, MEF and different correspondence groups with a view to adoption by the 23rd session of the IMO Assembly, following finalization by NAV 49.

The resolution recommends that all coastal States should establish a maritime assistance service (MAS). The principal purposes would be to receive the various reports, consultations and notifications required in a number of IMO instruments; monitoring a ship’s situation if such a report indicates that an incident that may give rise to a situation whereby the ship may be in need of assistance; serving as the point of contact if the ship’s situation is not a distress situation but nevertheless requires exchanges of information between the ship and the coastal State, and for serving as the point of contact between those involved in a marine salvage operation undertaken by private facilities if the coastal State considers that it should monitor all phases of the operation.

According to the draft Assembly resolution, the services of a MAS might be required in situations where the safety of life is not directly threatened, for example if a ship is involved in an incident (e.g. loss of cargo, accidental discharge of oil that does not impair its seakeeping ability but nevertheless has to be reported; or, according to its master’s assessment, is in need of assistance but not in a distress situation that requires the rescue of those on board; or is found to be in a distress situation and those on board have already been rescued, with the possible exception of those who have remained aboard or have been placed on board to attempt to deal with the ship’s situation.

The establishment of a MAS should not entail the setting up of a new organization. Insofar as the present guidelines are observed, the functions of the MAS could be discharged by an existing organization, such as an MRC, a harbour master’s office, a coast guard operations centre (if one exists) or another body, according to the guidelines.

The fact that the resolution recommends every coastal State to establish a MAS should not prevent neighbouring coastal States from combining their resources under suitable arrangements to operate a joint MAS.

The Sub-Committee agreed that real-life case studies should be used in the preparation of the feasibility study, if applicable and available. The studies should concentrate, among other things, on providing a cost/benefit analysis.

Matters related to bulk carrier safety
The Sub-Committee was of the opinion that MSC/Circ.1041 satisfactorily highlighted the
The definition of “oil tanker” in regulation 1.5 has been modified to include any gas carrier as defined in SOLAS regulation II-1/5.20 when carrying a cargo, or part of a cargo, of oil in bulk.

Because SOLAS regulation XI.2 includes the mandatory application of resolution A.744(18) for oil tankers of 500 gross tonnage and above, it was decided to delete regulation 7 on enhanced surveys to limit unnecessary cross-references between the two Conventions.

Regulation 15.6.1 was amended to specify cleanly the requirements for discharge into the sea of oily mixtures from ships of less than 400 gross tonnage in all areas.

The requirement for an oil tanker between 150 and 400 gross tonnage to be provided with an Oil Record Book part I was deleted following the decision to harmonise the requirements for machinery spaces for all ships below 400 gross tonnage.

The revised regulation on double hull and double bottom requirements was split to ensure continuity with the present system of having two regulations, 13F and 13G. Revised regulation 13B addresses requirements for oil tankers delivered on or after 1 July 1993 (present regulation 13F), while revised regulation 20 addresses requirements for oil tankers delivered before that date (present regulation 13G).

Regulation 21 on accidental oil outflow performance was revised to reflect modifications agreed by the Working Group on Matters Related to the Probabilistic Methodology for Oil Outflow Analysis.

New paragraphs were added specifying that regulation 21 on the hypothetical outflow of oil and regulation 24 on the limitation of size and arrangement of cargo tanks would only apply to oil tankers to which new regulation 21 does not apply.

Regulation 31.2 incorporates the provisions of Unified Interpretation 4.9 specifying that, when a COW system is fitted on an oil tanker as an addition to those requirements of MARPOL 73/78, this system should at least comply with those provisions of the revised COW Specifications related to safety.

Additionally, the reference to the appropriate regulations of SOLAS chapter II-2 with regard to the installation of inert gas systems has been deleted to limit unnecessary cross-referencing between the two Conventions.

Amendments to requirements on electrical installations in the IBG and IGC codes

In its role as co-ordinator of work on amendments to electrical requirements contained in SOLAS and the IBC and IGC Codes to ensure consistency between the three instruments, the Sub-Committee prepared draft amendments to the IBC and IGC Codes, for application to new ships, so that the next session of the Sub-Committee on Design and Equipment could consider them in the course of the work on the matter under their purview.

The amendments took into account proposals to prohibit the lifting of electrical motors in the cargo-pump rooms of oil tankers and chemical tankers, and in the gas compressor rooms of gas carriers.

Requirements for protection of personnel involved in the transportation of cargoes containing toxic substances in tankers

A number of issues were considered in this regard whether SOLAS should be amended to include a requirement for personal protective equipment for seafarers on oil tankers, whether the IBC and IGC Codes should be amended to include requirements for personal protective equipment for cargo handling, tank cleaning or emergency situations; whether standards should be developed for occupational health data for use by seafarers to cover the substances to which they are likely to become exposed on board.

 bearing in mind that there are a multiplicity of standards available, none in a form readily accessible or usable by the seafarers, and whether management-based guidelines on the establishment of shipboard occupational health and safety programmes should be developed.

The Secretariat had volunteered to develop draft guidelines based on information from IOSH and WHO for consideration at this session. It had been agreed in principle that the guidelines should be non-mandatory with a view towards providing seafarers with clear, concise and accurate information on the health effects of toxic substances carried on board tankers.

The Sub-Committee considered proposals to amend SOLAS chapters I and VII to deal with occupational health issues for seafarers on tankers and, noting that Administrations could address occupational health issues as part of their implementation of ISM Code, agreed that amendments to mandatory IMO instruments should not be developed.

The Sub-Committee also considered a proposal to update MSC/Circ.752 on Minimum safety standards for ships carrying mixtures the bencene concentration of which is 0.5 percent or more and agreed to revise it. Members were invited to submit comments and proposals to BLG 8.

The Sub-Committee agreed a draft MSC/MEPC circular on Recommendation for the use of a standard format for the cargo information required by chapter 16 of the IBC Code for submission to the Committees for approval and agreed to develop similar guidance for the protection of personnel involved in the handling and storage of MARPOL Annex I cargoes.

MARPOL Annexes I and II reviewed

A working group of the Sub-Committee finalized the draft revised text of MARPOL Annex I, Oil Record Book, IOPP Certificate and unified interpretations. Among the main decisions, clarifications and editorial adjustments were the following:

- In regulation 3.1.2, the text “unprocessed oily mixtures which without dilution have an oil content not exceeding 15 ppm and that do not originate from cargo pump room bilges and are not mixed with oil cargo residues” has been deleted since it was related to oily mixtures from machinery spaces operations and not from the cargo area of an oil tanker.
- The working group also reviewed the draft revised Oil Record Books parts I and II, the draft revised IOPP Certificate, and the United Interpretations to MARPOL. Annex I and made consequential editorial amendments as necessary. Although considerable progress was made in the development of the revised text of MARPOL, Annex II at the last session, it had been agreed to defer the choice of Pollution Categorisation System until the GESAMP/FER Working Group had largely completed the re-evaluation of those products listed in chapters 17 and 18 of the IBC Code. The decision to defer the discussion on the choice of Pollution Categorisation System and consequential amendments to the text of MARPOL. Annex II had been taken to determine, among other things, the potential impact on the world fleet that the systems under consideration may have.
- The Sub-Committee agreed that there was now sufficient information to allow recommendations to be made to the MEPC 48 on the draft revised text of MARPOL. Annex II, including the Pollution Categorisation System, the Ship Typing System and appropriate stripping limits for new chemical tankers and consequential amendments.
- The Sub-Committee developed a series of pros and cons relating to both the proposed 3-Category and 5-Category Systems for consideration by the MEPC at its next meeting.
- The revised regulation on double bottom requirements was split to ensure continuity with the present system of having two regulations, 13F and 13G. Revised regulation 13B addresses requirements for oil tankers delivered on or after 1 July 1993 (present regulation 13F), while revised regulation 20 addresses requirements for oil tankers delivered before that date (present regulation 13G).
- Regulation 21 on accidental oil outflow performance was revised to reflect modifications agreed by the Working Group on Matters Related to the Probabilistic Methodology for Oil Outflow Analysis.
- New paragraphs were added specifying that regulation 21 on the hypothetical outflow of oil and regulation 24 on the limitation of size and arrangement of cargo tanks would only apply to oil tankers to which new regulation 21 does not apply.
- Regulation 31.2 incorporates the provisions of Unified Interpretation 4.9 specifying that, when a COW system is fitted on an oil tanker as an addition to those requirements of MARPOL 73/78, this system should at least comply with those provisions of the revised COW Specifications related to safety.
- Additionally, the reference to the appropriate regulations of SOLAS chapter II-2 with regard to the installation of inert gas systems has been deleted to limit unnecessary cross-referencing between the two Conventions.
- The Sub-Committee considered proposals to prohibit electric motors in the cargo-pump rooms of chemical tankers.
IMO Secretary-General William O’Neil has paid warm tribute to the outgoing President of the International Maritime Pilots Association (IMPA), M. Michel Poulot. Speaking at the sixteenth IMPA congress in Hamburg, Mr O’Neil said that the skills IMPA members under M. Poulot’s leadership had played a crucial role in IMO’s success.

Mr O’Neil told delegates to the congress ‘IMO’s targets of safe, secure and efficient shipping on clean oceans are clear and precise. However,’ he added, ‘the processes involved in achieving them are complex. Many factors must be taken into account and they involve literally millions of people. The ultimate destination has to be reached through uncharted waters; nevertheless, progress is being made. The quality of ships is being improved, the skills of seafarers are being enhanced, the focus on management is more intense and there is an awareness that substantial performance will not be tolerated. Putting the package together to bring about change is not easy but it is progressing, as proven by the fact that annually fewer lives and ships are lost at sea and there is a marked reduction in the pollution of the oceans by ships.’

M. Poulot, a Canadian, has been appointed to the Order of Canada by the Canadian Government in recognition of his contribution to piloting and safety at sea. The Order was established to pay tribute to whose contributions enrich the lives of their contemporaries.

Kenya workshop launches security push

On the subject of training, participants heard that the three primary causes of compromised security are improper hiring, training, or supervision, and in this context discussed the attributes of a proper security training program, and the knowledge required of the ship security officer, the trainers, and the managers. The knowledge required of the ship security officer, the company security officer, and ship security personnel was also addressed, as were the importance of security inspections and implementation of security plans.

Award nominees sought

Closing date for nominations is 31 December 2002.

Secretary-General pays pilotage tribute

IMO has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Argentine Coast Guard - the Prefectura Naval Argentina (PNA) to formalize the close co-operation that already exists between the two organizations in carrying out technical assistance activities in Latin America.

Under a long-standing informal arrangement, the PNA have provided IMO with consultants and instructors for technical assistance activities in Latin America on a no-fee basis. In 2001, for example, nine experts from the PNA carried out successful missions on IMO’s behalf to El Salvador, Nicaragua and Panama, where they developed technical regulations, updated national contingency plans, prepared syllabuses for training ratings and delivered a course for ship inspectors.

In signing the memorandum, Secretary-General O’Neil said it demonstrated the PNA’s commitment to IMO’s goals, as well as Argentina’s continued promotion of technical co-operation in the maritime sector. He said Argentina made a significant and generous in-kind contribution to IMO’s technical co-operation programme, which is aimed at securing effective and uniform implementation of IMO’s global standards.

Argentina confirms continued support for technical co-operation

The search is on for the next wave of innovative ideas that could shape the future of shipping. Entries for the prestigious Seatech Awards for 2003 are now being sought in four categories: safety at sea, protection of the marine and atmospheric environment, innovation in ship operations and new IT applications for the shipping industry.

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