WORLD MARITIME DAY 2003: COMMITTED PEOPLE WORKING FOR SAFE, SECURE AND CLEAN SEAS

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World Maritime Day 2003

Message from the Secretary-General M. R. William A. O'Neil

Each year, the celebration of World Maritime Day offers an opportunity not only for the governments and the international community to be reminded of the contribution of the shipping industry to the life of our world, but also to give thanks for the dedicated effort of all those who work in this industry.

The theme for this year’s World Maritime Day is ‘Making Committed People Working for Safe, Secure and Clean Seas’. This theme is particularly relevant in view of the recent developments in the field of maritime security.

In recent years, the shipping industry has faced a number of challenges, including the need to improve maritime security and enhance the environment in which it operates. These challenges have been met with determination and commitment by those who work in the industry.

The IMO, through its specialized technical committees and working groups, has made significant progress in developing and implementing new regulations and guidelines for the prevention of pollution and the enhancement of maritime security. These efforts have been supported by the many people who work in the shipping industry, including ship owners, operators, port state control officials, classification societies and others.

The success of these efforts has been demonstrated by the fact that the number of major spills and other pollution incidents has decreased significantly in recent years. This is a testament to the commitment and dedication of those who work in the industry.

However, there is still much work to be done to ensure the safety and security of our oceans and the lives of those who work on them. The IMO is committed to continuing its efforts to develop new regulations and guidelines, and to promoting the implementation of existing ones.

In conclusion, I extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to all those dedicated, hard-working individuals who work in the shipping industry, and who are committed to ensuring that the global transportation network operates safely and efficiently.

I am sure that, with the continued support of all those who share a genuine commitment to safety, security and sound environmental practice, there will be a brighter future for the world of shipping.
Efthimios Mitropoulos – IMO’s new Secretary-General elect

Efthimios Mitropoulos of Greece has been elected as the new Secretary-General of the International Maritime Organization, to succeed the incumbent Mr. William O’Neil of Canada when he steps down from the post at the end of this year.

Mr. Mitropoulos was elected to the post by IMO’s 40-member Council. Other candidates were Mr. Magnus Johannesson of Iceland and Mrs. Monica Mbanefo of Nigeria.

Speaking after his election, Mr. Mitropoulos said, “I am delighted with today’s decision of the Council to appoint me as IMO’s new Secretary-General to succeed Mr. O’Neil as from next year. I look forward to the Assembly approving the decision of the Council.

“However, as delighted as I am today, I will be even more so if, at the end of my four-year term, I am judged to have been successful in the discharge of my responsibilities and that I have lived up to the expectations of the IMO Members.

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“Although I interpret the Council’s vote as a vote of confidence in the particular individual, I cannot see the honour that goes with the vote as not reflecting on my family, my family’s home town and my country, all three with deep maritime roots, of which I am very proud.

“I am fully aware of the heavy responsibilities the Council has put on my shoulders. As I stated when I presented my candidacy, I intend to carry out my duties with honesty and dignity in full consultation with the IMO Members acting, at all times, in the best interests of the Organization in pursuance of the ideals and objectives of the United Nations.

“I have extended a hand of friendship and co-operation to my fellow candidates and appealed to the countries which voted for them to give me their support and co-operation so that the membership, as one solid entity, moves forward to face the many and various challenges that lie ahead.

“Wish to thank the Greek Government for putting forward my candidacy and, in particular, Prime Minister Samaras, Foreign Affairs Minister Papandreou and Minister of Maritime Affairs and Shipping Natsis for the support they gave me throughout my campaign. I am very pleased with the decent and transparent manner in which the campaign was carried out.

“My deep and sincere thanks are extended to the Governments which supported my election, my many friends who wished me good luck and my staff in the Maritime Safety Division who supported me since I took over eleven years ago and whose solid work and co-operation provided me with a strong platform from which to launch my campaign. The trust Mr. O’Neil put in me has always been a source of strength and appreciation for my part. I owe a lot to our close working relationship.

“My gratitude to my wife, son and daughter for the moral support they gave me over the years and the sacrifices they endured while I was devoting my life to IMO is inexpressible and I will never be able to thank them enough.”

Mr. Mitropoulos, aged 64, has been involved with the maritime industry since 1957. Following his career at sea in the Greek Merchant Navy, he gained experience as a maritime economist, lecturer and author, harbour master and marine technologist. From 1965 to 1979 he was a member of the Greek delegation to IMO, rising to head of delegation. He joined the IMO secretariat in 1979 and in 1985 was appointed head of the Navigation Section. In 1989 he became Senior Deputy Director for Navigation and Related Matters and in 1992 was appointed Director of the Maritime Safety Division. In 2000 he was designated Assistant Secretary-General.
Piracy figures on increase again

The number of acts of piracy and armed robbery against ships continues to rise, according to figures unveiled at the 77th meeting of the IMO Maritime Safety Committee (MSC) in June. The number of incidents during the calendar year of 2002, as reported to the Organization, was 383, an increase of nearly 4 per cent over the annual figure for 2001. This brought the total number of incidents of piracy and armed robbery reported to have occurred from 1984 to the end of March 2003, to 1,341.

The areas most affected in 2002 were the East, in particular the South China Sea and the Malacca Strait, South America and the Caribbean, the Indian Ocean and West and East Africa. In 2002, the number of acts reported to have occurred or to have been attempted increased from 2 to 3 in the Mediterranean Sea, from 120 to 140 in the South China Sea, from 23 to 67 in South America and the Caribbean, and from 22 to 24 in East Africa. However, it decreased from 58 to 47 in West Africa, from 38 to 34 in the Malacca Strait and from 86 to 66 in the Indian Ocean, over the 2001 figures.

Most of the attacks worldwide were reported to have occurred or to have been attempted in the coastal States’ concerned territorial waters while the ships were at anchor or berthed. The Committee was particularly concerned to note that, during the same period, ship crews had been violently attacked by groups of five to ten people carrying knives or guns. During the same period, six crew members of the ships involved had been killed, fifty had been wounded, thirty-eight had been reported missing and another thirty-eight had been thrown overboard (although they were later rescued) in the reported incidents.

The MSC has endorsed the Secretariat’s proposals to continue with the anti-piracy project that began in 1998. Phase one consisted of a number of regional seminars and workshops attended by Governmental representatives from countries in piracy-infested areas of the world, while phase two consisted of a number of evaluation and assessment missions to different regions.

Future plans include following up the planned September 2003 South American and Caribbean Meeting with a similar meeting for the Asia and the Pacific region towards the later part of 2003 or the early part of 2004.

IMO diplomacy pays dividends as single-hull phase-out proposals move forward

Proposals submitted by the EU countries for an accelerated phase-out scheme for single-hull tankers, along with other measures including an extended application of the Condition Assessment Scheme (CAS) for tankers, are to be taken forward to an extra session of IMO’s Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC) to be convened in December this year.

The proposed amendments to MARPOL 73/78 were first discussed during the week-long forty-ninth session of the MEPC, ending 18 July.

Their submission came after considerable efforts had been put into removing any administrative or political hurdles that might have prevented them from coming to IMO. Secretary-General William O’Neill conducted meetings earlier this year with the then President of the European Union Maritime Transport Ministers’ Council, Mr. Yorgos Anomeritis, and the Vice-President of the European Union, Mrs. Loyola de Palacio, during which he urged Member Governments to bring any safety and environmental issues relating to the Prestige incident to IMO for consideration and appropriate action. In submitting these new requirements to IMO, the EU countries once again confirmed the vital role played by IMO as the only forum in which effective, global regulations for international shipping can be formulated, and reiterated their own strong commitment to this important principle.

The MEPC decision to proceed with these proposals at an Extra Session of the Committee in December, so that they might be further refined, with a view to their subsequent adoption, once again demonstrates the urgency with which IMO can address pressing issues and the realistic, pragmatic and well-balanced approach that can be achieved within the framework of a truly international forum.

Speaking on behalf of the Secretary-General Mr. William O’Neill at the close of the MEPC session, Assistant Secretary-General Mr. Efthimios Mitropoulos said that the outcome of the intense negotiations on the issue was successful in general terms, although the decisions made were not final, pending the extra MEPC session in December.

Although a number of points within the overall context of the proposed draft amendments to MARPOL were left in square brackets - awaiting final decision - “the outcome of this week’s work shows the emerging trends on which Governments, the industry and, as necessary, the Secretariat should work between now and December to pave the way for consensus decisions to be made at the end of the day,” Mr. Mitropoulos said.

“We should, therefore, be hopeful that the spirit of cooperation, which prevailed during the week, will also be demonstrated in December so that IMO would be able, once again, to do what it was founded to do, that is to encourage and facilitate the adoption of global standards to regulate shipping, and that it does so on the basis of realistic, pragmatic and well-balanced consideration of items on its agenda,” he added.
Feasibility study gives green light to simplified VDRs

A study carried out by an IMO correspondence group has concluded that retrofitting existing cargo ships with Voyage Data Recorders (VDRs) is feasible and desirable and that a simplified VDR (S-VDR) could be specified for existing cargo ships. The Organization’s Sub-Committee on Safety of Navigation (NAV) will now refer this as a recommendation to the Maritime Safety Committee.

Draft amendments to regulation V/20 on a phased-in carriage requirement for a shipborne simplified Voyage Data Recorder (S-VDR) have now been agreed by the Sub-Committee for approval by the MSC and subsequent adoption. The proposed draft regulation would require a VDR, which may be a simplified voyage data recorder (S-VDR), to be fitted to cargo ships above 3,000 gross tonnage. The proposed draft regulation would phase in the requirement for cargo ships over 20,000 gross tonnage first, possibly by 2007, to be followed by cargo ships above 3,000 gross tonnage, possibly by 2008.

New role proposed for IMO in developing goal-based ship standards

IMO’s Maritime Safety Committee has held extensive discussions relating to proposals that IMO should play a larger role in determining the standards to which new ships are built, following referral of the original proposals from Bahamas and Greece to the Committee by the Council at its 89th session in November 2002. The majority of delegations which spoke supported the proposal of the Bahamas and Greece that IMO should commence a programme to devise basic goal-based standards for the design and construction of new ships, while continuing to draw on the experience, knowledge and expertise of IACS and others.

During the debate, the Committee noted that the current system and, in particular, the services rendered by IACS, had contributed to enhanced safety standards. But the debate was centred on whether there was need for further improvements. The Committee noted the complementary roles of IMO and IACS in the common efforts to raise the technical standards of ships, and agreed to forward its discussion on the proposals to the Council (at its 90th session June 16-20) for its consideration in the context of the development of the Organization’s Strategic Plan, and to include a new item on “Goal-based new ship construction standards” in its work programme and agenda for MSC 78 (May 2004).

Correspondence Group, first established by the IR O Legal Committee in 1999 to consider the implementation of the HNS Convention, held a special consultative meeting in Ottawa, Canada, in June 2003. The meeting, attended by delegations of several Member States, as well as intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, reached agreement on a number of detailed technicalities arising under the Convention. A number of recommendations based on the conclusions reached in Ottawa should, if adopted by LEG III in October, greatly facilitate States implementation of the HNS Convention. In particular, these conclusions focus on the issuance and control of insurance certificates, the identification and reporting of HNS, the identification of the receivers of HNS (who will become liable for losses to fund compensation under the HNS regime). In addition, the meeting considered proposed compliance and verification systems, and electronic monitoring and reporting databases.

A noteworthy milestone in the work to promote implementation of this key IMO convention has been the development of an electronic database developed by the International Oil Pollution Compensation Fund to identify and report receipts of imports of HNS as required under the HNS Convention. The database will provide the means to overcome much of the administrative burden that has posed an obstacle to implementation of the HNS Convention. A demonstration of the database was given at the meeting by the Secretariat of the IOPC Fund. The electronic database has shown that many of the administrative details that had previously caused a particular concern have now been taken care of with a straightforward and transparent system to meet the requirements under the terms of the Convention.

The Ottawa meeting agreed that the core work of the Correspondence Group has now been completed and that Member States should be able to use the outcome of the Conclusions from the meeting to work towards ratification and implementation of the Convention with a view to early entry into force.

REMPEC takes training lead

Followed the 2002 adoption of the new Protocol to the Barcelona Convention, the Regional Marine Pollution Emergency Response Centre for the Mediterranean Sea (REMPEC) has organized its first training activity in the field of prevention of pollution from ships, a short Training Course on M arpol Annex I for ship inspectors from Cyprus and Israel, held in Larnaca, Cyprus during July.

T he IMO Council has approved a set of proposed objectives and principles presented by a working group established to develop the proposed Model Audit Scheme for Member States. The aim of the audit scheme will be to determine to what extent Member States are implementing and enforcing the applicable IMO instruments, with a view to enhancing their performance. In order to achieve this, a number of objectives will be considered, including: confirmation of the Member State in enacting legislation for the applicable IMO instruments to which it is a Party; the administration and enforcement of the applicable laws and regulations of the Member State; the delegation of authority by a Member State in terms of the implementation of the convention requirements; the control and monitoring mechanisms of the Member State’s survey and certification process and of its recognized organizations; the fostering of capacity-building and the provision of related technical assistance; provision to the Member States of feedback, intended to assist in improving its capacity to implement the applicable instruments; provision to all Member States of feedback on generic lessons learnt from audits, so that the benefits can be widely shared; and systematic feedback of any lessons learnt from the audits into the work of the Organization.

The Model Audit Scheme will also contain references to the proposed Code for the implementation of [mandatory] IMO instruments, but will be developed in such a way that, if the Code does not materialize, the scheme would remain independent and viable. The Council also agreed that sovereignty and universality, consistency, transparency, objectivity and timeliness; transparency and disclosure; quality and inclusiveness; and continual improvement should be the underlying principles of the Scheme.

The Council approved a draft Assembly resolution to endorse the establishment of the voluntary IMO Model Audit Scheme for submission to the twenty-third session of the Assembly for adoption, taking into account the recommendations of MSC 77 and GCC 53 on the matter and subject to the Council’s consideration of any recommendations of M EPC 49.

Ottawa meeting clears HNS implementation hurdles

A new role proposed for IMO in developing goal-based ship standards

NGOs - consultative status reviewed

A correspondence group has established that a shipborne simplified Voyage Data Recorder (S-VDR) has also been agreed (subject to comments by the Sub-Committee on Audits and Communications, Search and Rescue) and these will be put before the MSC for adoption in May 2004. Under SOLAS regulation V 20, passenger ships and ships other than passenger ships of 3000 gross tonnage and upwards constructed on or after 1 July 2000 must carry voyage data recorders (VDRs) to assist in accident investigations. At the time of the adoption or the regulation, in 2000 (it entered into force in July 2002), the MSC agreed that a feasibility study on the mandatory carriage of VDRs on existing cargo ships should be carried out and it should be finalized by 1 January 2004. For a full report of the 49th meeting of the NAV sub-committee, turn to F 37.
The celebration of World Maritime Day provides an annual opportunity for the goals and objectives of the International Maritime Organization to be brought to the attention of a far broader audience than is usually the case. It also serves to give the wider shipping community a central platform, from which overall public awareness of shipping and of the very positive, not to say vital role that this industry plays in all our lives, can be raised to new levels.

The role of shipping in the global economy

In today’s global economy, hundreds of millions of people all over the world rely on ships to transport the great multitude of goods and products that surround them, as well as the materials that went into making them, not to mention the food they eat and the fuel that heats and lights their homes and powers their transport systems. Yet, for most of them, shipping, and the huge range of related maritime activities that together go to make up what is loosely termed “the shipping industry” do not register a particularly strong echo on their personal radar. The very nature of shipping makes it something of a “background” industry for the majority of people. Ports today are generally situated away from the main cities which means that, for most people, ships are conveniently out of sight and out of mind.

Yet shipping is the bulk delivery mechanism of international trade and commerce, and it plays a massive part in our collective well being; millions of tonnes of raw materials, finished products and goods are transported economically, cleanly and without mishap every day of the week, underpinning the global economy and fulfilling international trade. And never has shipping been so cost-effective, so safe and so clean as it is today. Indeed, it is something of a testimony to the ever improving safety record of the industry that it is able quietly to go about its business, largely unsung and generally unheralded. Shipping usually only comes to greater prominence when, as inevitably happens from time to time, the bleaker side of the industry rears its head, when an accident or pollution occurs. It is a perennial truth that good news is no news. But the combined effect of the many national celebrations and related events that take place all over the world on World Maritime Day is to give renewed focus to this key global industry and to reflect in greater detail on some of the considerable progress that has been made towards IMO’s objectives of creating a framework within which safe and secure shipping can operate on clean seas, with minimal negative impact on the environment.

The fact that shipping today is safer, more secure and more environmentally friendly than ever before is largely due to the unstinting efforts of people within the industry who have dedicated their professional lives to achieving these goals. And, in selecting our theme for World Maritime Day 2003, we have chosen to draw particular attention to
safety had an economic advantage over their more conscientious rivals and was thus a threat to any serious attempt to improve shipping safety. But it was not until the founding of the United Nations itself that a permanent international body was set up to promote maritime safety more effectively – and that body is IMO. IMO was established by means of a convention adopted in Geneva in 1948. The convention received sufficient signatures to enter into force ten years later and the first meeting of IMO was held in 1959.

One of the most important tasks allocated to IMO when it met for the first time was to develop international standards which would replace the multiplicity of national legislation that then existed. The conventions and other standards developed since IMO was established have been so effective that today it is widely considered that there is consensus among the vast majority of maritime countries that these standards are the most important conventions.

IMO’s global focus

As international maritime trade grew, the question of how to ensure safety at sea took on increasing importance, and it became apparent that the best way of achieving significant and widespread improvements in safety at sea would be through the development of international regulations that would be followed by all shipping nations. From the mid-19th century onwards a number of such treaties were adopted. One example is the 1865 rules of the road at sea – known as the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea – which were adopted by more than 30 maritime countries. It was not until 1914, however, that the famous Titanic disaster which led to the adoption one year later of the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea Convention (SOLAS). SOLAS was adopted after the United Kingdom called a conference following the Titanic disaster and it was the first convention to lay down international rules governing safety of shipping, such as making sure enough lifeboats and lifejackets are provided for all the persons on board. The convention also provided for the appointment of “armchair” committees who would have no concept of what has actually gone into drawing up these standards, nor of how IMO works and of the many people whose combined efforts he is now seeing the end result of.

The real core of IMO’s work is carried out in a chain of international and regional conferences and the activities of the various committees and working groups which groups to which the Member Governments send their experts. As well as the IMO secretariat, the large number of international organizations also attend by non-governmental organizations representing a wide diversity of interests from within and outside the industry itself and by intergovernmental groups that represent regional interests. These meetings usually last a week or more and are extremely intense and concentrated in their nature.

The highest governing body of the Organization is the Assembly, which consists of all Member States and meets once every two years in regular sessions, although it may also meet in an extraordinary session if necessary. The Assembly is responsible for all the work, programme, budget and determining the financial arrangements of the Organization. At the most recent Assembly, in 2001, there were more than 900 delegates from all over the world.

Next in order of seniority is the IMO Council, which is the executive organ of IMO and is responsible, under the Assembly, for supervising the work of the Organization. Between sessions of the Assembly the Council performs most of the functions of the Assembly.

The detailed work of the Council includes co-ordinating the activities of the organs of the Organization, considering the draft work programme and budget estimates of the Organization before they are submitted to the Assembly, receiving reports and proposals from the Committees and other organs and submitting them to the Assembly and relevant committees and to the Assembly and relevant committees, and receiving reports and proposals from the Committees and other organs and submitting them to the Assembly and relevant committees.

The membership of the Council has now increased to 40 Member States. Last year IMO Secretary-General William O’Neil welcomed eight additional Member States onto the Council following the entry into force on 7 November 2002 of the 1993 amendments to the IMO Convention which expanded the size of the Council to 40 Member States from 32. The enlargement is designed to ensure that the Council best represents the interests of all 162 IMO Member States. Council members are elected by the Assembly for two-year terms, which begin after each regular session of the Assembly. In the new, enlarged Council, ten places are designated for States deemed to have the largest interest in providing international shipping services; ten for other States with largest interest in international seaborne trade; and twenty for States not elected in either of those two categories but which have special interests in maritime transport or navigation and whose election to the Council will ensure the representation of all major geographic areas of the world.

International expertise, applied in detail

Reporting to the Council are the four main Committees: the Maritime Safety Committee (MSC); the Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC); the Legal Committee (LEG); and the Technical Cooperation Committee (TCC). There is also a Facilities Committee, (FAL), and a number of Sub-Committees are in place to provide the structure of the main technical committees.

The MSC is the highest technical body of the Organization. It consists of all Member States and, according to the IMO Convention, its purpose is to “consider any matter within the scope of the Organization concerned with aids to navigation, construction and equipment of vessels, maritime safety procedures and requirements, hydrographic information, logbooks and navigational records, marine casualty investigations, salvage and rescue and any other matters directly affecting maritime safety”.

The Committee also has the responsibility for considering and submitting recommendations and guidelines on safety for possible adoption by the Assembly, and an “expanded MSC” adopts amendments to conventions such as SOLAS and includes all Member States as well as countries which are Party to whichever convention is being amended, even if they are not IMO Member States.

The MEPC, which consists of all Member States, is empowered to decide on the most appropriate measure, or any other matter within the scope of the Organization concerned with prevention and control of pollution from ships. In particular it is concerned with the adoption and amendment of conventions and other regulations and measures to ensure their enforcement. The MEPC was first established as a subsidiary body of the Assembly and raised to full statutory status in 1985.

The MSC and MEPC are assisted in their work by nine
sub-committees which are also open to all Member States. The immensely detailed and highly focussed nature of the work that goes on in the sub-committees is clear from their titles: Bulk Liquids and Gases; Carriage of Dangerous Goods, Solid Cargoes and Containers; Fire Protection; Radio-communications and Search and Rescue; Safety of Navigation; Ship Design and Equipment; Stability and Load Lines and Fishing Vessels Safety; Standards of Training and Watch-keeping and Flag State Implementation.

The other committees of IMO are the Legal Committee, the Technical Co-operation Committee and the Facilitation Committee and like the others all three are open to all IMO Member States. The Legal Committee was established in 1967, originally as a subsidiary body to deal with legal questions which arose in the aftermath of the Torrey Canyon disaster. Today it is empowered to deal with any legal matters within the scope of the Organization.

The Technical Co-operation Committee is required to consider any matter within the scope of the Organization concerned with the implementation of technical co-operation projects for which the Organization acts as the executing or co-operating agency and any other matters related to the Organization’s activities in the technical co-operation field. It was established in 1969 as a subsidiary body of the Council, and was institutionalised by means of an amendment to the IMO Convention which entered into force in 1984.

The Facilitation Committee was established in May 1972 and deals with IMO’s work in eliminating unnecessary formalities and “red tape” in international shipping. The 1991 amendments to the IMO Convention, when they come into force, will institutionalise the Facilitation Committee, putting it on the same standing as the other Committees. However, these amendments have not yet received enough acceptances to come into force.

Within this basic overall structure there are numerous working groups, correspondence groups and informal meetings, some of which are long-standing while others are formed and disbanded according to need. There is, on average, a meeting every other week at IMO and at busy times three or four meetings may come back-to-back.

All of this work is supported by the IMO secretariat, a small staff of about 300 people who provide the Member States with a host of services including interpretation, translation and the production of documents, as well as offering technical guidance whenever it may be required. Some 120 nationalities are represented on the secretariat staff, which is structured in six divisions: Maritime Safety, Marine Environment, Technical Co-operation, Legal and External Relations, Administrative and Conference.

Thus the work of IMO represents the collective efforts of many hundreds of people who are dedicated to ensuring that there is a comprehensive and effective framework of international standards surrounding the design, construction, operation and manning of ships. Every aspect is considered in the minutest of detail and absolutely no stone is left unturned in the pursuit of standards that are fair, effective and which can be applied uniformly throughout the world.

Near-universal application of key measures

Often, an incident or a series of incidents provides the spark for a new piece of work at IMO. In the same way that the Titanic prompted the first SOLAS Convention, so, in more recent times, have other incidents made their mark. The Torrey Canyon was instrumental in providing the impetus for the MARPOL Convention; the Estonia prompted a thorough review of the safety of ro-ro ferries; the Nakhodka and the Prestige incidents led to increases in the amount of compensation available to the victims of oil spills; the Prestige and Erika incidents caused the regulations surrounding single and double-hull tankers to be reviewed, while both those vessels and the Castor incident served to bring the question of places of refuge for stricken vessels into sharp focus.

But, in the majority of

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World Maritime Day 2003

Delegates at an IMO Sub-Committee debate international shipping standards in minute detail.

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Under IMO's leadership, standards within shipping have reached unprecedented levels (Frontline).

Features

World Maritime Day 2003

A second chart showed the same data from the same sources but displayed as the loss rate per million flight or voyage hours at risk, over a series of three year periods dating from 1985-87 through to 1997-99. The startling truth revealed was that the commercial aircraft loss rate is three times that for merchant ships. A chart second showed the same data from the same sources but displayed as the loss rate per 1000 units at risk. Yet those amazing statistics clearly do not support the popular view of shipping as an industry with a safety problem, and none of the advances that have been achieved would have been possible without dedicated and committed people working with a passion to make things better. Those largely unknown people who commit so much of their time and energies to refining the international standards that have helped make shipping the dependable global transport mechanism that it is today have already been alluded to. But these represent only part of the story. Regulation alone does not prevent accidents from occurring and, if casualty rates are to be improved still further, the commitment to safety, security and sound environmental practice must continue to spread throughout the industry. It is in the implementation of regulations and standards that the real key to improvement lies, and in this context great credit must be given to all those who play a part in it.

Redressing the balance through technical co-operation

To address this imbalance, IMO has developed an Integrated Technical Co-operation Programme which is designed to assist Governments that lack the technical knowledge and resources needed to operate a shipping industry successfully, by helping them to build up their human and institutional capacities for uniform and effective compliance with the Organization’s regulatory framework. IMO’s Technical Co-operation activities are conceived and developed through a partnership between the recipient countries, the resource providers and the Organization. This partnership is based on three complementary factors - the assessed needs of the developing countries, (and their full ownership and direction of the assistance process), the interests of the resource providers in supporting sustainable maritime development and the promotion of uniform implementation and enforcement of IMO’s rules and standards. These technical assistance activities are delivered mostly

Implementation holds the key

Although new measures to improve maritime safety or prevent pollution may begin to take shape in detailed discussion among experts in IMO committees, their eventual success is always dependent on the commitment, dedication and skill of a whole range of people who make a contribution to the implementation of the standards that are agreed at IMO. Maritime lawyers and administrators in the Member States have the task of ensuring that new measures are properly incorporated into their national legal frameworks, and that the appropriate infrastructure and expertise for whatever inspection, testing, verification and certification may be required is in place. And then the responsibility for successful implementation spreads wider still, to a whole network of people embracing classification societies, Port State control, training establishments, harbour authorities, pilots and so on.

It is in helping to establish this invaluable human resource capacity worldwide that another important facet of IMO’s work plays a most significant part. Although IMO adopts international shipping regulations, it is the responsibility of Governments to implement those regulations. But many countries – especially the developing ones – lack the resources and facilities they need to give full and complete effect to IMO’s instruments.

In its publication “Analysis of major claims” the United Kingdom P&I Club examines ten-year trends in maritime risk and in doing so it stresses once again the critical nature of the human element in establishing shipping’s safety credentials. Although claims resulting from human error are decreasing slowly in absolute terms, their relative importance is increasing in a climate where ship failure is significantly reducing. Three out of every five major claims are directly related to human error, says the report.
administration, the creation of regional networks of maritime authorities, the development of regional Port State control mechanisms, the promotion of regional strategies for maritime safety and marine environment protection, the modernization of maritime legislation, assistance in the development of a global search and rescue plan and training personnel to operate it, the establishment of regional co-ordination centres and development of national and regional contingency plans and related training courses for marine pollution preparedness and response in partnership with Governments and the oil industry at national and international levels, the provision of fellowships for specialized maritime training both "on the job" and at institutions, the development of national and regional maritime training institutions and the establishment of regional associations of maritime training academies.

Global training centres create network of commitment

Among the most significant and permanent of IMO's technical co-operation activities has been the establishment of three global training centres: the World Maritime University at Malmö, Sweden, IMO International Maritime Law Institute at Mālta, Malta, and the IMO International Maritime Academy at Trieste, Italy.

The IMO International Maritime Academy is an international institution for postgraduate studies, with courses aimed primarily at those who already hold a university degree or equivalent education, and who already work in Government structures, but who need some further training to improve the quality of their work. Students are drawn from all over the world. The IMO International Maritime Law Institute is an international centre for the training of specialists in maritime law and the development of expertise in the international legal regime of merchant shipping and the related areas of maritime law and the general law of the sea. The World Maritime University (WMU) was established in 1983 by IMO and its mission is to serve the global maritime community as a centre of excellence and IMO's apex institution for high-level maritime education and training.

Through its programmes, the WMU provides developing countries with the latest knowledge and technological skills in the maritime transport industry, without neglecting the more traditional aspects of seafaring. Its courses are structured to equip graduates with the knowledge and skills to enable them successfully to fulfill their national responsibilities for effective maritime development in their respective countries. They are also geared towards problem-solving in the wider context of global issues, and the university stresses the importance of teamwork and co-operation across national and disciplinary boundaries.

Speaking at the University's 20th anniversary earlier this year, William O'Neill, who in addition to being IMO Secretary-General also serves as Chancellor to the WMU, said: "The WMU is unique - not just because it is the only United Nations institution with a postgraduate degree programme in maritime safety and marine environmental protection - but also because its graduates now form an exclusive group of highly trained maritime experts who act as catalysts for change nationally, regionally and internationally."

"WMU graduates," he added, "in their role as managers of change, find that they very quickly gain a firm grasp of the direction of future global developments, not to mention an invaluable network of contacts within the international maritime community which is a useful tool for the up-and-coming administrator or decision-maker."

Grades from the WMU invariably go on to become the kind of committed people working for safe, secure and clean seas that this year's World Maritime Day theme has been selected to highlight, and their contribution has been immense. WMU graduates have returned to their home countries to take up a wide variety of pivotal positions in the shipping and related industries. Some have become government ministers, deputy ministers and ambassadors. Others have pursued career paths that have led to senior jobs in shipping companies, regional maritime organizations and national port and harbour authorities. Still more have become educators and senior surveyors. Many have returned to IMO as part of their national delegations. Collectively they form a unique cadre of highly trained maritime experts, continuing to pass on the skills and values they absorbed during their time at WMU and thereby widening still further the influence of this unique institution.

Ship operators and ship staff play a vital role

But, notwithstanding the huge contribution that all these people make in the pursuit of enhanced maritime safety and a better environmental record for shipping, the final responsibility must eventually lie with ship operators, and with the ship managers and ship staff that they employ.

Indeed, it is the seafarers who can make the most significant contribution of all in the creation of a culture of safety within the industry as a whole. In his opening remarks to the 77th session of the IMO Maritime Safety Committee earlier this year, William O'Neill referred to shipping as "an industry to be proud of" and remarked that today it is in a much better state, from the safety and pollution prevention viewpoints, than it was a decade ago. However, he went on readily to admit that the end of the voyage has not yet been reached and that more needs to be done if we are to create a safer, more secure and environmentally friendlier maritime world.

Accidents still occur and there is clearly a great deal of work that still needs to be done. While the regulatory regime undoubtedly has its part to play, we should be clear that the reason why accidents continue to befall ships, is, in the vast majority of cases, because somebody, somewhere along the line, did not take proper action to avert a problem, or did something wrong, for whatever reason.

This is why it is so important that IMO's current focus on people, as has been clearly demonstrated by the introduction in recent years of the International Maritime Organization Code, and the updating of the STCW Convention on maritime training and education standards, must be sustained. And why, more than ever, support for IMO's programme of technical co-operation, through which the network of people who have necessary skills required to ensure that IMO's measures are successfully implemented can be extended ever further into the developing world, must continue to grow.

As an industry, shipping is able to boast of a history and a tradition that few others can match. And yet it remains as relevant to the modern world as it ever had been - perhaps even more so because, without it, today's global economy simply could not exist. The legacy that seafarers hand down to one another is one of pride in a job well done, of attention to detail, of skills diligently learned and painstakingly applied; in short, of seamanship.
Seafaring is potentially a dangerous business and it is manifestly clear that, these days, the possible harmful consequences of accidents are more serious than ever before. One has only to consider the aftermath of some of the high-profile oil spills that have occurred over the years to conclude that the responsibility of the ship owner now extends far beyond the immediate concerns for crew, ship and cargo to the wider world of the global environment that we all share.

Manpower in crisis?
It is widely predicted that, unless something is done very soon, shipping will soon face a manpower crisis; there simply will not be enough properly qualified officers to run a world fleet that continues to increase in size. ISF/BIMCO statistics predict a 40,000 shortfall in navigation officers worldwide by 2010. If the industry is to maintain and improve standards, it cannot afford to ignore this reported shortage of good entrants to the industry. The evidence suggests that young people today do not seem to find seafaring an attractive or appealing career. As an aside, there can be little doubt that the imprisonment and punishment of seafarers generally work for manning agencies rather than as a result of the company’s own management. As it was, a challenging, exciting and slightly exotic life in which individuality and an independent spirit were important elements. It was relatively well rewarded, too. In the United Kingdom, for instance, a third mate could expect to earn considerably more than a teacher, while needing about the same general knowledge and experience. It included the SMCP is required for the certification of officers in charge of navigational watch and the SM CPO, to replace the Standard Marine Navigational Vocabulary (SM NV) which had been in place since 1977. The SM CP includes phrases which have been developed to cover the most important safety-related fields of navigation, ship-to-ship and ship-to-shore communications. The aim is to get round 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 has been drafted to fit a simplified version of maritime English. It includes phrases for use in routine situations such as berthing as well as standard phrases and responses for use in emergency situations. Under the revised 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.

Fatigue as a factor
The problem of fatigue has become increasingly important in recent years. Writing in the journal “Seaways” earlier this
New security measures will pose a challenge for the shipping industry

year, Captain Heint-Merkens, President of the International M arine Pilots Association, said, “The highly motivated and committed officer/crew team is well in line with fatigue trends to be rare. Put another way, it is almost the fabled exception among the merchant seafarers suffering from widespread demotivation and frustration throughout the world.” He went on, “There is no question that the workload of bridge crews and particularly masters, has increased dramatically in recent years. Masters frequently complain about their administrative burdens. They are physically tired and mentally stressed, particularly in pilotage waters.”

The General Secretary of the International Transport Workers’ Federation, David Cockcroft, told a similar story to delegates at this year’s International Maritime Policy Conference in London. “Fatigue is caused by constant economic pressure on manning levels and most seafarers including those with watch-keeping responsibilities are today working hours which are well beyond those which would be considered safe or reasonable if they worked ashore,” he said.

Indeed, the whole question of fatigue and its influence on the ability of ships’ staff to work safely and effectively has been taken up by IMO. Comprehensive guidelines on fatigue were issued last year, and a high priority item on the agenda for the International Maritime Policy Conference in London was the need for the development of a security consciousness, to support the frequently stated goal of developing a safety culture and environmental consciousness in all maritime operations.

Among the raft of measures that have been adopted, the most far-reaching is the International Ship and Port Facility Security Code which will be implemented through a new chapter XI-2 of the SOLAS Convention. The Code has two parts, one mandatory and the other recommendatory. In essence, the Code takes the approach that ensuring the security of ships and port facilities is basically a risk management activity and that, to determine what security measures are appropriate, an assessment of the risks must be made in each particular case.

The purpose of the Code is to provide a standardized, consistent framework for evaluating risks, enabling governments to balance changes in threat and changes in vulnerability for ships and port facilities by determining appropriate security levels and corresponding security measures. As the perceived threat increases, vulnerability will be correspondingly reduced by a consequent increase in the security provisions.

But, to return to one of the central themes of this paper, the hard work and dedication that went into creating the regulatory framework will be of little value if the same level of commitment and expertise is not brought to bear on its implementation. The new maritime security measures enter into force on 1 July 2004, and in the period between their adoption and this deadline there is an immense amount to be done. As IMO Secretary-General William O’Neill told delegates to the thirty-fourth session of the Sub-Committee on Standards of Training and Watchkeeping, “Because of the worldwide escalation of acts of terrorism, I consider that it would be prudent for all parties concerned to start putting in place, methodically and systematically and as soon as possible, all the legislative, administrative and operational infrastructure needed to give effect to the decisions of the Maritime Security Conference without waiting until the entry-into-force date of 1 July 2004, so as to avoid having to take hasty action at the last minute.”

He added, “In the meantime, Governments and the industry should bear in mind that the potential risk areas in which their ships are operating, take steps to increase awareness of the potential dangers so that their ships’ crews will be extremely vigilant and alert to any security threat they may encounter or be suspicious of, whether they are at port, at offshore terminals or underway. The need for co-operation among all parties involved is paramount importance.”

Although rarely in the limelight, shipping does not exist in a vacuum and industry leaders are well aware of the changes that are gradually taking hold in a global society. The world outside of shipping – which in effect means the industry’s customers – now places a higher premium on certain core values than ever before. High safety and security standards and a strong environmental consciousness are now expected by the majority rather than just wished for by the few. There can be little doubt that the proportion of people in shipping who share a genuine commitment to strive to embrace these values is greater than ever before.

It is part of our challenge to do all we can to make sure that proportion continues to grow, and to see to it that shipping is able to attract and retain people of the highest calibre: committed people working for safe, secure and clean seas.
IMO has adopted a revised Annex B to the 1988 Load Lines Protocol, to provide significant improvements to the structural safety of ships, in particular bulk carriers. The MSC adopted what amounts to a comprehensive revision of the technical regulations of the original Load Lines Convention. The amendments are expected to enter into force on 1 January 2005.

The amendments to Annex B to the 1988 Load Lines Protocol (i.e. the International Convention on Load Lines, 1966, as modified by the Protocol of 1988 relating thereto) include a number of important revisions, in particular to regulations concerning: strength and intact stability of ships; definitions; superstructure and bulkheads; doors; position of hatchways, doorways and ventilators; hatchway coamings; hatch covers; machinery space openings; miscellaneous openings in freeboard and superstructure decks; cargo ports and other similar openings; spurling pipes and cable lockers; side scuttles; windows and skylights; calculation of freeing ports; protection of the crew and means of safe passage for crew; calculation of freeboard; sheer; minimum bow height and reserve buoyancy; and others.

The amendments will not affect the 1966 LL Convention and will only apply to approximately two-thirds of the world's fleet, i.e., to those ships flying the flags of States Party to the 1988 LL Protocol. At the end of April 2003, the Load Lines Protocol 1988 had been ratified by 63 States representing 63.25 per cent of world merchant shipping tonnage, while the 1966 LL Convention had been ratified by 150 States representing 98.45 per cent.

The MSC also agreed a draft Assembly resolution on Wider acceptance of the Protocol of 1988 relating to the International Convention on Load Lines, 1966 to encourage all Contracting Governments to the 1966 Load Lines Convention to become Parties to the 1988 LL Protocol, as the most practical way of achieving widespread application of the new provisions. The draft resolution will be submitted to the 23rd Assembly in November for adoption.

Amendments to SOLAS

The expanded MSC adopted amendments to chapter V on Safety of Navigation of the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS), 1974, as amended. The amendments are expected to enter into force on 1 July 2006.

The amendments to SOLAS regulations V/2 Definitions and V/22 Navigation Bridge Visibility add the definition of "length" to regulation V/2 and a consequential editorial change is made to regulation V/22. The definition states that "length of a ship means its length overall".

Amendments to SOLAS regulation V/28 on Records of navigational activities add a new paragraph on daily reporting. The amendment will require all ships of 500 gross tonnage and above, engaged on international voyages exceeding 48 hours, to submit a daily report to their company, to include ship's position; ship's course and speed; and details of any external or internal conditions that are affecting the ship's voyage or the normal safe operation of the ship. The aim of the amendments is to address the responsibilities of ship operators to provide information of benefit to those responsible for mounting rescue operations.
Draft recommendations on functional requirements for long-range identification and tracking of ships were endorsed and the Sub-Committee on Safety of Navigation (NAV) requested to review them and submit comments to the Sub-Committee on Radiocommunications, Search and Rescue (COM S AR). In addition, the MSC established a correspondence group to look into the issues and report to COM S AR.

The MSC noted that neither of the two types of floating production, storage and offloading units (FPSOs) and floating storage units (FSUS), were ships subject to the provisions of the ISPS Code, but that they should have some security procedures in place. Single buoy moorings (SBMs), attached to an offshore facility would be covered by that facility’s security regime and if it was connected to a port facility it would be covered by the port facility security plan (PFSP). In all cases the intention was to provide sufficient security to maintain the integrity of ships and port facilities covered by SOLAS and the ISPS Code.

The MSC also approved a revised MSC/Circ.1073 to the MSC/Circ.967 to include provisions for the handling by MRCCs of alerts received from ships in response to acts of violence, including terrorist acts and other security incidents. A correspondence group was established to draft an interim format and guidelines for the CSR for submission to the 72nd Assembly for consideration and adoption of an associated draft Assembly resolution. The MSC also approved an MSC/Circ.1072 for the authorization of Recognized Security Organisations acting on behalf of the Administration and/or Designated Authority of a Contracting Government.

DE 47 should develop draft amendments to the resolution on Application of IACS Unified Requirements to include provisions for the handling by MRCCs of alerts received from ships in response to acts of violence, including terrorist acts and other security incidents. A correspondence group was established to draft an interim format and guidelines for the CSR for submission to the 72nd Assembly for consideration and adoption of an associated draft Assembly resolution. The MSC also approved an MSC/Circ.1072 for the authorization of Recognized Security Organisations acting on behalf of the Administration and/or Designated Authority of a Contracting Government.

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The MSC considered further the development of the proposed IMO Model Audit Scheme, which would be 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.

The Joint MSC/Marine Environment Protection Committee (M EPC)/Technical Co-operation Committee (TCC) Working Group on the voluntary IMO Model Audit Scheme met during the session. The MSC noted the Group’s progress in developing:

• Draft Framework for Member State Audits
• Draft Procedures for Member State Audits
• List of substantive issues for the development of the scheme
• Draft workplan for the development of the scheme, in particular, the proposed establishment of a correspondence group and the convening of the Joint MSC/M/MEPC/TCC Working Group before 1 June 2004 and June 2005.

The MSC endorsed the proposed draft Assembly resolution on the Voluntary IMO Model Audit Scheme. The MSC approved the report of the group as far as maritime safety and security matters were concerned, and

The MSC noted that paragraph 9.4 of part A of the ISPS Code required that, in order for an ISSC to be issued, the guidance in part B would need to be taken into account and agreed that it was assumed that an ISSC would not be issued unless paragraphs 8.1 to 8.11 of part B of the ISPS Code had been taken into account. It was agreed that an MSC Circular giving guidance on this would be developed and issued after the session.

The MSC agreed that an ISSC should only be issued when the ship has an approved ship security plan and when there is objective evidence to the satisfaction of the Administration that the ship is operating in accordance with the provisions of the approved plan. As an interim measure, it was agreed that the ISSC would be accepted as prima facie evidence that training has been conducted in accordance with the ISPS Code. The flag State was responsible for deciding how that training was to be conducted, and if any additional certification was required. If port State control detected a lack of training, it could take action. The MSC agreed to insert the following caveat, at an appropriate place of the draft Guidelines on places of refuge for ships in need of assistance: “These guidelines do not apply to the following categories of places of refuge: [list]”.

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Banning bulk carriers from sailing with any hold empty: Bulk carriers in the full load condition (90% of the ship’s deadweight tonnage lost was falling). The banning of bulk carriers from sailing with any hold empty has been proposed as a basis in the development of a revised Chapter XI.

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Bulk carrier safety - Circulars approved

The Committee approved the following MSC Circ. circulars relating to bulk carrier safety:

• MSC Circular on Interpretation of SOLAS regulation XII.13 (on Availability of pumping systems)
• MSC Circular on ship design, construction, repair and maintenance
• MSC Circular on Guidelines for bulk carrier hatch cover surveys and owners’ inspections and maintenance. The Committee agreed this would later be followed by the development of amendments to resolution A.744(18) (survey of hatch covers and coamings) and to SOLAS chapter XII (standards for hatch cover securing mechanisms).

In the light of statistical data provided by IACS on the current distribution of the world’s bulk carrier fleet by length and type, as well as extracts from the FSA study on bulk carrier safety carried out by a Japan showing comparative bulk carrier statistical data, the Committee concluded that the FSA study presented in document MSC 77 (N 2) should be reviewed with a limited scope, such as for ships between 130m and 150m in length, and invited interested Member Governments and international organizations, collectively if necessary, to carry out the necessary work and report the results to MSC 78, with a view to finalizing at that session the on-going exercise on bulk carrier safety.

Places of refuge

The issue of places of refuge for ships in distress was discussed in depth, including the consideration of two draft Assembly resolutions on Guidelines on places of refuge for ships in need of assistance and Guidelines on a Maritime Assistance Service (MAS), prepared by the Sub-Committee on Safety of Navigation (NAV).

The MSC instructed NAV 49 to take a number of points into consideration when finalizing the draft resolutions. It also requested NAV 49 to submit the drafts to the Legal Committee, which meets in October, prior to submission to the Assembly in November-December 2003.

The MSC agreed to insert the following caveat, at an appropriate place of the draft Guidelines on places of refuge for ships in need of assistance: “These guidelines do not address the issue of liability and compensation for damage resulting from a decision to grant or deny a ship a place of refuge.” An operative paragraph requesting the Legal Committee to consider, as a matter of priority, the Guidelines from its own perspective, including the provision of financial security to cover coastal State expenses and/or compensation issues, was also added.

Implementation of the revised STCW Convention

The list of Parties deemed to be giving full and complete effect to the provisions of the revised STCW Convention was updated with three more Parties following the submission of the report of IMO Secretary-General William O’Neil on those countries whose evaluations have been completed since the previous MSC meeting. The number of Parties on
From the meetings

Maritime Safety Committee

• 77th session
• 28 May - 6 June 2003

Some of the many delegates to the 77th session of the Maritime Safety Committee who had graduated to MSC 78 for adoption.

Chapter V and the SAR Convention concerning the amendments to SOLAS and SAR

The MSC endorsed the proposal of the COMSAR Correspondence Group on Large Passenger Ship Safety that the Group’s work plan be organized into the following seven themed areas of work: general parameters, including parameters and scale of application; transfer, rescue and recovery; and ability and adequacy of the SAR services; medical issues; communication issues; new concepts and adequacy of current requirements; and human element and training for shore-side SAR issues.

Piracy and armed robbery against ships

The number of acts of piracy and armed robbery against ships, which occurred during the calendar year of 2002, as reported to the Organization, was 276. This is an increase of nearly 4 per cent over the annual figure for 2001. The total number of incidents of piracy and armed robbery against ships, reported to have occurred from 1984 to the end of March 2003, was 3,041.

The MSC endorsed the Secretariat’s proposal to continue with the anti-piracy project that began in 1998. This was based on a number of regional seminars and workshops attended by Government representatives from countries in piracy-affected areas of the world; while phase two consisted of a number of evaluations and assessment missions to different regions. The future plans included follow-up seminars to be held in 2003 and 2004.

Draft Assembly resolutions approved

The MSC approved the following, for submission to the 31st Assembly:

- Draft Assembly resolution on Graphical symbols for shipboard fire control plans (revision of resolution A.854(20))
- Draft Assembly resolution to revoke resolution A.474(18) on Proper use of VHF channels at sea
- Draft Assembly resolution on Revised Survey Guidelines under the Harmonized System of Survey and Certification (resolution A.746(18)), as well as in the fishing vessel Safety Code and Voluntary Guidelines.
- Draft Assembly resolution to SOLAS regulation II-2 concerning inspections of lifeboats, with a view to adoption at MSC 78.
- Draft Assembly resolution to SOLAS regulation II-2 concerning the conditions in which lifeline emergency training and drills should be conducted, with a view to adoption at MSC 78.
- Draft assembly amendments to SOLAS regulation I1.2 concerning carriage requirements for immersion suits, including consequential amendments affecting the regulations related to the equipment, with a view to adoption at MSC 78.
- Draft assembly amendments to SOLAS Part 4 concerning carriage requirements for immersion suits, including consequential amendments for consideration with a view to adoption at MSC 78 and entry into force on 1 January 2006.
- Draft assembly amendments to STCW Code Part B concerning deletion of the term ‘as amended in 1995’ and to the associated STCW 61 circular, to become operative on the same date as the entry into force of the amendments to STCW Code Part B.

Human element

The MSC approved proposed revisions to resolution A.850(20) on Human element Vision, Principles and Goals. The proposed revisions expand on the principles and goals listed, in particular focusing on the operational element in human element issues. It also agreed to establish a correspondence group to develop a human element strategic plan for the Organization and measures to support the plan in accordance with the goals and objectives of resolution A.850(20).
Circulars approved

The MSC approved the following circulars:

MSC Circulars
MSC/Circ.1069 Interpretation of SOLAS regulation XII/13
MSC/Circ.1070 Ship design, construction, repair and maintenance
MSC/Circ.1071 Guidelines for bulk carrier hatch cover surveys and owners’ inspections and maintenance
MSC/Circ.1072 Guidance on provision of ship security alert systems (SSASs)
MSC/Circ.1073 Revised directive for maritime rescue co-ordination centres (M RCCs)
MSC/Circ.1074 Interim guidelines for the authorization of recognized security organizations acting on behalf of the Administration and/or designated authority of a Contracting Government
MSC/Circ.1075 Granting exemptions from the provisions of the International Maritime Dangerous Goods (IMDG) Code
MSC/Circ.1076 Future withdrawal of Inmarsat A services by Inmarsat Ltd.
MSC/Circ.1077 Procedure for evaluation and possible recognition of mobile-satellite systems notified for use in the GMDSS
MSC/Circ.1078 Guidelines to Administrations on reporting false alerts
MSC/Circ.1079 Guidelines for preparing plans for cooperation between search and rescue services and passenger ships (in accordance with SOLAS regulation II-3.5)
MSC/Circ.1080 Amendments to the IAMSAR Manual
MSC/Circ.1081 Unified interpretations of the revised SOLAS chapter II-2
MSC/Circ.1082 Unified interpretation of the Guidelines for the approval of fixed water-based local application fire-fighting systems (MSC/Circ.913)
MSC/Circ.1083 Uniform interpretation of SOLAS regulation III-2/5.11
MSC/Circ.1084 Principles for work on board all types of ships
MSC/Circ.1085 Use of smoke helmet type breathing apparatus
MSC/Circ.1086 Code of practice for atmospheric oil mist detectors
MSC/Circ.1087 Guidelines for partially weather tight hatchway covers on board container ships
MSC/Circ.1088 Questionnaire on national data base standards, records systems and anti-fraud measures
MSC/Circ.1089 Guidance on recommended anti-fraud measures and forgy prevention features for seafarers’ certificates
MSC/Circ.1090 Guidance for Administrations, shipping companies, masters and manning agents for detecting and preventing unlawful practices associated with certificates
MSC/Circ.1091 Issues to be considered when introducing new technology on board ships
MSC/Circ.1092 Parties to the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (STCW), 1978, as amended, confirmed by the Maritime Safety Committee to have communicated information which demonstrates that full and complete effect is given to the relevant provisions of the Convention
MSC/Circ.1093 Guidelines for periodic servicing and maintenance of lifeboats, launching appliances and on-load release gear
MSC/Circ.1094 Application of SOLAS regulation III-2/26 concerning fast rescue boat systems on ro-ro passenger ships
MSC/Circ.1095 Revised minimum safety standards for ships carrying liquids in bulk containing benzene
MSC/Circ.1096 Guidelines on the prevention and management of severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS)

Other circulars
COM SARI/Circ.32 Harmonization of GM DSS requirements for radio installations on board SOLAS ships
STCW/Circ.6 Amendments to Part B of the STCW Code

SOLAS, Amendments 2001 & 2002

I7117, French, £8
I7115, Spanish, £14
I7118, Russian, £14

Load Lines, 2002 Edition

I7010, English, £20


1963E, English, £4

Guidelines on Fatigue, 2002 Edition

1968F, French, £15

Life-Saving Appliances, 2003 Edition

I982E, English, £18

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From the meetings

Maritime Safety Committee

• 77th session
• 28 May - 6 June 2003

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From the meetings

Maritime Safety Committee

• 77th session
• 28 May - 6 June 2003
The Integrated Technical Co-operation Programme (ITCP) for 2004-2005 was approved by IMO’s Technical Co-operation Committee, which met for its 53rd session 11-12 June 2003.

The required funding is estimated at some US$14 million for the entire ITCP. A biennial allocation from the Technical Co-operation Fund (TC Fund) of £5 million, or US$7,850,000, to support the core activities of the new ITCP, was approved. The sum represents some 56 per cent of the total funding required to implement the new ITCP in its entirety, and it is therefore hoped that this significant level of contribution from IMO will attract the necessary cost-sharing from developing partners to meet the growing demand for technical assistance from developing countries.

The use of the biennial allocation will be governed by the objectives set in resolution A.901(21) with respect to the ITCP’s long-term goal and mission statement: to:

- obtain and mobilize resources to meet the growing demand for technical assistance from developing countries;
- make maritime capacity-building a major contributor towards the ITCP’s long-term goal and mission statement: the objectives set out in resolution A.901(21) with respect to the ITCP’s long-term goal and mission statement;
- the United Kingdom has made a contribution of £2 million for the ITCP in its entirety, and it is therefore hoped that this significant level of contribution from IMO will attract the necessary cost-sharing from developing partners to meet the growing demand for technical assistance from developing countries.

The biennial allocation will support activities that concern the Organization’s technical programmes and it will target the following four elements, which, together, promote the build-up of institutional and human capacities at the national, regional and international levels to ensure safer shipping and cleaner oceans:

- maritime capacity-building, as a major contributor towards compliance with international rules and standards relating to maritime safety and the prevention and control of marine pollution, giving priority to technical assistance activities; and
- to help developing countries improve their ability to comply with international rules and standards relating to maritime safety and the prevention and control of marine pollution, giving priority to technical assistance programmes that focus on human resource development, particularly through training, and institutional capacity-building.

Apart from the funding already approved by donor countries and institutions, new sources of ITCP financing have been secured in the last 12 months, enabling the Organization to deliver more projects and activities:

- UNDP Sierra Leone - In 2002, the UNDP Country office in Sierra Leone provided US$460,000 through the SPPO programme for Project PRS1 “Assistance for a feasibility study for the establishment of a port reception facility in the seaports of Sierra Leone”. This project has been successfully implemented.
- African Development Bank (ADB) - ADB has indicated funding through bilateral sources US$433,000 for a project “Study of Maritime Waste Reception Facilities and Environmental Impact in the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) region of Africa”. Terms of reference have been developed by IMO and it is expected to implement this project in 2003.
- Donations by Member States - The following Governments have provided contributions: the Republic of Korea has contributed US$101,000 towards the implementation of STCW activities and US$533,000 for the effective implementation of the International Safety Management Code (ISM Code);
- the United Kingdom has made a contribution of US$57,000 in 2002 for Flag State Implementation activities; and
- Germany has provided US$42,367 to support maritime security related activities in the Member States.

IMO-France Protocol - Within the framework of the management and development of the IMO/France Protocol of co-operation in support of the ITCP, a one-day meeting took place in Paris, in January 2003, bringing together a cross-section of interested French Government departments and institutions. The meeting attracted the interest of French Departments in building ITCP support and proposals were made to increase further the effectiveness of the IMO/France Protocol. France has already provided US$320,500 for the 2002-2003 ITCP and US$444,000 for the Enhancement of Safety of Navigation on Lake Victoria. Further support is being negotiated with the French Government for the provision of on-the-job training in MRCCs and ship safety centres for 2003.

In-kind support - Most of the ITCP activities planned for 2002 were carried out with the collaboration of Member States and regional agencies and institutions, which provided host ship and facilities and support.

IMO regional presence - The three IMO regional offices in Kenya, Ghana and Côte d’Ivoire are expected to continue in operation until at least 31 December 2005, when the three MOUs between IMO and the Governments of Kenya, Ghana and Côte d’Ivoire are renewed by exchange of letters for a further period of two years i.e. up to 31 December 2005. The current MOUs, for the establishment of IMO regional presence offices for Eastern and Southern Africa and West and Central Africa, expire on 31 December 2003.

During 2002, the promotion of training opportunities for women remained one of the key elements of the IMO Women in Development Programme. The impact of this strategy was to increase the visibility of women as role models in a variety of key maritime professions, while supporting the ITCP by increasing the self-sufficiency of developing countries in their supply of a qualified maritime staff.

The Committee agreed to recommend that the IMO council approve a twelve-month extension of the term of appointment of IMO Secretary-General Mr. William A. O’Neill as Chairman of the IMU in the interest of continuity. It was also agreed to recommend that the IMO council approve a twelve-month extension of the term of appointment of Mr. O’Neill as Chairman of the IMU Governing Board until June 2004.

The Committee reviewed the IMO Programme for the Integration of Women in the Maritime Sector (WIMES) and urged States to continue to promote the participation and integration of women in the maritime sector.
From the meetings

The compendium of maritime training institutes (CMTI) website
The CMTI website will also be giving live from July 2003. The website is accessible from www.imo.org under Technical Co-operation section. Maritime training institutes will be invited to use CMTI, through their maritime authorities, to supply information on the courses at their respective training establishments through the password protected updating facility.

The Committee urged national authorities to provide information regarding bilateral maritime assistance and maritime training institutes, respectively, through the Internet Inter-active facility, for inclusion in MARTECAID and CMTI websites.

PORT STATE CONTROL
LONDON, 29 March - 8 April 2004

This widely recognised and practical intensive course is now in its 15th successive year. The course is designed especially for officials in national marine departments, port or terminal operators, ship managers and shipowners.

The course covers in detail the major IMO conventions and codes along with other relevant international regulations and conventions, inspection systems and documentation. Special sections of the course concentrate on ISPS Code. The course is taught by an experienced team of academics and practitioners from the UK, USA and Europe.

Venue: Senate House, University of London
Fees: Sterling £2,500
The course is conducted by the Centre for Maritime Co-operation of the International Chamber of Commerce.

Further details can be obtained from:
Mr Ben Roberts, Course Co-ordinator
ICC Centre for Maritime Co-operation
Maritime House, 1 Lilton Road, Barking, Essex IG11 8HG, United Kingdom
Tel: +44 020 8591 3000 Fax: +44 020 8594 2833
E-mail mcnc@icc-ccs.org.uk Web www.icc-ccs.org.uk

FROM THE MEETINGS

From the meetings

Sub-Committee on Safety of Navigation

49th session
30 June - 4 July 2003

Places of refuge - draft guidelines finalized

Draft Assembly resolutions on Guidelines on places of refuge for ships in need of assistance as well as on the establishment of Maritime Assistance Services (MAS) were finalized, for submission to the 23rd Assembly in late 2003 for adoption. The draft resolution on Guidelines on places of refuge for ships in need of assistance will also be referred to the Legal Committee, meeting before the Assembly, for advice on paragraphs relating to liability and compensation issues.

The need to review the issues surrounding the need for places of refuge was included in a list of measures aimed at enhancing safety and minimizing the risk of oil pollution, drawn up in December 2000 in response to the Erika incident of December 1999. Further urgency to the work came in the aftermath of the incident involving the fully laden tanker Castor, which, in December 2000, developed a structural problem in the Mediterranean Sea. The November 2001 sinking of the Prestige further highlighted the issue.

Carriage of VDRs on existing cargo ships - feasibility study completed

The Sub-Committee agreed to refer to the Maritime Safety Committee (MSC) the recommendation that retrofitting existing cargo ships with Voyage Data Recorders (VDR) would be feasible and desirable and that a simplified VDR (S-VDR) could be specified for existing cargo ships. The recommendation followed a feasibility study carried out by a correspondence group. The Technical Working Group, meeting during the session, concurred with the conclusions of the study.

Under SOLAS regulation V/20, passenger ships and ships other than passenger ships of 3000 gross tonnage and upwards constructed on or after 1 July 2002 must carry voyage data recorders (VDRs) to assist in accident investigations. At the time of the adoption of the regulation, in 2000, (entered into force in July 2002), the MSC agreed that a feasibility study on the mandate for carriage of VDRs on existing cargo ships should be carried out and it should be finalized by 1 January 2004.

The Sub-Committee agreed draft amendments to regulation V/20 on a phased-in carriage requirement for a shipborne simplified Voyage Data Recorder (S-VDR) for approval by the MSC and subsequent adoption. The proposed draft regulation would require a VDR, which may be a simplified voyage data recorder (S-VDR), to be fitted to cargo ships above 3,000 gross tonnage. The proposed draft regulation would phase in the requirement for cargo ships over 20,000 gross tonnage first, possibly by 2007, to be followed by cargo ships above 3,000 gross tonnage, possibly by 2008.

Ships due to be taken permanently out of service could be exempted from the requirements.

The Sub-Committee also agreed, subject to comments by the Sub-Committee on Radiocommunications, Search and Rescue (COMMAR), a draft MSC resolution on performance standards for shipborne simplified voyage data recorders (S-VDRs) for adoption by the MSC in May 2004.

Security issues

The Sub-Committee reviewed a number of issues relating to maritime security following the adoption of measures to enhance maritime security by the December 2002 SOLAS conference. Agreement was reached on the following:

- A revised draft recommendation on functional requirements for long-range identification and tracking of ships, for submission to COMMAR for consideration.
- Proposed draft revisions to section 21 of resolution A.917 (22)- Guidelines for the onboard operational use of shipborne Automatic Identification Systems (AIS). The draft amendments state that the master should report to the competent authority concerned, when switching off the AIS, if the ship is operating in a mandatory ship reporting system, unless it would further compromise the safety or security of the ship.

Radar reflectors - revised performance standards

The Sub-Committee approved draft performance standards for radar reflectors to replace those in resolution A.384(X), and a draft MSC resolution on Adoption of revised performance standards for radar reflectors. The resolution and standards will be submitted to the MSC for adoption in May 2004.

Routing of ships, ship reporting and related matters

The Sub-Committee approved the following for submission to the MSC for adoption, except where otherwise stated:
- New traffic separation schemes (TSSs)
  - New TSS for Ras al Kuh
  - New TSS for the approaches to the Port of Ras al Khuai
  - New TSS in the Adriatic Sea
- Amendments to existing TSSs
  - Establishment of new traffic lanes for ships carrying dangerous or pollutant cargoes in bulk in the Cape Finisterre traffic separation scheme. (This amended traffic separation scheme will be submitted to the 23rd Assembly in November-December 2003 for adoption and will enter into force six months after adoption.)
  - Amendment to the existing traffic separation scheme “Between Karoser and Sprogore”
  - Amendment to the separation zone of the TSS in the Singapore Straits, by which a space for an anchorage area would be released.

2008 is the proposed deadline for existing cargo ships over 20,000 gross tonnage to be simplified VDRs (Edwards Ship Photo).
From the meetings

Sub-Committee on Safety of Navigation

- 49th session
- 30 June - 4 July 2003

Resolution of Working Group A.532(13) on Collecting and forwarding of hydrographic data

A final draft text of the proposed Assembly resolution on Provision of Hydrographic services was agreed, for submission to the 23rd Assembly for adoption. The resolution on collection and forwarding of hydrographic data reflects the new requirements of resolution V.9 of the revised SOLAS chapter IV regarding hydrographic services.

Archipelagic sea lanes - amendments to Ships’ Routing

The Sub-Committee agreed draft amendments to the General Provision on Ships’ Routing (resolution A.327(14), as amended), concerning the adoption, designation and substitution of archipelagic sea lanes (paragraph 3.33 of Section B) on the basis of consideration “Ships’ Routing” for adoption by MSC in May 2004.

After the adoption of the archipelagic sea lanes by IMO, the Government of the Archipelagic State shall promulgate the designation of the sea lanes. The designation of the sea lanes shall be formally communicated to IMO. Archipelagic sea lanes shall not come into effect until at least six months after the designation of sea lanes as described in paragraph 3.33 or the publication of either notices to mariners to amend charts or revised charts to depict the sea lanes.

AIS navigation-related information including guidance on the Application of the AIS Binary Messages

The Sub-Committee agreed a draft, SN. circular on Guidance on application of the AIS Binary Messages for approval by the MSC in May 2004.

‘Binary’ M-messages are pre-defined information packages which enable ship-to-ship and shore-to-ship exchange of standard messages such as pilot request, current water level, etc. They are distinguished by a discrete number known as an “Application Identifier”. In accordance with the provisions of Recommendation ITU-R M. 1375, ILAIA has had responsibility for maintaining and publishing a record of the International Application Identifiers (IAIs), but is set to hand over this responsibility to IMO.

The MSC has already issued MSC Circ.1062 on M antennage and Administration of AIS Binary M-messages. Advice on maintaining a continuous navigational watch at anchor

The Sub-Committee agreed a note to the Sub-Committee on Standards of Training and Watchkeeping (STW) on Keeping a safe anchor watch, to enable STW 3 to develop appropriate guidance to masters.

From the meetings

Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC)

- 49th session
- 14 – 18 July 2003

December 2003 meeting to consider proposals for an accelerated single-hull tanker phase-out

A 6 extra session of IMO’s Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC) will be convened in December to consider the adoption of proposals for an accelerated phase-out scheme for single-hull tankers, along with other measures for the extended application of the Condition Assessment Scheme (CAS) for tankers.

The MEPC held extensive discussions in a Working Group and in plenary in relation to proposals to amend MARPOL 73/78, submitted by all the fifteen Member States of the European Union, calling for further acceleration of the phase-out timetable for single-hull tankers, an immediate ban on the carriage of heavy grades of oil in single-hull tankers and for the Condition Assessment Scheme (adopted in 2003 in the wake of the 1999 Erika incident) to be applied to tankers of 35 years of age and above.

The outcome of the discussions was as follows, with further discussion scheduled for the extra MEPC session in December, which will consider, with a view to adoption, the proposed amendments to MARPOL 73/78:

- accelerated phase-out for Category 1 tankers (pre-MARPOL tankers) agreed. This would bring forward the final phasing-out date for these tankers to 2005, from 2007. The proposal to bring forward the phasing-out of category 2 and 3 tankers (MARPOL tankers and smaller tankers) to 2020, from 2023. discussed. While there was substantial support in principle by the 2010 deadline, there was also concern relating to the phase-out of tankers of less than 20 years old in 2010 that this would lead to. There was a suggestion that the proposal be considered in December, which could see the operational life of these tankers extended to 2020, unless the ship reaches a specified age (e.g. 20, 23 or 25 years), subject to satisfactory reports from the Condition Assessment Scheme (CAS).

- Agreement in principle that the CAS should be applied to single-hull tankers of 15 years, or older (as against applicable to all Category 1 vessels continuing to trade after 2005 and all Category 2 vessels after 2020) The MEPC agreed to circulate the proposed CAS amendments with a view to consideration for adoption at the extra session in December.

Proposed new regulation 13H on Prevention of oil pollution when carrying heavy grades of oil, in particular in relation to the physical properties of heavy grades of oil (including their definition, in relation to density and/or kinematic viscosity) and in pollution combating.

The MEPC noted the differing views on the issue of tankers carrying HGO engaged in domestic trades, regarding possible exemptions for tankers on local voyages and agreed this was a policy matter for a decision later.

The Informed Group of 8 experts to be reestablished to review the impact of the proposals discussed at this session.

The extra session of the Committee will be held at MEPC 50 on 1 and 4 December 2003, during the 23rd IMO Assembly, which meets from 24 November to 5 December 2003.

Proposal for a West European PSSA

The MEPC approved in principle a proposal for Belgium, France, Ireland, Portugal, Spain and the United Kingdom to designate a Particularly Sensitive Sea Area (PSSA) to cover a wide sea area west of these countries, subject to the area being reduced to bring the easterly line off the Shetlands lies to 00 longitude.

The States proposing the measure withdrew an earlier proposal to ban carriage of heavy fuel oil in single-hull tankers in the PSSA, and instead agreed that the Associated Protective Measures (APM) linked to the PSSA would, at this stage, concern a proposed 6-month reporting rule for ships carrying certain cargoes entering the PSSA. This measure would be referred to the Sub-Committee on Safety of Navigation (SOLAS), meeting in November, for consideration.

Delegations who had raised potential legal issues relating to the application of the PSSA were invited to refer these concerns to the Legal Committee, which is scheduled to meet in October 2003 and April 2004.

The Western European Waters PSSA will be considered by the Committee for potential final designation at the regular session of MEPC in October 2004.

Great Barrier Reef PSSA extended

The MEPC approved in principle a proposal from Australia and Papua New Guinea for the extension of the Great Barrier Reef PSSA to cover Torres Strait Region, together with the associated protective measures, subject to clarification on the compulsory pilotage measures at N45’56’ South in 2004. The extended PSSA will be expected to be regulated at a regular session of MEPC in October 2004.

Paracas National Reserve PSSA adopted

The MEPC adopted the Paracas National Reserve, Peru, as a PSSA.
From the meetings

Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC)

- 49th session
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- Guidelines approved (ILO)

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Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC)

- Water Management Programme (GloBallast) and has been dealing with the issue. In order to help developing MEPC, together with MSC and technical sub-committees, water was first raised at IMO in 1988 and since then the Convention in accordance with the agreed timetable of Ships’ Ballast Water and Sediments, and agreed to hold a diplomatic conference from 9 to 13 February 2004 to adopt the Convention in accordance with the agreed timetable already approved by the Council.

The Committee conducted an article-by-article review of the draft taking into account the report of the second intersessional meeting of the Ballast Water Working Group. The problem of harmful aquatic organisms in ballast water was first raised at IMO in 1988 and since then the MEPC, together with MSC and technical sub-committees, has been dealing with the issue. In order to help developing countries understand the problem and monitor the situation, IMO is implementing the GEF/UNDP/IMO Global Ballast Water Management Programme (GlobalBallast) and has provided technical support and expertise.

Ship recycling

The MEPC approved draft Guidelines on Ship Recycling and the associated Assembly resolution, for submission to the 23rd Assembly later this year for adoption. The draft guidelines recognize that, while the principle of ship recycling may be sound, working practices and environmental standards in the yard often leave much to be desired. While ultimate responsibility for conditions in the yards has to lie with the countries in which they are situated, other stakeholders must be encouraged to contribute towards minimising potential problems related to health, safety and protection of the environment in the recycling facilities.

The guidelines will give advice to all stakeholders in the recycling process, including administrations of ship building and maritime equipment supplying countries, flag, port and recycling states, as well as intergovernmental organizations and commercial bodies such as shipowners, ship builders, repairers and recycling yards.

The Committee also agreed a programme of future work on ship recycling issues.

The MEPC noted that technical guidelines for specific disposal operations and for specific wastes which may be relevant to ship recycling activities have been developed under the Basel Convention, and that existing ILO Conventions, Recommendations and Codes of Practice can be applied to deal with numerous occupational safety and health hazards and worker protection issues arising in ship recycling operations. The Committee agreed to recommend to the International Labour Organization and the Secretariat of the Basel Convention that relevant information be made available on their websites.

Greenhouse gases

The MEPC finalised a draft Assembly resolution on IMO Policies and Practices related to reduction of Greenhouse Gas Emissions from Ships, for submission to the Assembly in November/December.

Entry into force of MARPOL Annex VI

The MEPC noted that the requirements for entry into force of Annex VI of MARPOL 73/78 on Regulations for prevention of pollution by air pollution from ships (adopted in 1997) were nearly satisfied. As of 20 June 2003, Annex VI of MARPOL 73/78 has been ratified by 11 States representing more than 50% of world’s merchant shipping and ratifications from four more States are required to satisfy the conditions for entry into force, i.e. ratification by at least 15 States with not less than 50% of world merchant shipping tonnage.

Cyprus, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands and Spain stated that their national procedures for the ratification of the Protocol of 1997 to MARPOL 73/89 have reached the final stage and they would be able to deposit their instrument of ratification for Annex VI shortly. This would mean that the Annex might satisfy the entry into force conditions before the end of year 2003, and would enter into force twelve months later.

Application of MARPOL to FPSOs and FSUs

The MEPC approved an MEPC circular on Guidelines for the application of MARPOL Annex I requirements to FPSOs and FSUs.

Implementation of MARPOL Annex IV (Sewage)

The MEPC agreed on the proposal for the revised Annex IV, which was approved by the MEPC at its 44th session, with a view to its adoption after the entry into force of the original Annex IV.

The revised Annex IV will be put forward for adoption at the MEPC’s M arch session in 2004, but the revised Annex IV would only become effective in July 2005. There would be a possibility of confusion as to which text, either the original or revised Annex IV, should be applied among Parties to the Annex.

The Circular reconfirms that Parties be recommended to apply the revised Annex IV upon the entry into force of the existing Annex IV.

However, in order to avoid confusion among Parties to Annex IV, any Parties to Annex IV which may not be able to modify their national legislation to implement the revised Annex IV until its entry into force in July 2005 as expected, are requested not to apply, for the purpose of port State control, requirements of the original Annex IV to ships of foreign flag falling under those categories of ships which will be exempted from application in the revised Annex IV, and not to apply any punitive measures for such ships, during the transitional period from the date of entry into force of the original Annex IV until the date of entry into force of the revised Annex IV.

Approval of the revised text of MARPOL Annex I and Annex II

The new versions of Annex I and Annex II of the MARPOL Convention, were approved, in principle, together with the proposed new four-category categorization system for vessels and for substances. The revised tests of both Annexes will be reconfirmed at MEPC 53 in M arch 2004 and will be considered for adoption at MEPC 52 in October 2004.

Anti-fouling Systems


The Guidelines were developed by the Sub-Committee on Flag State Implementation. Japan ratified the ATS Convention on 8 July 2003. Norway was expected to ratify the AFS Convention soon; and Greece and Spain are both in the process of ratifying the AFS Convention and expect the Convention to be ratified in the near future. For entry in to force, the AFS Convention requires ratification by 25 States representing more than 25% of the world’s merchant shipping tonnage.

Implementation of the OPC and the OPRC-HNS Protocol

The MEPC approved revised guidelines for bioremediation; the Terms of Reference for an OPC and OPRC-HNS Protocol Technical Conference and an action plan to promote the recommendations of the Third Research and Development Forum on High Density Oil Response.

Form of the Oil Record Book

Problems involving port State control issues related to the Form of the Oil Record Book Part I were brought to the attention of the MEPC. The problems have arisen due to consequential editing of the Form of the Oil Record Book Part I (MARPOL 73/78, Consolidated Edition 2002), resulting in differences between the Form of the Oil Record Book Part I in the 1997 and 2002 Consolidated Editions.

Guidelines and resolutions adopted

The following MEPC resolutions were adopted:

- MEPC resolution on Tri-partite Agreement
- MEPC resolution on Revised Guidelines for the approval of the alternative methods of design of oil tankers under regulation 15 (f) of Annex I of MARPOL 73/78
- MEPC resolution on Guidelines for onboard NOx verification procedures
- MEPC resolution on revised Guidelines and specifications for pollution control equipment for machinery space bilges of ships
- MEPC resolution on Revised Guidelines and specifications for oil discharge monitoring and control systems for all tankers
- MEPC resolution on Guidelines for inspections of ships’ anti-fouling systems
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IMO at work

IMO hosts successful partnership building workshop

A Workshop on Partnership Building was held at IMO Headquarters on 9 and 10 June, immediately preceding the 53rd meeting of the Technical Co-operation Committee. The purpose of the workshop was to encourage the development of partnerships between IMO and regional organizations, Governments, institutions and industry through the exchange of information and open discussion.

In the exchange of information and discussion that the meeting promoted, the main outcomes included enhanced understanding on access to TC funds, appreciation of the diversity of IMO partnerships, a consensus to expand IMO’s existing partnerships, the need for more efforts to involve industry at the implementation stage and identification of corporate responsibility with IMO objectives, strengthening and expanding IMO’s regional presence with clearly defined roles, engaging more effectively with regional organizations, including NGOs, and identification of the importance, with member states, of making closer linkages between IMO goals and the Millennium Development Goals for poverty alleviation.

The Workshop participants proposed that the Technical Co-operation Committee consider a draft resolution for Assembly on the development and improvement of partnerships arrangements.

Singapore Minister visits IMO

IMO Secretary-General William O’Neil in discussion with Mr. Yea Chee Tong, Minister of Transport of Singapore during a courtesy call during the Minister’s recent visit to London. The Minister was accompanied by the the Chief Executive of the Maritime Port Authority of Singapore, Mr. Lui Tuck Yew and by Mr. Zahir Alam, First Secretary (Maritime Affairs) at the High Commission, who is the IMO liaison officer.

Ecuador changes Permanent Representative

In July, Ecuador’s Capt. Jorge Vega Romero and his successor as the country’s Permanent Representative to IMO, Capt. Marco Gonzalo Salinas Haro, presented Secretary-General O’Neil with a small wooden figure as a gift to mark the introduction of the Permanent Representative.

Security chairman wins maritime prize

The IMO Council has decided to award the International Maritime Prize for 2002 to Mr. Frank Wall of the United Kingdom. Among several notable career achievements, Mr. Wall was recently chairman of the MSC’s Maritime Security Working Group which developed in detail the comprehensive package of measures adopted by the Diplomatic Conference on Maritime Security at the end of 2002. Mr. Wall also chaired the Committee of the Whole at the Diplomatic Conference.