WORLD MARITIME DAY ISSUE
INTERNATIONAL SHIPPING - CARRIER OF WORLD TRADE
NEW AIR POLLUTION RULES IN FORCE
OCTOBER CONFERENCE TO REVISE KEY SECURITY INSTRUMENTS
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**Our theme for World Maritime Day 2005 celebrates international shipping’s role as the carrier of world trade**
International shipping - carrier of World Trade

The history of shipping is a glorious and proud one. There is no doubt, for example, that the magnificent square riggers of the era of sail or the early 20th century’s prestigious ocean liners could stir the hearts of all those that beheld them. But the ships of today are just as worthy of our admiration, for shipping today is in another truly golden age. Ships have never been so technically advanced, never been as sophisticated, never been so immense, never carried so much cargo, never been safer and never been so environmentally-friendly as they are today.

Mammoth containerships nudging the 10,000 TEU barrier yet still capable of 25 knot operating speeds; huge oil tankers and bulk carriers that carry vast quantities of fuel, grain and other commodities around our planet economically, safely and cleanly; the complex and highly specialized workhorses of the offshore industry; and the wonderful giants of the passenger ship world are all worthy of our greatest admiration. I remarked, at the time of the unveiling of the iconic Queen Mary 2 to the sounds of the “Ode to Joy” from Beethoven’s 9th symphony, what a happy combination it was of two of the great achievements of mankind; and ships such as these incorporate and combine the finest examples of naval architecture, marine engineering, function and system integration and technical skill.

In shipping today we can see many marvels of state-of-the-art engineering and technology that deserve to be ranked alongside the very finest achievements of our global infrastructure. We all marvel at the wonders of the modern world – skyscrapers, bridges, dams, ship canals, tunnels and so on. Although they all deserve our admiration, there should be no question that today’s finest ships are also worthy of the sort of recognition usually reserved for the great icons of land-based civil engineering – with one substantial difference in favour of the former: while skyscrapers, bridges, dams et al are static structures designed to withstand the elements coming to them, the very essence of marine vehicles sends them out to sea to face the elements at full force, alone in the vastness of the ocean. It is, therefore, only fair that all those who apply their skills in the complicated process that takes ships from concept to delivery, and thereafter through their entire life, should be commended for their vision, their tenacity, their dedication and the sheer quality of their work.

I believe we should celebrate this excellence in shipping far more often than we do and, in selecting the theme for World Maritime Day 2005 – International Shipping - Carrier of World Trade – we sincerely hoped that we (Governments, organizations, industry and all other stakeholders) would be able to draw attention to the vital role that shipping plays in underpinning international commerce and the world economy as the most efficient, safe and environmentally friendly method of transporting goods around the globe. We live in a global society which is supported by a global economy – and that economy simply could not function if it were not for ships and the shipping industry.

On World Maritime Day, let us also celebrate not only the vital contribution that ships and shipping make to the prosperity and well-being of us all but also the men and women who take on the onerous task of operating them. Given the enormous responsibility those in command have both for the very lives of those who serve with them and for the environment, not to mention the commercial success of the enterprise in which they are engaged, it requires a very special kind of person to take up the challenge of a seafaring career – especially these days when ships, because of their capacity to carry passengers in their thousands and also because of their size, enabling them to carry cargoes in hundreds of thousands of tons, have the potential to cause enormous loss of life or environmental catastrophes of unimaginable dimensions. We should, therefore, never forget our collective responsibility to help promote the notion of seafaring as a viable and attractive career for people of the highest calibre, now and in the future.

The sea can be an unforgiving environment and, over the centuries, its rigours have encouraged seafarers to build a tradition of selfless endeavour and of high regard for others, particularly those who find themselves in difficulty or distress. It is a tradition that persists today – indeed IMO is to establish a special award for courage at sea, to recognize those who, at the risk of losing their own life, commit acts of extreme bravery to rescue persons in distress at sea or to prevent catastrophic pollution of the environment thus exhibiting virtues of self sacrifice in line with the highest traditions at sea and the humanitarian aspect of shipping. This year, we have also witnessed the humanitarian aspect of shipping at work in the tremendous response of the maritime community and industries, both in kind and in direct financial terms, to the dreadful Boxing Day tsunami tragedy.

It may seem obvious to say that we live in a global world, and it is certainly true that international trade among all the nations and regions of the world is nothing new. But there is no doubt that we have now entered a new era of global interdependence from which there can be no turning back.

Of course, there was a time when, for any given community, the most important raw materials,
Were they dependent only on their domestic one level or another, in the process of selling today, international trade has evolved to the common wealth. The widespread distribution of our planet’s variety of resources to be more widely markets of the western world. Global trade began to emerge. Eventually, the great seaborne trades became established: coal from Australia, Southern Africa and North America to Europe and the Far East; grain from North and South America to Asia, Africa and the Far East; iron ore from South America and Australia to Europe and the Far East; oil from the Middle East, West Africa, South America and the Caribbean to Europe, North America and Asia; and now we must add to this list containerized manufactures from China, Japan and South-east Asia to the consumer markets of the western world. Global trade has effectively permitted an enormous variety of resources to be more widely accessible and has thus facilitated the widespread distribution of our planet’s common wealth.

Today, international trade has evolved to the point where almost no nation can be fully self-sufficient. Every country is involved, at one level or another, in the process of selling what it produces and acquiring what it lacks. Were they dependent only on their domestic resources, some nations might find their shortcomings would weigh heavily indeed. Global trade has fostered an interdependency and inter-connectivity between peoples who would previously have considered themselves completely unconnected. The potential benefits are clear: growth can be accelerated and prosperity more widespread; skills and technology can be more evenly dispersed, and both individuals and countries can take advantage of previously unimagined economic opportunities.

Shipping has always provided the only really cost-effective method of bulk transport over any great distance, and the development of shipping and the establishment of a global system of trade have moved forward together, hand-in-hand. Those with access to natural resources; those with the ability to convert those resources into useful products for the good of mankind; and those with a requirement and the wherewithal to utilize and consume those end products are all joined by the common thread of shipping. The eternal triangle of producers, manufacturers and markets are brought together through shipping. This has always been the case and will remain so for the foreseeable future.

More than 90 per cent of global trade is carried by sea. The latest complete annual figures from the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development show that shipping accounted for a staggering 24.589 billion ton-miles in 2003, a figure that continues to increase year on year.

In the context of a global economy, the contribution made by shipping as a major industry in its own right is also very significant, and increasingly so for the developing world. Maritime activity already provides an important source of income to many developing countries. Indeed, developing countries now lead the world in some of shipping’s most important ancillary businesses, including the registration of ships, the supply of sea-going manpower and ship recycling. They also play a significant part in shipowning and operating, shipbuilding and repair and port services, among others.

There can be no doubt that transport and communication are crucial for sustainable development in the global environment. If the benefits of globalization are to be evenly spread, the developing countries must be able to play a full and active part in the distribution system. IMO’s extensive programme of technical co-operation provides a valuable service in terms of training and capacity building in these newly emerging maritime powers.

Of course, shipping must present itself as a sustainable activity conscious of the need to address both sides of a finely balanced equation. If shipping were to consume environmental capital (in the form of pollution) or social capital (by being an inherently unsafe activity that costs thousands of lives each year) or economic capital (perhaps through enormous insurance premiums and massive claims) to a greater extent than its overall positive contribution, then clearly it could not be considered “sustainable”. However, in this respect, I think shipping has an excellent record, indeed one which we should be proud of and about which we should be far less reticent.

Accidents do, of course, unfortunately happen from time to time and, when they do, they may result in loss of life and damage to the environment. It is my firm contention that every occasion in which a ship – any ship – becomes involved in a pollution incident or a major casualty must be set against the literally billions of trouble-free, clean and economically efficient ton-miles that shipping achieves every day, and all the consequent benefits that accrue from this activity.

It is a pity, although perhaps inevitable in a world where good news is no news, that it is the accidents which tend to make the headlines and inform public opinion. An oil tanker, for example, can be either a menacing pollution accident waiting to happen, filled to the brim with a scarce natural resource that we should be preserving, not plundering; or, a modern, clean, safe and efficient carrier of the vital energy resource that provides the power we need in order to enjoy the comfort and living standards we expect from life in the 21st century - it just depends on which way you look at it.

What tends to be overlooked is that vast supplies of seaborne oil are needed every day, literally to fuel the lives and lifestyles we have become accustomed to. The real picture is revealed in industry figures which show that 60 per cent of the annual world oil consumption of 3.6 billion tonnes is transported by sea and, of this, 99.997 per cent is delivered safely.

To a considerable extent, this success story should be attributed to the comprehensive framework of rules, regulations and standards developed, over many years, mainly by IMO, through international collaboration among its Members and with full industry participation – it is thanks to the Organization’s outcomes that those trouble-free ton-miles are made possible. Just about every technical aspect of shipping is covered by an IMO measure, from the drawing board to scrapyard.

What is more, it is effective, too. Every statistical indicator suggests that shipping is...
New rules to reduce emissions from ships enter into force

International regulations to control harmful emissions from ships' exhausts entered into force on 19 May 2005. The Regulations for the Prevention of Air Pollution from Ships are contained in Annex VI of the MARPOL Convention and were adopted in the 1997 Protocol to that Convention.

The Annex VI regulations set limits on sulphur oxide (SOx) and nitrogen oxide (NOx) emissions from ship exhausts and prohibit deliberate emissions of ozone-depleting substances.

The Annex includes a global cap of 4.5 percent by mass (% m/m) on the sulphur content of fuel oil and calls on IMO to monitor the worldwide average sulphur content of fuel once the Protocol comes into force.

IMO has been monitoring the worldwide average sulphur content of residual fuel supplied for use on board ships since 1999 following the adoption of resolution MEPC.82(45) Guidelines for monitoring the world wide average sulphur content of residual fuel supplied for use on board ships. The monitoring is based on bunker reports around the world representing more than 60 per cent of all bunkers delivered to ships. The worldwide average for 2004 has been calculated to be 2.67% m/m sulphur content. This figure has been almost constant since 1999 - the variation is less than +/- 0.02 % m/m.

The Annex contains provisions allowing for special “SOx Emission Control Areas” (SECAs) to be established with more stringent controls on sulphur emissions. In these areas, the sulphur content of fuel oil used onboard ships must not exceed 1.5% m/m. Alternatively, ships must fit an exhaust gas cleaning system or use other methods to limit SOx emissions. The regulation requires such alternative methods to be approved by the Flag State Administration. Draft Guidelines on on-board exhaust gas-SOx cleaning systems have been developed.

The Baltic Sea Area is designated as a SECA in the Protocol. However, the regulation allows for a 12-month period from the date of entry into force before the limits in a SECA can be enforced.

Annex VI also prohibits deliberate emissions of ozone-depleting substances, which include halons and chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs). New installations, such as refrigeration and fire-fighting systems, containing ozone-depleting substances, are prohibited on all ships, but new installations containing hydro-chlorofluorocarbons (HCFCs) are permitted until 1 January 2020.

The Annex also sets limits on emissions of nitrogen oxides from diesel engines. A mandatory NOx Technical Code establishes procedures for the testing, survey and certification of marine diesel engines which will enable engine manufacturers, shipowners and Administrations to ensure that all applicable marine diesel engines comply with the relevant limiting emission values of NOx as specified in regulation 13 of Annex VI.

The Annex also prohibits the incineration aboard ship of certain products, such as contaminated packaging materials and polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), which have previously been used in a number of industrial materials.

In November 2003, IMO adopted resolution A.963(23) IMO Policies and practices related to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions from ships.

The MEPC is developing draft Guidelines on the CO2 Indexing Scheme and has recognized that IMO guidelines on greenhouse gas emissions have to address all six greenhouse gases covered by the Kyoto Protocol: carbon dioxide (CO2); methane (CH4); nitrous oxide (N2O); hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs); perfluorocarbons (PFCs); and sulphur hexafluoride (SF6).
Revised international ship sewage regulations enter into force

Revised international regulations for the prevention of pollution of the sea by sewage from ships (revised MARPOL Annex IV, adopted by resolution MEPC.115(51)) will enter into force on 1 August 2005.

The regulations are important because the discharge of raw sewage into the sea can create a health hazard and, in coastal sea areas, can also lead to a depletion of oxygen in the water and visual pollution - a particular problem for countries with large tourist industries. Under current thinking it is assumed that the oceans are capable of assimilating and dealing with raw sewage through natural bacterial action and the regulations, therefore, prohibit the discharge of sewage by ships within a specified distance of the nearest land, unless they have an approved sewage treatment plant or system in operation.

The revised MARPOL Annex IV will apply to new and existing ships of 400 gross tonnage and above or ships which are certified to carry more than 15 persons, engaged in international voyages.

Existing ships will be required to comply with the provisions by 27 September 2008 (five years after the entry into force of MARPOL Annex IV).

The Annex requires ships to be equipped with either a sewage treatment plant, a sewage comminuting and disinfecting system or a sewage holding tank.

The discharge of sewage into the sea will be prohibited at a distance of 12 nautical miles, or less, from the nearest land. Exceptions apply when the ship has an approved sewage treatment plant in operation or when discharging comminuted and disinfected sewage using an approved system at a distance of more than three nautical miles from the nearest land.

When a Party to Annex IV requires ships under its jurisdiction, i.e. ships under its flag, and other ships operating in its waters, to comply with the discharge requirements, then it shall ensure adequate facilities at ports and terminals for the reception of sewage are provided.
Radioactive waste disposal ban now in force

The Russian Federation has officially accepted the 1993 ban on the dumping of radioactive wastes under the 1972 London Convention. The Government of the Russian Federation informed the Secretary-General of IMO on 17 May 2005 that it had accepted the ban as contained in the amendments to the Convention under Resolution LC.51(16). As a result, twelve years after its adoption, the prohibition of the disposal of radioactive wastes at sea is finally in force for all Contracting Parties to the London Convention, of which there are currently 81.

The Convention on the Prevention of Marine Pollution by Dumping of Wastes and Other Matter 1972, or “London Convention” is one of the oldest global conventions protecting the marine environment from human activities. It has been in force since 1975. Its objective is to promote the effective control of all sources of marine pollution and to take all practicable steps to prevent pollution of the sea by the dumping of wastes from vessels, aircraft, platforms or other man-made structures.

The prohibition of dumping high-level radioactive wastes, in force since 1975, was extended in 1993 to cover all radioactive wastes, through the adoption of Resolution LC.51(16). These legally binding provisions entered into force on 20 February 1994 for all Contracting Parties to the Convention, except the Russian Federation which, on 18 February 1994, issued a declaration of non-acceptance of this resolution. In its declaration, the Russian Federation made clear, however, that it would “continue to endeavour to ensure that the sea is not polluted by the dumping of wastes and other matter, the prevention of which is the object of the provisions contained in Resolution LC.51(16)”.

In the 1990s the Russian Federation reportedly had insufficient facilities to store and process the low-level liquid radioactive wastes generated by its Northern and Pacific nuclear submarine and icebreaker fleets. The facilities were upgraded and expanded with assistance from Japan, Finland, Norway and the United States. In recent years, the Russian Federation also gave priority to the implementation of its National Management Plan addressing radioactive wastes from all sources before formally accepting the ban on dumping at sea.

October Conference to revise key security instruments


The IMO Legal Committee has completed its work on two draft Protocols to amend the Treaties, the main purpose of which is to provide the legal basis for action to be taken against persons committing unlawful acts against ships. These acts include the seizure of ships by force, acts of violence against persons on board ships and the placing of devices on board which are likely to destroy or damage the ship. Under the Convention, Contracting Governments are obliged either to extradite or prosecute alleged offenders. Similar provisions are contained in the SUA Protocol, relating to unlawful acts against fixed platforms located on the continental shelf.

The aim of the two draft Protocols is to strengthen the SUA Treaties in order to provide an appropriate response to the increasing risks posed to maritime navigation by international terrorism.

Proposed amendments to the Treaties in the draft Protocols include a substantial broadening of the range of offences included in Article 3 of the SUA Convention and the introduction of provisions in Article 8 to allow for the boarding of vessels suspected of being involved in terrorist activities.

The Conference will consider these amendments as well as a number of other, related, issues including the political offences clause, the transfer of prisoners clause and the entry into force criteria.

New Members join IMO

Timor-Leste and Zimbabwe have become Members of IMO, following their deposit of instruments of acceptance of the Convention on the International Maritime Organization, as amended, with the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

With their accession the number of IMO Member States stands at 166, with three Associate Members.
Northeast Maritime Institute provides technical assistance and advisory services for the implementation of International Conventions, Codes and Regulatory Requirements.
Maritime Safety Committee progresses goal-based standards

Basic principles and goals for goal-based standards (GBS) for new ship construction were agreed in principle by IMO’s Maritime Safety Committee (MSC) at its 80th session. Other important issues on the MSC agenda included the adoption of revised provisions for subdivision and stability in SOLAS chapter II-1 Construction – Structure, subdivision and stability, machinery and electrical installations, continued work on passenger ship safety and consideration of issues surrounding the implementation of the maritime security measures adopted by IMO.

Goal-based new ship construction standards

The five-tier system on which the development of GBS is being based consists of goals (Tier I), functional requirements (Tier II), verification of compliance criteria (Tier III), technical procedures and guidelines, classification rules and industry standards (Tier IV) and codes of practice and safety and quality systems for shipbuilding, ship operation, maintenance, training, manning, etc. (Tier V).

The MSC agreed in principle with the basic principles and goals for goal-based standards and with the Tier I goals developed by the Working Group on Goal-based New Ship Construction Standards.

The agreed basic principles state that IMO goal-based standards are:

1. broad, over-arching safety, environmental and/or security standards that ships are required to meet during their lifecycle;
2. the required level to be achieved by the requirements applied by class societies and other recognized organizations, Administrations and IMO;
3. clear, demonstrable, verifiable, long standing, implementable and achievable, irrespective of ship design and technology; and
4. specific enough in order not to be open to differing interpretations.

The Tier I goals are based on the premise that - for all new ships - “ships are to be designed and constructed for a specified design life and to be safe and environmentally-friendly, when properly operated and maintained under the specified operating and environmental conditions, in intact and specified damage conditions, throughout their life”.

The Working Group also made progress on developing the Tier II functional requirements, agreeing that for new oil tankers and bulk carriers in unrestricted navigation (the ship is not subject to any geographical restrictions i.e. any oceans, any seasons) except as limited by the ship’s capability for operation in ice); the specified design life is not to be less than 25 years and they should be designed in accordance with North Atlantic environmental conditions and relevant long-term sea state scatter diagrams. Other functional requirements for these ship types were agreed by the Working Group, including those relating to structural strength, fatigue life, residual strength, protection against corrosion and so on.

The MSC approved the work plan for future work on GBS and agreed to establish a Correspondence Group to develop draft Tier III criteria for the verification of compliance. The work plan for future work includes:

- consideration of the probabilistic risk-based methodology in the framework of GBS; completion of Tier II - functional requirements; development of Tier III – verification of compliance criteria; implementation of GBS; incorporation of GBS into IMO instruments; development of a ship construction file and consideration of the need for the development of a ship inspection and maintenance file; and consideration of the need to review consistency and adequacy of scope across the tiers.

Revised SOLAS chapter II-1 adopted

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

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

The revision has taken into account the results of the HARDER (Harmonisation of Rules and Design Rational) research project: a project undertaken by a consortium of European industrial, research and academic institutions to study the probabilistic approach for assessing a ship’s damage stability and to develop new criteria and indexes for subdivision based on probability of survival, taking into account effects from waves, heeling moments, cargo shift, transient effects and equalization arrangements.

Bulk carrier construction standards - interpretations

The Committee considered requests by Members for the preparation of interpretations to the revised SOLAS chapter XII, which was adopted by MSC 79 in December 2004 and is expected to enter into force on 1 July 2006, and agreed a circular giving unified interpretations relating to regulation XII/4.2 – Damage stability requirements applicable to bulk carriers and regulation XII/5.2 – Structural strength.
of bulk carriers. With respect to regulation XII/6 Structural and other requirements for bulk carriers, the Committee agreed to establish an intersessional working group, to meet in September 2005, in order to prepare a unified interpretation of SOLAS regulations XII/6.5.1 and 6.5.3. The working group will submit its report to the Technical Committee of the 24th Assembly in November-December 2005 for consideration and appropriate action.

Voluntary Audit Scheme

The Audit Scheme is 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 MSC reviewed the report of the third session of the Joint MSC/MEPC/TCC Working Group on the Voluntary IMO Member State Audit Scheme and approved the draft Code for the implementation of mandatory IMO instruments, which was developed by the Sub-Committee on Flag State Implementation (FSI) to be the audit standard under the Audit Scheme. The Audit Scheme and the Code will be considered by the IMO Council in June 2005 with a view to their formal adoption by the IMO Assembly in November 2005.

The MSC agreed to recommend to the Council that security issues be removed from the Audit Scheme and Code at this time, but agreed to develop, at an appropriate time, suitable provisions for the eventual inclusion of other safety- and security-related issues in the Audit Scheme and Code, taking into account the experience gained from the implementation of the Scheme and salient safety- and security-related issues.

The MSC endorsed Guidance to auditors on the STCW Convention areas to be covered by the Audit Scheme; the draft Pre-audit questionnaire; and the draft Assembly resolutions on the adoption of the Code for the implementation of mandatory IMO instruments and on the Framework and Procedures for the Voluntary IMO Member State Audit Scheme.

Other amendments to SOLAS

The MSC adopted other amendments to SOLAS, with an expected entry into force date of 1 January 2007, including:

- New SOLAS regulation II-1/3-7 to require ship construction drawings to be maintained on board and ashore.
- New SOLAS regulation II-1/3-8 concerning towing and mooring equipment. The regulation will require all ships to be provided with arrangements, equipment and fittings of sufficient safe working load to enable the safe conduct of all towing and mooring operations associated with the normal operation of the ship.
- New SOLAS regulation II-1/2-3 concerning water level detectors in the cargo hold(s) on new single hold cargo ships other than bulk carriers.
- Amendment to SOLAS regulation II-1/3/1 Machinery control to restrict the application of propulsion control automation systems to new ships only.
- (With expected entry into force of 1 January 2009) New SOLAS regulations XI-1/5-1 and amendments to regulation XI-1/5 on the mandatory company and registered owner identification number.
- Also (expected entry into force of 1 January 2009) amendments to add the IMO unique company and registered identification number to relevant certificates and documents in the International Management Code for the Safe Operation of Ships and for Pollution Prevention (the ISM Code) and International ship and Port Facility Security (ISPS) Code.

Amendments to bulk carrier inspection guidelines

The amendments to the Guidelines on the enhanced programme of inspections during surveys of bulk carriers and oil tankers (resolution A.744(18)), as amended, incorporate some elements of the Condition Assessment Scheme (CAS) required for certain single hull tankers under the revised MARPOL regulation I/13G and include re-organization of the guidelines to include a new section on survey guidelines for the inspection of double hull tankers. The date for entry into force is 1 January 2007.

Passenger ship safety

The MSC agreed a revised work plan for the on-going work by the relevant Sub-Committees on passenger ship safety, the guiding philosophy for which is based on the premise that the regulatory framework should place more emphasis on the prevention of a casualty from occurring in the first place and that future passenger ships should be designed for improved survivability so that, in the event of a casualty, persons can stay safely on board as the ship proceeds to port.

The MSC approved the definition for the time for orderly evacuation and abandonment as “the time, beginning when the casualty threshold is exceeded until all persons have safely abandoned the ship, in which the ship remains viable for this purpose”. The MSC agreed that, in the event that the casualty exceeds the threshold for return to port, an additional casualty scenario, for design purposes, should be developed. The MSC instructed the Fire Protection (FP) and Stability, Load Lines and Fishing Vessel Safety (SLF) Sub-Committees to develop these scenarios to support the concept that a passenger ship should remain viable for at least three hours, to allow for safe, orderly evacuation and abandonment.

It was agreed that the casualty threshold is the amount of damage a ship is able to withstand, according to the design basis, and still safely return to port. The aim is to complete the work on passenger ship safety by 2006.

The MSC also agreed that the World Maritime University (WMU) should begin...
From the meetings

Maritime Safety Committee (MSC)

80th session
11 - 20 May 2005

Circulars approved by MSC 80

MSC Circs

MSC/Circ.1002/Corr.1 Guidelines on alternative design and arrangements for fire safety
MSC/Circ.1154 Guidelines on training and certification for company security officers
MSC/Circ.1155 Guidance on the message priority and the testing of ship security alert systems
MSC/Circ.1156 Guidance on the access of public authorities, emergency response services and pilots onboard ships to which SOLAS chapter XI-2 and the BPS Code apply
MSC/Circ.1157 Interim scheme for the compliance of certain cargo ships with the special measures to enhance maritime security
MSC/Circ.1158 Unified interpretation of SOLAS chapter II-1
MSC/Circ.1159 Guidelines on the provision of stability-related information for bulk carriers
MSC/Circ.1160 Manual on loading and unloading of solid bulk cargoes for terminal representatives
MSC/Circ.1161 Guidance on training for fast rescue boats launch and recovery teams and boat crews
MSC/Circ.1162 General principles and recommendations for knowledge, skills and training for officers on wing-in-ground (WIG) craft operating in both displacement and ground effect modes
MSC/Circ.1163 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.1164 Prioritization of information related to reports of independent evaluation submitted by 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 Parties are giving full and complete effect to the relevant provisions of the Convention
MSC/Circ.1165 Revised guidelines for the approval of equivalent water-based fire-extinguishing systems for machinery spaces and cargo pump-rooms
MSC/Circ.1166 Guidelines for a simplified evacuation analysis for high-speed passenger craft

MSC/Circ.1167 Functional requirements and performance standards for the assessment of evacuation guidance systems
MSC/Circ.1168 Interim guidelines for the testing, approval and maintenance of evacuation guidance systems used as an alternative to low-location lighting systems
MSC/Circ.1169 Unified interpretations to SOLAS chapter II-2
MSC/Circ.1170 Application of SOLAS regulation II-2/15 for lubricating oil and other flammable oil arrangements for ships built before 1 July 1986
MSC/Circ.1171 Closure of Inmarsat-E services by Inmarsat Ltd.
MSC/Circ.1172 Identification of passenger ships, other than ro-ro passenger ships, which should benefit from being equipped with the emergency medical kit/bag (EMK)
MSC/Circ.1173 Adoption of amendments to the IAMSAR Manual
MSC/Circ.1174 Basic safety guidance for oceanic voyages by non-regulated craft
MSC/Circ.1175 Guidance on shipboard towing and mooring equipment
MSC/Circ.1176 Interim interpretations to SOLAS chapters II-1 and XII
MSC/Circ.1177 Interpretations to the 2000 IHC Code
MSC/Circ.1178 Unified interpretations of SOLAS regulations XII/4.2 and XII/5.2
MSC/Circ.1179 Deficiencies in hydrographic surveying and nautical charting worldwide and their impact on safety of navigation and protection of the marine environment

Other circulars

CSC/Circ.134 Guidance on serious structural deficiencies in containers
SN/Circ.234/Corr.1 Routing measures other than traffic separation schemes
STCW/6/Circ.7 Amendments to Part B of the Seafarers’ Training, Certification and Watchkeeping (STCW) Code

Measures to enhance maritime security

The MSC considered issues relating to the implementation of the special measures to enhance maritime security which were adopted in 2002 and entered into force on 1 July 2004.

The MSC approved draft amendments to the STCW Convention on Requirements for the issue of certificates of proficiency for ship security officers; draft amendments to part A of the STCW Code on Training requirements for issue of certificates of proficiency for ship security officers; and related draft amendments to part B of the STCW Code on Guidance regarding training for ship security officers. The drafts will be circulated with a view to adoption at MSC 81 in 2006.

The proposed amendments to the STCW Convention and to parts A and B of the STCW Code require candidates for a certificate of proficiency as a ship security officer to demonstrate the knowledge to complete a project to co-ordinate a search and rescue (SAR) research programme related to passenger ship safety. The first phase, to be implemented from May 2005 to April 2006, will include initial data collection and reporting on the state of the art and current research efforts and results in the subject area. The MSC requested the IMO Secretary-General to include in his budget proposal for the 2006-2007 biennium an amount equivalent to US$60,000 in order to implement phase 2 of the project, which would include further work in data collection from sources not identified by the Member States; development of an on-line database of current research; and the organization of a workshop/seminar on the subject area, to include the research community as well as other stakeholders.

Towing and mooring equipment is the subject of a SOLAS amendment agreed by the Committee (USMMA)
range of tasks, duties and responsibilities, including maintenance and supervision of the implementation of a ship security plan; assessment of security risk, threat, and vulnerability; undertaking regular inspections of the ship to ensure that appropriate security measures are implemented and maintained; ensuring that security equipment and systems, if any, are properly operated, tested and calibrate; and encouraging security awareness and vigilance.

The MSC also approved for circulation as MSC circulars:
- Guidelines on the training and certification of Company Security Officers (CSOs);
- Guidance on the access of public authorities, emergency response services and pilots onboard ships to which SOLAS chapter XI-2 and the ISPS Code apply;
- Guidance on the priority and testing of ship security alert system; and
- Interim scheme for the compliance of certain cargo ships with the special measures to enhance maritime security.

The MSC also adopted amendments to resolution A.898(23) on Format and guidelines for the maintenance of the continuous synopsis record intended to update the CSR format to include the registered owner and the company identification numbers and to address a number of practical difficulties encountered during the transfer of ships between flags.

Long-range identification and tracking of ships

The Working Group on Maritime Security held extensive discussions relating to proposed draft amendments to SOLAS to include a new regulation on long-range identification and tracking of ships (LRIT).

The purpose of the proposed draft regulation is to establish a mechanism for the collection from ships of LRIT information for security, search and rescue and any other purpose as determined by the Organization and a scheme for the provision of LRIT information to Contracting Governments. The ships which are required to comply with SOLAS chapter XI-2 and the ISPS Code would be required to transmit LRIT information.

The Committee noted that there were still a number of outstanding technical issues to be resolved and agreed that an intersessional working group should meet ahead of the 10th session of the COMSAR Sub-Committee in early 2006 so that COMSAR 10 would be able to finalize the work. The COMSAR correspondence group on LRIT was also tasked with considering a number of technical issues, so as to enable COMSAR 10 to complete its own work on LRIT.

The Committee also authorized the convening of an MSC intersessional working group on LRIT, not later than seven months before MSC 81, for the purpose of developing draft SOLAS amendments on LRIT to be circulated with a view to consideration and adoption at MSC 81.

Formal safety assessment

The MSC reviewed the report of the Joint MSC/MEPC Working Group on Formal Safety Assessment (FSA) which met during the session.

The MSC approved, subject to MEPC concurrence, draft amendments to the Guidelines for Formal Safety Assessment (FSA) for use in the IMO rule-making process (MSC/Circ.1023-MEPC/Circ.392) and a draft revised MSC/MEPC circular.

The amendments include revisions to section 3 Methodology, including the addition of a paragraph outlining the need for data on incident reports, near misses and operational failures to be reviewed objectively and their reliability, uncertainty and validity to be assessed and reported. The assumptions made and limitations of these data must also be reported.

The MSC agreed to establish a Correspondence Group to further consider unresolved issues in particular concerning inconsistent results of different FSAs on the same subject and clarifications of the technology used for particular FSAs.

The MSC also agreed on the establishment, when necessary, of an FSA Group of Experts for the purpose of reviewing an FSA study if the Committee plans to use the study for making a decision on a particular issue. A flow-chart for the FSA review process was agreed. The MSC agreed in principle that the proposed expert group would undertake to review FSA studies on specific subjects submitted to the Organization, as directed by the Committee(s) and prepare relevant reports for submission to the Committee(s).

The structure of the group of experts was left open for future discussion, though the Committee agreed, in principle, that members participating in the expert group should have risk assessment experience; a maritime background; and knowledge/training in the application of the PSA Guidelines.

Implementation of the revised STCW Convention

The list of Parties confirmed by the Committee as having communicated information demonstrating full and complete effect to the relevant provisions of the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (STCW), 1978, as amended, was updated.

The MSC also agreed an MSC circular on Promotion of information related to reports of independent evaluation submitted by Parties to the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (STCW), 1978, as amended, confirmed by the Maritime Safety
From the meetings

Maritime Safety Committee (MSC)

- 80th session
- 11 - 20 May 2005

Committee to have communicated information which demonstrates that Parties are giving full and complete effect to the relevant provisions of the Convention. The circular provides information on the due date of the report of independent evaluation; the date of the report of the independent evaluation communicated to the Secretary-General (if applicable); and the outcome of the process of evaluation of the reports of independent evaluation communicated by the STCW Parties demonstrating that they are continuing to give full and complete effect to the relevant provisions of the STCW Convention.

Rescue boat crew training

The MSC approved draft amendments to part A of the STCW Code regarding additional training requirements for the launching and recovery operations of fast rescue boats, with a view to their adoption at MSC 81. It agreed an MSC circular on Guidance on training for fast rescue boats launch and recovery teams and boat crews.

Officers on Wing-in-Ground craft

The MSC approved general principles and recommendations for knowledge, skills and training for officers on Wing-in-Ground (WIG) craft operating in both displacement and ground effect modes. They will be forwarded to the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) for consideration.

Casualty investigation code revisions

Noting that the Sub-Committee on Flag State Implementation (FSI) had expressed overwhelming support for the idea of making the Code for the investigation of marine casualties and incidents mandatory, in full or in part, the MSC instructed the FSI Sub-Committee to develop a draft revised Code; to determine whether the revised Code itself or parts thereof should be made mandatory; and to provide recommendations as to how such a revised code should be made mandatory, in full or in part.

Chemical carrier explosions

The MSC strongly urged the relevant flag States to provide IMO with reports on the investigations into a number of incidents of explosions on chemical and product carriers, for analysis by the Inter Industry Working Group (IIWG) which was established to study the reported incidents of explosions on chemical and product carriers.

Reports on marine casualties and incidents

The Committee approved, subject to MEPC’s concurrent decision, a draft MSC/MEPC circular on Reports on marine casualties and incidents, superseding MSC/Circ.953 - MEPC/Circ.372.

Certificates and documentation

The Committee approved a draft amendment to the 1988 SOLAS Protocol, with a view to its adoption at MSC 81, relating to the extension of the five-year period of validity of the Cargo Ship Safety Construction Certificate or the Cargo Ship Safety Certificate, in certain cases. In all cases, the interval between any two inspections of the outside of the ship’s bottom shall not exceed 36 months.

The MSC also approved, subject to MEPC’s concurrent decision, a draft MSC/MEPC circular on Recommended conditions for extending the period of validity of a certificate and a draft MSC/MEPC circular on Interpretations of the date of completion of the survey and verification on which the certificates are based.

Another draft MSC/MEPC circular, on Retention of original records/documents on board ships, was approved. It addresses the fact that because ships often travel between multiple jurisdictions, the retention of the original records/documents on board the ship is the primary method of attesting to their compliance. Only in exceptional circumstances, should the original records/documents be removed and replaced by certified copies. It was agreed to bring the draft circular to the attention of the IMO/ILO Joint Working Group on the Fair treatment of Seafarers.

Resolutions adopted by MSC 80

Resolution MSC.194(80) Adoption of amendments to the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea, 1974, as amended

Resolution MSC.195(80) Adoption of amendments to the International Management Code for the Safe Operation of Ships and for Pollution Prevention (International Safety Management (ISM) Code)


Resolution MSC.197(80) Adoption of amendments to the Guidelines on the enhanced programme of inspections during surveys of bulk carriers and oil tankers (resolution A.744(18), as amended)

Resolution MSC.198(80) Adoption of amendments to the format and guidelines for the maintenance of the Continuous Synopsis Record (CSR) (resolution A.958(21))

Resolution MSC.199(80) Adoption of amendments to provision of radio services for the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS) (resolution A.801(19))

Resolution MSC.200(80) Adoption of amendments to the revised recommendation on testing of life-saving appliances
TC Committee approves Integrated Technical Co-operation Programme

At its 55th session in June, the Technical Co-operation Committee noted the Interim report on the status of ITCP implementation (2004-2005), which outlined the results achieved in implementation during the first year of the biennium.

The report showed that the high level of technical co-operation continued to increase during 2004, with some US$14 million-worth delivered at the regional and global level, compared with US$13.2 million in 2003. A total of 97 missions were carried out; 115 courses, seminars and workshops were held at the national, regional and global levels, and 4,181 participants were trained worldwide.

Total donor contributions in 2004 amounted to US$18,011,329, against an expenditure level of some US$14,024,271, giving a delivery rate of 77.9% for the year. The overriding proportion of the ITCP funding base for 2004 was provided by the GEF and the TC Fund, which together accounted for 75% of expenditure.

The Committee approved the ITCP for 2006-2007, which included the ITCP’s mission statement and priorities, its long-and medium-term goals, reference to the strategic plan for the Organization (2004 to 2010), and the thematic priorities identified by the MSC, MEPC and LEG. The document set out the principles in the preparation, design and execution of the ITCP, provided the constituent regional and global programmes, comprising 13 programmes (seven regional and six global), with funding requirements totalling some US$15.5 million.

The Committee discussed capacity-building aspects of the Voluntary IMO Member State Audit Scheme and the financial implications that would arise from the implementation of the Scheme.

The Committee agreed on the need to ensure that developing countries participated fully in the Voluntary IMO Member State Audit Scheme and that US$500,000 should be allocated from the unreserved TC Fund towards the funding requirement of US$1,077,000 estimated in the ITCP global programme for the Scheme. This support would include covering the cost of conducting the audit in some developing countries.

New resources for ITCP activities

The Committee endorsed the proposals for the TC Fund to support the implementation of the ITCP for the biennium 2006-2007, to be forwarded to the Council the following week, in accordance with the Rules of Operation of the Technical Co-operation Fund, and the amount proposed, increased from US$4.88 million to US$15 million to incorporate the allocation for the global programme to support the Voluntary IMO Member State Audit Scheme.

The Committee considered that it was premature to establish a separate voluntary trust fund for the Audit Scheme but encouraged Member States to make contributions for the Audit Scheme under the ITCP, following the example of the Government of Netherlands.

The Government of the Netherlands pledged contributions to support the ITCP with €30,000 for the conduct of audits in developing countries and €25,000 for capacity-building related to ship recycling, as well as €25,000 for the International Maritime Trust Fund (IMTF). The Government of Egypt also pledged a contribution of US$450,000 spread over 5 years under the framework of the MOU between IMO and the Government of Egypt specifically for the benefit of ITCP activities in the Arab Region. The Committee was also informed that several donors have recently increased or pledged financial contributions to the ITCP.

Meanwhile, the Technical Co-operation Committee agreed, in principle, to the establishment of an International Ship Recycling Fund on the understanding that, when the Fund was established, detailed information would be provided, inter alia, on the specific purposes for which the Fund would be used. The Committee noted that the primary purpose was to provide a specific focus for potential donors (Governments and industry) who may find it easier to contribute to a specific fund rather than generally support the ITCP.

Long term financing for ITCP

While the increase in technical co-operation delivery steadily continued, the level of funding available for the implementation of the ITCP was decreasing. The information provided to the Committee in the TC Financial Forecast, with the current trends projecting the declining reserves of the TC Fund over the next few years, indicated that this Fund could not be considered a sustainable or predictable source of support for the ITCP.

The donor profile for 2004 comprised 20 sources of funding, dominated by the TC Fund (42% of disbursed funds) and the Global Environment Facility (GEF) (32%). Eighteen donors covered the remaining 26% of the programme, with 12 donors accounting for less than 1% each of the total disbursements. The Committee noted the significance of the “pyramid structure” of IMO’s TC donor-profile, with a concentration of two primary sources at the top and a wide, fragmented base, and its important implications for the forward-planning of technical co-operation activities.

The Committee agreed that it was necessary to continue to address the issue of the long-term financial sustainability of the ITCP, which was a priority identified most recently by the Assembly in resolution A.944(23) on the Organization’s Strategic Plan.

The Committee endorsed the formulation of a resource-mobilization strategy for the longer term implementation of the ITCP based on the five precepts presented, which were as follows:

1. ensuring that the TC Fund was maintained as a core fund to support the delivery of the primary activities of the biennial ITCP, and as a means to attract cost-sharing participation from external donor countries and organizations;

2. maximizing the cost-effectiveness of our delivery mechanism – i.e. by reducing costs without lowering the quality of the services provided;

3. establishing an equitable financial mechanism which can ensure the sustainability of a certain minimum level or core capacity of the Organization to respond to the emerging technical assistance needs of developing member countries;
From the meetings - Technical Co-operation Committee (TC)

55th session
14 - 16 June 2005

From the meetings

Port security. IMO Model Courses for Port Facility Security Officers have been published and are available in English, French and Spanish. (Hobart Port Authority)

4 mobilizing external financial and in-kind support through partnerships with Member States, organizations and industry, to supplement the core funding of the ITCP;

5 sharing responsibility for resource mobilization,

Global programmes on maritime security

The Committee received an update on the successful implementation of the global programmes on International ship and Port Facility Security (ISPS) Code implementation and the maritime security Train-the-Trainer courses. To date, since the Global Programme on ISPS Implementation was launched in 2002, a total of 19 regional and 55 national seminars/workshops, as well as 32 country advisory missions on maritime security, had been delivered and some 3,800 persons trained. In addition, the Train-the-Trainer programme was launched in September 2004 with 11 training courses conducted to date, with some 218 persons trained.

IMO Model Courses for Ship Security Officer, Company Security Officer and Port Facility Security Officer have been published and are available in English, French and Spanish. Videos and CD-ROMs on port security have been produced in Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish and will shortly be distributed to developing countries. Meanwhile, the IMO Secretariat is in the final stages of a tender specification for the conversion of the maritime security model courses into distance-learning tools.

IMO regional presence programme

The Committee was updated on the activities of the regional co-ordination offices in Côte d'Ivoire for West and Central (Francophone) Africa, in Ghana for West and Central (Anglophone) Africa, in Kenya for Eastern and Southern Africa subregion and in the Philippines for East Asia. It noted the beneficial impact that these offices, as well as that of the Regional Maritime Adviser in the Caribbean, were having in their respective regions on the number of IMO activities carried out and on the overall regional project delivery. Thanks to field-level representation, the regional co-ordinators had been able to participate in the preparation and formulation of United Nations Common Country Assessment and Development Assistance Framework (CCA/UNDAF) documents and to contribute to regional meetings and conferences. As a result of the close contacts that the regional co-ordinators had established with Member States, the donor community and regional/subregional organizations involved in the maritime sector, they had represented IMO at 28 meetings organized by different institutions including the African Union, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Economic Community Of West African States (ECOWAS), Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) and others.

The Committee noted that the Memorandum of Understanding between India and IMO, for the establishment of a regional presence office in South Asia, was very close to being finalized.

Partnership programme

The Committee was informed that IMO had established some 30 partnership arrangements for its technical co-operation activities. Twenty of them were made with developing and developed countries and the rest with international and regional institutions. Since June 2004, partnerships have been established with the Port Management Association for Eastern and Southern Africa (PMAESA) and the Port Management Association of West and Central Africa (PMAWCA). The purpose of the partnerships is for the two organizations to assist in the implementation of ITCP activities planned for Africa. The Delegation of the Islamic Republic of Iran informed the Committee that they were in the process of finalizing an MoU making available training facilities and personnel. The Delegation of Canada indicated its willingness to provide support for the ITCP delivery through partnerships.

Programme for the Integration of Women in the Maritime Sector (IWMS)

The Committee was updated on the implementation of the Programme for the Integration of Women in the Maritime Sector (IWMS). Financed through the TC Fund, the IWMS activities include the provision of short-term fellowships for women, and an on-going series of regional workshops. The aims of the IWMS programme include enhancing the visibility and impact of women in the maritime industry while strengthening the industry's resource capacities, increasing the percentage of women at senior management level within the maritime sector and promoting women's economic self-reliance, including access to employment.

Following the successful outcome of an initial series of workshops held in Cape Verde, Egypt, Malawi and Mexico, the regional seminar for the Pacific Islands on The Role of Women in the Maritime Sector: Opportunities and Challenges, hosted by Samoa in 2003, adopted a regional Resolution on Strategies for enhancing the role of women in the maritime sector. This was followed by the establishment, in February 2005, of the formal Pacific Women in Maritime Association (WIMA), which aimed to promote information and opportunities and the active participation of women in the maritime sector.

Elsewhere, preliminary discussions, with a view to establishing a formal association in the West and Central Africa sub-region for professional women in the port sector, were initiated at the 28th Annual Council and 4th Round Table of the Port Management Association of West and Central Africa (PMAWCA), in February 2005. Since the establishment of the IWMS programme in 1988, a great deal has been achieved in terms of making gender-awareness part of the culture in technical co-operation, resulting in an increase in the number of appointments of women at the management level of national maritime and port authorities.
NAV Sub-Committee agrees mandatory ECDIS for high-speed craft

High-speed craft should be fitted with an Electronic Chart Display and Information System (ECDIS) on a mandatory basis, the Sub-Committee on Safety of Navigation agreed at its 51st session in June.

The Sub-Committee agreed proposed draft amendments to the International Code of Safety for High-Speed Craft 2000 (2000 HSC Code), as amended, which would require ECDIS to be fitted to all new craft and to all existing craft under a phase-in schedule with a proposed final implementation date of 2010. The proposed amendments will be submitted to the Maritime Safety Committee (MSC) at its 81st session in May 2006 for consideration.

The Sub-Committee agreed that there should be a Formal Safety Assessment (FSA) study on the use of ECDIS on ships other than high speed craft and passenger ships prior to any discussion on a possible carriage requirement for other ships.

The Sub-Committee also agreed to consider proposed amendments to the performance standards for ECDIS at its next session, following work by an intersessional correspondence group.

IHO online charts catalogue

The Sub-Committee expressed support for the International Hydrographic Office (IHO) initiative to establish a comprehensive online catalogue of available official charts, which will facilitate the determination of an “appropriate folio of up-to-date paper charts”, as required by SOLAS. The Sub-Committee was of the view that IHO should be invited to include the following in the catalogue: availability of Electronic Navigational Charts (ENCs); availability of Raster Navigational Charts (RNCs); availability of official paper charts (as defined in SOLAS regulation V/2.3) and a list of charts compiled from inputs by coastal States as an “appropriate folio of up-to-date paper charts” as supplementary to ECDIS working in ECDIS mode.

The Sub-Committee’s correspondence group on ECDIS was tasked with further reviewing the draft specifications of the proposed chart catalogue. It was agreed that Member States should be invited to consider which paper charts would meet the “appropriate folio of up-to-date paper charts” in territorial seas and where ENC’s did not exist, and to communicate this information to IHO for inclusion in the online chart catalogue. Member States were advised to consult the relevant hydrographic authorities.

Performance standards for VDRS and S-VDRs

Performance standards for Voyage Data Recorders (VDRS) and Simplified VDRs were reviewed and it was agreed that amendments were needed with regard to download and playback equipment.

The Sub-Committee approved, for submission to the MSC, a draft MSC resolution Adoption of amendments to the performance standards for shipborne voyage data recorders (VDRs) (resolution A.861(20)) and simplified voyage data recorders (S-VDRs) (resolution MSC 163(76)).

A Safety of Navigation circular Recommended means for extracting stored data from voyage data recorders (VDRs) and simplified voyage data recorders (S-VDRs) for investigation Authorities was also approved. The circular recommends that all VDR and S-VDR systems installed on or after 1 January 2006 be supplied with an accessible means for extracting the stored data from the VDR or S-VDR to a computer.

It also recommends that manufacturers should provide: an output port providing data in an internationally recognized format, such as Ethernet, USB, FireWire, or equivalent; software, compatible with an operating system available with commercial-off-the-shelf computers stored on a portable storage device such as a CD-ROM, DVD, USB-memory stick, etc.; and instructions for executing the software and for connecting the computer to the VDR/S-VDR.

Galileo - performance standards in development

Draft Performance standards for shipborne Galileo receiver equipment were prepared and the Sub-Committee recommended that Performance standards for shipborne Galileo receiver equipment be included on the agenda for its next session. It was agreed that it was important to complete the performance standards by 2006 in order to give time for industry to produce equipment ahead of the Galileo system becoming operational in 2008. It is anticipated that Galileo will be proposed by the Galileo system operators to the Organization as a component of the World Wide Radionavigation System (WWRNS).

Voyage planning for passenger ships

The Sub-Committee endorsed a draft Assembly resolution on Voyage and passage planning for passenger ships operating in remote areas for submission to the MSC at its 81st session in 2006, with a view to adoption at the 25th session of the Assembly in 2007.

The draft resolution, as a standalone document for passenger ships operating in remote areas, is intended to supplement resolution A.830(21) Guidelines for voyage planning.

The draft resolution recommends that passenger ships operating in remote areas should include additional factors in their voyage planning, including the source, age, and the quality of the hydrographic data on which the charts to be used are based; limitations of available Maritime Safety Information (MSI) data and Search and Rescue resources; availability or lack of aids to navigation; and places of refuge. The detailed voyage and passage plan should include the following factors: safe areas and no-go areas; surveyed marine corridors, if available; and contingency plans for emergencies in view of limited support.
From the meetings

Sub-Committee on Safety of Navigation (NAV)

- 51st session
- 6 - 10 June 2005

The vessel should be capable of displaying the proper light configuration in compliance with SOLAS; functional requirements for displays of INS; automatic control systems; back up and fallback arrangement; technical requirements; Part C - Alarm management system; and Part D - Documentation requirements.

The revised performance standards should allow for the proper application of SOLAS regulation V/15 Principles relating to bridge design, design and arrangement of navigational systems and equipment and bridge procedures and overcome the limitations of the existing performance standards for INS.

Review of performance standards for INS

The Sub-Committee agreed a revised draft structure of performance standards for Integrated Navigation Systems (INS) and established a correspondence group to continue the work in developing the text of the performance standards intersexionally. The draft structure provides the framework for the performance standards to be developed in several sections, to include purpose; scope; application; definitions; Part A - Integration of navigational information to include system requirements; Part B – Task-related requirements for Integrated Navigational Systems to include operational requirements; compliance with SOLAS; configuration of INS; functional requirements for displays of INS; automatic control systems; back up and fallback arrangement; technical requirements; Part C - Alarm management system; and Part D - Documentation requirements.

Ships’ routeing

The Sub-Committee approved the following new or amended ships’ routeing measures for submission to the MSC 81st session in May 2006 for adoption:

- New traffic separation schemes for seven Colombian ports: Puerto Bolivar, Santa Marta, Barranquilla, Cartagena, Turbo, Buenaventura including Bahia Malaga and Tumaco.
- Amendments to the existing Traffic Separation Schemes “In the Strait of Juan de Fuca and its approaches” (Canada and the United States);
- Amendment to the existing Traffic Separation Scheme “Off Cabo de Gata” (Spain);
- Amendments to the Existing Traffic Separation Scheme “Off Porqueta Lighthouse” (Estonia, Finland and the Russian Federation); and
- Amendments to Existing Traffic Separation Scheme “In the Strait of Dover and Adjacent Waters” (United Kingdom).
- Amendment to the existing Area to be Avoided: CSH Buoy, Dover Strait (United Kingdom).
- Two new Areas to be Avoided in the Colombian part of the Caribbean Sea - the Rosario Islands and Salmedina Bank, and the Gulf of Morrosquillo (Colombia).
- Canary Islands Particularly Sensitive Sea Area (PSSA) - associated protective measures: Establishment of new Traffic Separation Schemes; Areas to be Avoided; and a new mandatory Ship Reporting System.

The following ships’ routeing systems were approved for submission to the 24th session of the Assembly in November-December 2005 for adoption:

- Amendments to the existing mandatory ship reporting system “In the Great Belt Traffic Area”.
- Galapagos Archipelago PSSA – establishment of a new Area to be Avoided as an associated protective measure.
- Baltic Sea Area PSSA - Establishment of new Traffic Separation Schemes; a recommended Deep-Water Route; Areas to be Avoided; and amendments to existing Traffic Separation Schemes as associated protective measures.

Passenger ship safety

As part of the ongoing work by IMO on passenger ship safety, the Sub-Committee reviewed relevant draft performance standards for essential systems and equipment on passenger ships for safe return to port after a casualty and for three hour time to remain habitable after a casualty. With respect to navigation systems, the Sub-Committee agreed the following revised wording: “Equipment essential for navigation, position fixing and detection of risk of collision should also be available. The vessel should be capable of displaying the proper light configuration in compliance with the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea.”

Review of OSV guidelines

The Sub-Committee finalised its review of the Guidelines for the Design and Construction of Offshore Supply Vessels (originally adopted by resolution A.469(XII)) and forwarded its comments concerning operational precautions against capsizing to the Sub-Committee on Stability and Load Lines and on Fishing Vessels Safety (SLF), which is co-ordinating the review of the guidelines.

Code of safety for special purpose ships (SPS Code)

The Sub-Committee recommended that special purpose ships should comply with the provisions of chapter V of the 1974 SOLAS Convention as amended and that words to that effect should be included in the revised Code. The SPS Code was adopted in 1983 and is being revised to reflect amendments to SOLAS adopted since 1983.
Facilitation Committee adopts Convention amendments

The Facilitation Committee adopted amendments to the FAL Convention when it met for its 32nd session from 4 to 8 July 2005. The amendments are intended to modernize the Convention in order to enhance the facilitation of international maritime traffic.

The amendments include the following:

- A Recommended Practice for public authorities to develop the necessary procedures in order to use pre-arrival and pre-departure information to facilitate the processing of information, and thus expedite release and clearance of cargo and persons;
- A Recommended Practice that all information should be submitted to a single point to avoid duplication;
- Encouragement of electronic transmission of information; and
- The addition of references to the International Ship and Port Facility Security (ISPS) Code and SOLAS chapter XI-2 in the Standards and Recommended Practices which mention security measures; and
- Amendments to the IMO Standardized FAL Forms (1 to 7).

The amendments are expected to enter into force on 1 November 2006.

Persons rescued at sea

As amendments to the SOLAS and SAR Conventions adopted in May 2004 (expected to enter into force on 1 July 2006), relating to persons rescued at sea will place for the first time, obligations on Contracting Governments to “co-ordinate and cooperate” in progressing the matter so that assisted survivors are disembarked from the assisting ship and delivered to a place of safety within a reasonable time; the Committee also adopted an amendment to the FAL Convention relating to persons rescued at sea, to be included in a standard in Section 2 - Arrival, stay and departure of the ship. The proposed amendment would require public authorities to facilitate the arrival and departure of ships engaged in the rescue of persons in distress at sea in order to provide a place of safety for such persons.

Prevention and control of illicit drug trafficking

The Committee agreed to revise the Guidelines for the prevention and suppression of smuggling of drugs, psychotropic substances and precursor chemicals on ships engaged in international maritime traffic (resolution A.872(20)), in conjunction with the Maritime Safety Committee, to update and align them with the provisions of the International Ship and Port Facility Security Code (ISPS Code). To this end, the Committee prepared a draft Assembly resolution for submission to the IMO Assembly at its 24th session in November-December 2005 for adoption which would, inter alia, authorize the Committee and the MSC to adopt jointly a new version of the Guidelines. The revision work will be carried out at MSC 81 in May and FAL 33 in July 2006.

Training and education for shore-side mooring personnel

The Committee approved a circular on Guidelines on minimum training and education for mooring personnel. The guidelines provide Member Governments, port authorities and the port industry with guidance on recommended training and education for shore-side mooring personnel, the application of which aims to assure the shipping industry and the public at large that there is an adequate level of competence available in ports, to enable ships to enter, stay and leave a port safely, secure and efficiently. The guidelines have been developed for non-seafarers seeking to enter the profession for the first time. However, they may be used, as a guide, by those seeking to develop programmes to upgrade the knowledge and level of education or training of existing mooring personnel.

The Committee also established a Correspondence Group on Development of a Model Course on Training of Mooring Personnel to develop a suitable model course.

Shipments of IMDG Code class 7 radioactive materials

The Committee approved a circular on Difficulties encountered in the shipment of IMDG Code class 7 radioactive material and, in particular, Cobalt-60. The circular is intended to help alleviate the reported difficulties encountered in the shipment of IMDG Code class 7 radioactive materials and in particular Cobalt-60.

The circular notes that shipping and handling of IMDG Code class 7 radioactive materials, when carried out in compliance with the relevant provisions of SOLAS chapter VII, the IMDG Code and Recommendations on the safe transport of dangerous cargoes and related activities in port areas (MSC/Circ.675), should be considered as meeting the necessary safety requirements and should be facilitated.

The circular recommends that the efficient, cost effective and expeditions handling and shipment of Cobalt-60 aboard ships, and in and through ports, should be facilitated.

Cobalt-60, a non-fissile IMDG Code class 7 radioactive material with UN 2916, is used to sterilize approximately 45% of all single use medical supplies used worldwide, such as syringes, surgeons’ gloves, bandages, and a wide variety of other products. Cobalt-60 is also relied upon to sterilize a vast array of consumer products and is used to make the food supply safer by eliminating food
From the meetings
Facilitation Committee (FAL)
32nd session
4 - 8 July 2005

pathogens and to reduce the incidence of disease-carrying insects. Cobalt-60 is one of the radioisotopes used in the treatment of cancer.

Decrease in stowaway incidents reported

The Committee noted information on a decrease in reported incidents of stowaways since the adoption of the 2002 amendments to the FAL Convention (addressing the resolution of stowaway incidents) and the entry-into-force on 1 July 2004, of SOLAS chapter XI-2 Special measures to enhance maritime security and the ISPS Code, the Committee noted.

The annual statistics of incidents reported to IMO for the years 2003 and 2004 showed that 281 stowaway incidents had occurred (183 in 2003 and 98 in 2004), involving 686 stowaways (476 in 2003 and 210 in 2004). The most affected areas were West Africa (208 stowaways – 43.70% of the total in 2003 and 196 stowaways – 54.48 % of the total in 2004) and the Mediterranean, Black Sea and North Sea (114 stowaways – 23.95% in 2003 and 64 stowaways – 30.48% in 2004).

Shipboard certificates and documents

Following a proposal by the International Chamber of Shipping (ICS), the Committee agreed to consider whether, in future, access to the information on certificates of ships engaged on international voyages might be facilitated and simplified through the use of modern communication technology, such as access to online databases.

As ships are required to carry certain certificates and documents on board for validation when necessary, the Committee agreed that a detailed analysis needed to be carried out to determine which certificates and documents have to be kept on board vessels and which may be retained in electronic format. Careful consideration was also necessary to be given to who could access such electronic documents. The Committee also agreed that the Maritime Safety Committee (MSC) and Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC) should be consulted on the feasibility and practicability of such a system.

Single Window System

The Committee discussed a recommendation to establish an XML-based Single Window System framework in an effort to simplify, standardize and make effective use of present arrival and departure information through electronic means. It was agreed that further discussion was needed and that an Electronic Data Interchange Working Group should meet at the next session to discuss the development of the Single Window system for the exchange and management of information; the development of Message Implementation Guidelines (MIG) for exchange of information electronically on all IMO/FAL forms; the development of a uniform ship’s pre-arrival electronic message for the transmission of security-related information; and related issues, including collaboration with the United Nations Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business, (UN/CEFACT), the World Customs Organization (WCO) and the International Organization for Standardization (ISO).

Facilitation in avoiding safety threatening conditions

The Committee approved a circular on Facilitation in avoiding safety threatening conditions. The Circular notes that the Committee has received reports of a number of incidents wherein public authorities refused or delayed, for various reasons, the movement of material, equipment, fuel and any other supplies to ships essential for their safe operations. Consequently, ships had proceeded to sea in unsafe conditions, often presenting a hazard to other ships and the marine environment. The Committee agreed that public authorities should not unreasonably prevent, except in the case of judicial proceedings, the delivery of essential supplies to a ship.

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International Shipping - Carrier of World Trade

Globalization and international trade

It may seem obvious to say that, today, we live in a global world, and it is certainly true that international trade among all the nations and regions of the world is nothing new. From the Egyptians through the Greeks to the Chinese, the Vikings, the Spanish, the Portuguese, the British, the French, the Dutch, the Polynesians and Celts, the history of the world is a history of exploration, conquest and trade by sea.

But there is no doubt that we have now entered a new era of global interdependence from which there can be no turning back. In today's world, national boundaries offer little impediment to multi-national corporations: automobiles with far-eastern brands are not only sold but also assembled in Europe, while European brands are assembled and sold in North America; "western" energy companies invest millions of dollars in Asia and the far-east and the strategy and investment decisions they make can affect millions of people all over the world.

The high-flyers of the business world can cross oceans in just hours, communicating by email and telephone as they go. In the financial markets, brokers and traders have thrown off the constraints of time zones and distance and now access the markets all over the world via their computers. In the 21st century, emerging industries such as computer software, media and fashion have no obvious geographical dimension and recognise no physical boundaries. In today's consumer world, the same brands are recognised, understood and valued all over the world.

The process of globalization and the factors that have enabled it to evolve were recognized by the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Kofi Annan, in 2000. He observed, "Globalization has been made possible by the progressive dismantling of barriers to trade and capital mobility, fundamental technological advances, steadily declining costs of transport, communication and computing. Its integrative logic seems inexorable, its momentum irresistible."

Looking back into history, we can trace the stages through which we have progressed to arrive at this new world order. There was a time when, for any given community, the most important raw materials, the most important products and the most important markets were essentially local. But, as interaction between communities grew, trade developed and regional specialties, often founded on the availability of particular raw materials or on saleable skill-sets that had been developed over time, began to emerge.

As the world became more developed, proximity to raw materials and to markets became the factors that, above all others, shaped the world's economy and, in particular, the major trade patterns and shipping routes.

Eventually, the great seaborne trades became established: coal from Australia, Southern Africa and North America to Europe and the Far East; grain from North and South America to Asia, Africa and the Far East; iron ore from South America and Australia to Europe and the Far East; oil from the Middle East, West Africa, South America and the Caribbean to Europe, North America and Asia; and now we must add to this list containerized manufactures from China, Japan and South-east Asia to the consumer markets of the western world. Global trade has effectively permitted an enormous variety of resources to be more widely accessible and has thus facilitated the widespread distribution of our planet's common wealth.

Today, international trade has evolved to the point where almost no nation can be fully self-sufficient. Every country is involved, at one level or another, in the process of selling what it produces and acquiring what it lacks: none can be dependent only on its domestic resources.

Global trade has fostered an interdependency and inter-connectivity between peoples who would previously have considered themselves completely unconnected. The potential benefits are clear: growth can be accelerated and prosperity more widespread; skills and technology can be more evenly dispersed, and both individuals and countries can take advantage of previously unimagined economic opportunities.

Shipping has always provided the only really cost-effective method of bulk transport over any great distance, and the development of shipping and the establishment of a global system of trade have moved forward together, hand-in-hand. Those with access to natural resources; those with the ability to convert those resources into useful products for the good of mankind; and those with a requirement and the wherewithal to utilize and consume those end products are all joined by the common thread of shipping. The eternal triangle of producers, manufacturers and markets are brought together through shipping. This has always been the case and will remain so for the foreseeable future.

Shipping and the global economy

In selecting the theme for World Maritime Day 2005 – International Shipping - Carrier of World Trade – it is hoped that Governments, organizations, the shipping industry and all other stakeholders will be able to draw...
attention to the vital role that shipping plays in underpinning international commerce and the world economy as the most efficient, safe and environmentally friendly method of transporting goods around the globe. We live in a global society which is supported by a global economy – and that economy simply could not function if it were not for ships and the shipping industry.

More than 90 per cent of global trade is carried by sea. It is almost impossible to quantify the value of volume of world seaborne trade in monetary terms; however, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) estimates that the operation of merchant ships contributes about US$380 billion in freight rates within the global economy, equivalent to about 5% of total world trade.

Shipping trade estimates are usually calculated in tonne-miles – a measurement of tonnes carried, multiplied by the distance travelled. In 2003, for example, the industry shipped around 6.1 thousand million tonnes over a distance of about 4 million miles, resulting in a staggering total of over 25 thousand billion tonne-miles of trade.

Throughout the last century the shipping industry has seen a general trend of increases in total trade volume. Increasing industrialization and the liberalization of national economies have fuelled free trade and a growing demand for consumer products. Advances in technology have also made shipping an increasingly efficient and swift method of transport. Over the last four decades, total seaborne trade estimates have more than quadrupled, from less than 6 thousand billion tonne-miles in 1965 to the latest full-year figure of 25 thousand billion tonne-miles in 2003.

As with all industrial sectors, however, shipping is not immune to occasional economic downturns – a notable fall in trade occurred, for example, during the worldwide economic recession of the early 1980s. However, although the growth in seaborne trade was tempered by the Asian financial crisis of the late 1990s, there has generally been healthy growth in maritime trade since 1993. Overall, between 1980 and 1999, the value of world trade grew at 12% per year, while total freight costs, during the same period, increased by only 7%, demonstrating the falling unit costs of marine transportation.

The transport cost element in the shelf price of consumer goods varies from product to product, but is ultimately marginal. For example, transport costs account for only around 2% of the shelf price of a television set and only around 1.2% of a kilo of coffee. Shipping is truly the lynchpin of the global economy. Without shipping, intercontinental trade, the bulk transport of raw materials and the import/export of affordable food and manufactured goods would simply not be possible. Today's world fleet is registered in over 150 nations and is manned by over a million seafarers of virtually every nationality.

In the context of a global economy, the contribution made by shipping as a major industry in its own right is very significant, and increasingly so for the developing world. Maritime activity already provides an important source of income to many developing countries.

Indeed, developing countries now lead the world in some of shipping's most important ancillary businesses, including the registration of ships, the supply of sea-going manpower and ship recycling. They also play a significant part in shipowning and operating, shipbuilding and repair and port services, among others.

As seaborne trade continues to expand, it brings benefits for consumers throughout the world through low freight costs that are continuing to decrease in real terms. Thanks to the growing efficiency of shipping as a mode of transport and to increased economic liberalization, the prospects for the industry's further growth continue to be strong.

The world fleet and modern ships

The history of shipping is a glorious and proud one. There is no doubt, for example, that the magnificent square riggers of the era of sail or the early 20th century’s prestigious ocean liners could stir the hearts of all those that beheld them. But the ships of today are just as worthy of our admiration, for shipping today is in another truly golden age. Ships have never been so technically advanced, never been so sophisticated, never been more immense, never carried so much cargo, never been safer and never been so environmentally-friendly as they are today.

Mammoth containerships nudging the 10,000 TEU barrier yet still capable of 25 knot operating speeds; huge oil tankers and bulk carriers that carry vast quantities of fuel, minerals, and grain and other commodities around our planet economically, safely and cleanly; the complex and highly specialized
workhorses of the offshore industry; and the wonderful giants of the passenger ship world are all worthy of our greatest admiration.

In shipping today we can see many marvels of state-of-the-art engineering and technology that deserve to be ranked alongside the very finest achievements of our global infrastructure. We all marvel at the wonders of the modern world – skyscrapers, bridges, dams, ship canals, tunnels and so on. Although they all deserve our admiration, there should be no question that today’s finest ships are also worthy of the sort of recognition usually reserved for the great icons of land-based civil engineering – with one substantial difference in favour of the former: while skyscrapers, bridges, dams et al are static structures designed to withstand the elements coming to them, the very essence of marine vehicles sends them out to sea to face the elements at full force, alone in the vastness of the ocean. They should, therefore, be robust when built and maintained as such throughout their entire lifetime.

Ships are high value assets, with the larger of them costing over US $100 million to build. They are also technically sophisticated: you are more likely to find one of today’s modern vessels being controlled by a single joystick and a mouse-ball in the arm of the helmsman’s seat than a horny-handed bosun grappling with a spoked wheel; the chief engineer will probably have clean hands and the calluses on his or her fingers will be from tapping a keyboard rather than wielding a spanner. The crew accommodation will be clean, light and airy with modern recreation facilities; the food will be good; and you may well find the first officer exchanging emails with his family at home via the satellite communication system. Ships today are modern, technologically advanced workplaces and the work of IMO has played, and continues to play, an important part in shaping that environment.

As at 1 January 2005, the world trading fleet was made up of 46,232 ships, with a combined tonnage of 597,709,000 gross tonnes. The vast bulk of the fleet was made up of: general cargo ships (18,150), tankers (11,356), bulk carriers (6,139), passenger ships (5,679) and containerships (3,165). Other ship types accounted for 1,733 vessels.

Although general cargo ships are still the largest single category, the trend among new ships is more and more in favour of specialization (although it could be argued that handy-sized, geared bulk carriers and versatile medium-sized containerships, of which some have the ability to accommodate several different box sizes as well as palletised cargo are the natural successors of the old general cargo vessel); indeed, it is interesting to note that, in the most recent edition of the annual “Significant Ships” publication from the United Kingdom’s Royal Institution of Naval Architects, not a single one of the 50 selected for 2004 was a general cargo vessel.

Tankers make up the second largest category. There are many different types of tanker, ranging from those carrying crude oil, through those built to transport various refined hydrocarbon products, to highly specialized ships that carry liquefied petroleum gas and natural gas. There are even tankers designed to carry cargoes such as fresh water, wine or orange juice. In size terms, the heyday of the tanker was the early 1970s, when the so-called Ultra-Large Crude Carriers (ULCCs), capable of lifting more than half a million tonnes of cargo, bestrode the oceans. After the oil crisis of the 70s, tanker owners became a little more modest in their ambitions and, since then, most large modern tankers are in the 200-300,000 tonnage range. These are still massive vessels and enormously expensive to build, but today’s high price of oil means they can pay for themselves in a relatively short period of time.

The world’s largest ship today is a 564,765 dwt tanker with an interesting and varied history. She was built in 1976 and having undergone some work to increase her load-carrying capacity, was finally floated two years later and named Seawise Giant.

At first, she operated in the Gulf of Mexico and the Caribbean Sea, but was then used for exporting oil from Iran during the Iran-Iraq War. In 1986, she was attacked but not sunk in the Strait of Hormuz and at the end of the war in 1989 she was repaired and renamed Happy Giant. In 1991, she was renamed again, this time to Jahre Viking.

In March 2004, the ship was sold and sent by its new owner to be refitted as a floating storage and offloading unit. There, she was given her current name, Knock Nevis, and plans have been made to operate her in the Al Shabeen oilfield in the waters of Qatar.

Perhaps more typical of the kind of large crude oil carrier being built today is the Irene SL, also built in Japan in 2004. Selected as one of the Naval Architect’s 50 “Significant Ships” of 2004, Irene SL has a design deadweight of just under 300,000 dwt, a double-hull construction and is capable of handling three different grades of oil simultaneously in her 15 cargo tanks. Her cargo and ballast control systems, including the operation of pumps, valves and ullage measurement are all computerized. For safety, inert gas is pumped into the cargo tanks when they are empty and, to comply with the most recent requirements on emissions, the ship is fitted with a scrubber system to clean the exhaust gas.

Bulk carriers are often called the workhorses of the international shipping fleet. They can be thought of as simple, relatively unsophisticated but nevertheless highly efficient vessels that typically transport commodities such as grain, coal and mineral ores. If tankers provide the fuel that powers the modern economy, bulk carriers are responsible for moving the raw materials that are its lifeblood.

In terms of size, the world’s bulk carrier fleet has three categories; ships of up to 50,000 dwt are known as “handy-sized”; ships of 50,000 to 80,000 dwt are known as “Panamax” (being the largest ships able to...
transit the Panama Canal) and ships of more than 80,000 dwt are known as “capsize”. Bulk carriers embrace a number of variations – single or double hull, with or without their own cargo-handling equipment – but all are characterized by the huge hatch covers that can be rolled or lifted away to reveal cavernous holds beneath. Because of the nature of the cargoes they carry – often heavy, high-density commodities – accidents involving bulk carriers have sometimes resulted in considerable loss of life. For this reason IMO has, over a long period of time, undertaken a great deal of work to improve the safety of this type of vessel. There is, for example, a special chapter on bulk carrier safety in the Safety of Life at Sea Convention, covering such topics as damage stability, structural strength, surveys and loading. In a casualty analysis undertaken recently by the International Association of Dry Cargo Shipowners – Intercargo – for bulk carriers for the ten years to 2001 it revealed that the number of ships, lives and tonnage being lost in this sector are all decreasing. Moreover, the report has specifically identified that IMO measures such as the Enhanced Programme of Inspections during Surveys and SOLAS chapter XII on bulk carrier safety, have reduced the risk of fatality on new and existing ships by 50% and 25% respectively. More than 90 per cent of world trade is carried by sea. In 2003 the industry shipped around 6.1 thousand million tonnes over a distance of about 4 million miles, resulting in a staggering total of over 25 thousand billion tonne-miles of trade (CEPSA). Passenger ships come next in the world fleet league table. There are two basic categories – which can be summed up as “fun” or “function”. In the latter category are those...
Feature

International Shipping - Carrier of World Trade

The sea has always been a potentially hazardous and dangerous working environment. Yet, ship operators today have new factors and new pressures to contend with. The structure of the global marketplace requires that goods and materials be delivered not only to the geographical location where they are required but also within a very precise timeframe. Today, goods in transit are carefully factored-in to the supply chain and, as a result, the transportation industry – which embraces both shipping and ports – has become a key component of a manufacturing sector which sets its store by providing a complete “door-to-door” service. As a consequence, safety and efficiency have now, more than ever before, become two sides of the same coin: accidents are not only undesirable outcomes in themselves; they also have a negative impact on the supply chain that is at the heart of the new global economy. Seen in this light, IMO’s responsibility to ensure the highest practicable, globally acceptable, standards that will improve maritime safety and security, and, at the same time, help prevent marine pollution, takes on a new dimension.

Shipping in the 21st century is the safest and most environmentally benign form of commercial transport. Commitment to safety has long pervaded virtually all deep sea shipping operations and shipping was amongst the very first industries to adopt widely implemented international safety standards.

From the mid-19th century onwards, a number of international maritime agreements were adopted. A treaty of 1863, for example, introduced certain common navigational procedures that ships should follow, when encountering each other at sea, so as to avoid collision, and was signed by some 30 countries. And the infamous Titanic disaster of 1912 spawned the first Safety of Life at Sea - or SOLAS - Convention, which, albeit completely modified and updated, and nowadays within the responsibility of IMO, is still the most important international instrument addressing maritime safety today, covering, among others, such areas as ship design, construction and equipment, subdivision and stability, fire protection, radiocommunications, safety of navigation, carriage of cargoes (including dangerous cargoes), safety management and maritime security.

The overall safety record of shipping has been improving steadily for many years. Take, for example, the numbers of ships lost in maritime casualties: according to casualty statistics produced by Lloyds Register of Shipping (and latterly by LR-Fairplay), between 1966 and 1985 there were never fewer than 300 ships lost annually. The worst years, 1978 and 1979, together saw 908 losses at a ration of 6.7 ships per thousand in the world fleet. In 1959, when IMO began, the ratio of vessels lost was running at 5 per thousand vessels. The number and percentage of losses began to dip significantly in 1980 and has continued on a downward curve ever since. In 1990, the number of annual losses slipped under 200, at 2.4 per thousand vessels. By 2000 the figure had further decreased to 167 at 1.9 per thousand ships. By 2004, the overall figure had approached the 100 mark.
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In fact, relatively few ships actually sink at sea. The vast majority of so-called “losses” are actually those which are damaged and “written off” by the hull insurers as being beyond economical repair – described by underwriters as “constructive total losses”.

Furthermore, figures produced by the United Kingdom P&I Club, which insures around 20% of the world’s ships, reveal similar reductions in insurance claims for third party liability, such as incidents involving personal injury, cargo damage, pollution or damage to property (e.g. other ships or port equipment). The decrease in the number of large claims is all the more significant given the increasing value of claims that are made.

Figures from the International Salvage Union also confirm that safety at sea has improved dramatically in recent years. According to them, the numbers of major ship casualties and significant pollution incidents have decreased sharply. In 1974 there were 26 oil spills in excess of 700 tonnes. In 2004, there were just five such spills.

As in all transport sectors, lives are sadly lost as a result of accidents. However, the loss of life in shipping is in fact relatively modest and the overall trend is one of reduction in the number of fatalities, which is all the more impressive in view of the growth in the number of ships in the world fleet. Figures from LR Fairplay relating to lives lost on cargo ships show a continuing downward trend – and this covers the entire international industry, which employs over one and a quarter million people, plus many more employed in coastal trades.

Shipping is one of the least environmentally damaging forms of commercial transport and, compared with the land-based industry, is a comparatively minor contributor to marine pollution from human activities. There has been a substantial reduction in marine pollution over the last 15 years, especially with regard to the amount of oil spilled into the sea, again despite a massive increase in world seaborne trade.

It is estimated that land based discharge (sewage, industrial effluent and urban/river run off etc.) and atmospheric inputs from land industry sources account for some 77% of marine pollution generated from human activities. In contrast, maritime transport is only responsible for some 12% of the total and further reduction of this figure is vigorously pursued. The shipping industry is also a relatively small contributor to the total volume of atmospheric emissions compared to road vehicles and public utilities such as power stations while atmospheric pollution from ships has reduced in the last decade. There have been significant improvements in engine efficiency. Improved hull design and the use of ships with larger cargo carrying capacities have led to a reduction in emissions and an increase in fuel efficiency. Moreover, a new annex to IMO’s MARPOL (Marine Pollution) Convention entered into force this year, setting formal limits on sulphur oxide (SOx) and nitrogen oxide (NOx) emissions from ship-generated (bunkers or engine) exhausts and prohibiting deliberate emissions of ozone-depleting substances.

In the future, improvements in hull design are expected to lead to further reductions in fuel oil consumption with consequent reductions in air pollution. The latest marine engines give a 30%-40% reduction in discharges of nitrogen oxide, with reductions of 60% likely in the future.

In those sectors where it competes directly with other means of transport, shipping remains by far the most energy efficient. Research undertaken by the United Kingdom Government, for example, has demonstrated that energy consumption of road transport by truck lies in the range 0.7 to 1.2 Megajoules/tonne-km. By comparison, the consumption of a 3,000 dwt coastal tanker at 14 knots is about 0.3 Mj/tonne-km and that of a medium-size containership at 15.5 knots is about 0.12 Mj/tonne-km.

Looking at the larger picture, there can be no doubt that transport and communication are crucial for sustainable development in the global environment. Sustainable development calls for economic and social systems in which the consumption of the environment and natural resources is reduced to a permanently affordable level, while economic output, which is a prerequisite to meeting society’s material requirements, is maintained.

In order to gauge the sustainability of shipping, it is necessary to evaluate the contribution the activity as a whole makes to global economic and social prosperity and weigh that against any detrimental effect it may have on the environment and in other respects. The ideal situation must be to achieve the maximum possible contribution on the one hand, at minimal consequent expense on the other.

If shipping were to consume environmental capital (in the form of pollution) or social capital (by being an inherently unsafe activity that costs thousands of lives each year) or economic capital (perhaps through...
enormous insurance premiums and massive claims) to a greater extent than its overall positive contribution, then clearly it could not be considered “sustainable”. However, in this respect, shipping has an excellent record. Furthermore, there is no viable alternative to shipping and so any steps that can be taken towards making shipping a safer, more efficient and more environmentally-friendly activity can only increase, overall, the positive contribution the activity makes to global sustainability and to sustainable development.

Accidents do, of course, unfortunately happen from time to time and, when they do, they may result in loss of life and damage to the environment. However, every occasion in which a ship – any ship – becomes involved in a pollution incident or a major casualty must be set against the literally billions of trouble-free, clean and economically efficient tonne-miles that shipping achieves every day, and all the consequent benefits that accrue from this activity.

Seafarers today

On World Maritime Day, it is important to celebrate not only the vital contribution that ships and shipping make to the prosperity and well-being of us all but also the men and women who take on the onerous task of operating them.

The worldwide population of seafarers serving on internationally trading merchant ships today is estimated to be in the order of 400,000 officers and 825,000 ratings. The OECD countries (North America, Western Europe, Japan etc.) remain the most important source for officers although growing numbers of officers are now recruited from other Far Eastern countries and from Eastern Europe.

As far as ratings are concerned they are, in the majority, recruited from developing countries, especially the Far East. The Philippines alone provides almost 20% of the global maritime workforce. China and India are also significant maritime labour supply nations, with many seafarers from these countries enjoying employment opportunities on foreign flag ships operated by international shipping companies.

Given the enormous responsibility those in command have both for the very lives of those they carry on passenger ships, and those who serve with them and for the environment, not to mention the commercial success of the enterprise in which they are engaged, it requires a very special kind of person to take up the challenge of a seafaring career – especially these days when ships, because of their capacity to carry passengers in their thousands and cargoes in hundreds of thousands of tons, have the potential to cause enormous loss of life or environmental catastrophes of unimaginable dimensions.

The sea can be an unforgiving environment and, over the centuries, its rigours have encouraged seafarers to build a tradition of selflessness and of high regard for others, particularly those who find themselves in difficulty or distress. It is a tradition that persists today – indeed, IMO is to establish a special award for courage at sea, to recognize those who, at the risk of losing their own life, commit acts of extreme bravery to rescue persons in distress at sea or to prevent catastrophic pollution of the environment thus exhibiting virtues of self-sacrifice in line with the highest traditions at sea and the humanitarian aspect of shipping.

In 2005, we have also witnessed the humanitarian aspect of shipping at work in the tremendous response of the maritime community and industries, both in kind and in direct financial terms, to last year’s dreadful Boxing Day tsunami tragedy in the Indian Ocean.

The work of IMO

Shipping is perhaps the most international of all the world’s great industries. The ownership and management chain surrounding any particular vessel can embrace many different countries; it is not unusual to find that the owners, operators, shippers, charterers, insurers and the classification society, not to mention the officers and crew, are all of different nationalities and that none of these is from the country whose flag flies at the ship’s stern.

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

The first attempts at such a common approach date back to well beyond the formation of IMO. But it was not until the establishment of the Organization after World War II that there was a recognized, international body to address such concerns. Since its formation, IMO’s main task has been to develop and maintain a comprehensive regulatory framework for international shipping. Its mandate was originally limited to safety-related issues, but subsequently its remit has expanded to embrace environmental considerations, legal matters, technical co-operation, issues that affect the overall efficiency of shipping – such as how to deal with stowaways or how a cargo manifest should be transmitted to the authorities ashore; piracy and armed robbery against ships and, most recently, maritime security.

The direct output of IMO’s regulatory work is a comprehensive body of international conventions, supported by literally hundreds of guidelines and recommendations that, between them, govern just about every facet of the shipping industry. It is impossible to generalize with complete accuracy but, broadly speaking, IMO measures fall into three categories. There are those aimed primarily at the prevention of accidents, casualties and environmental damage from ships in the first place. This group comprises conventions setting standards for ship design, construction, equipment, operation and manning. Then there is a series of measures which recognize that accidents do happen, despite the best efforts of all concerned and which, therefore, try to mitigate their negative effects. Rules concerning distress and safety communications, the provision of search and rescue facilities and oil spill clean-up and response mechanisms, all fall into this category. The final group is concerned with the aftermath of accidents and, in particular, with establishing a mechanism for ensuring that those who suffer the consequences of an accident – and this refers, in particular, although not exclusively, to pollution victims – can be adequately compensated.

Although IMO does not have a massive field presence, the Organization as a whole does recognize that not all of its Members have an equal ability to implement the measures they agree to at IMO. Some lack resources, some lack expertise, some both. To this end, IMO has established an extensive technical co-operation programme, in which it tries to identify particular needs among the resource-shy Member countries and match them to offers of help and assistance from those that are better off. Typically, this might involve arranging training, workshops and seminars on particular subjects at national, sub-regional or regional level. IMO has also founded three high-level educational establishments in Sweden, Malta and Italy, specializing in maritime subjects, which are designed principally to offer advanced level education in maritime subjects to students from less developed countries.

The list of shipping-related topics that fall under the aegis of IMO is huge. But there are, of course, some things that the Organization is not. It is not, for example, a police force; it does not have the mandate or the capacity to put teams of inspectors aboard ships and check their compliance with international standards. It is not “operational” in the sense that it does not follow incidents and accidents at sea, such as groundings, collisions, explosions etc. on a 24-hour basis, and it is not a court; there is an International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea, in Hamburg, but this is established under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) which is not an IMO Convention. IMO does not get involved with issues such as territorial waters, EEZs or fishing rights. Again, these are regulated by UNCLOS and fall within the remit of other international organizations.

To a considerable extent, this success story of shipping in terms of its improving safety and environmental record can be attributed to the comprehensive framework of rules, regulations and standards developed over many years by IMO, through international collaboration among its Members and with full industry participation. It is thanks in no small measure to the Organization’s outcomes that all those millions of trouble-free tonne-miles referred to earlier are possible. Just about every technical aspect of shipping is covered by an IMO measure, from the drawing board to scrapyard. Every single piece of this all-embracing regulatory structure makes a contribution towards the overall sustainability of shipping and is a testimony to the highly responsible attitude that pervades the activity of shipping and the industry of shipping at all levels.

The public image of shipping

Of all the sectors that make up the global transport infrastructure, shipping probably has the lowest public profile and the least representative public image. In the developed world, most people are familiar with the rituals and the frustrations of air travel; railway trains not only cross vast empty plains but also rattled through busy cities and suburban towns; and the lorries, cars and vans that crowd onto the road network are simply a part of everyday life. By contrast, most people never encounter a ship, except perhaps for the occasional trip on a ferry. Even in the case of coastal cities, as ships grew exponentially in size, the latter half of the 20th century witnessed a migration of maritime traffic from traditional port areas to purpose-built, dedicated sites away from the main centres of population. To all intents and purposes, shipping is “out of sight and out of mind”.

It is a pity, although perhaps inevitable in a world where good news is no news, that it is the accidents which tend to make the headlines and inform public opinion. An oil tanker, for example, can be either a menacing pollution accident waiting to happen, filled to
the brim with a scarce natural resource that we should be preserving, not plundering; or, a modern, clean, safe and efficient carrier of the vital energy resource that provides the power we need in order to enjoy the comfort and living standards we expect from life in the 21st century - it just depends on which way you look at it.

The former European Union Transport Commissioner, Lord Kinnock, had some pertinent comments to make when he addressed the centenary celebrations of the shipping industry body BIMCO at IMO headquarters earlier this year. Among other things, he observed that “much of the world community, particularly its elected representatives, most of the time, in most cases, appear to be blissfully unaware of the significance of sea transport to the civilization, consumption and production of the world.”

Yet, shipping actually has a very positive story to tell. In terms of efficiency, safety, the environment and its contribution to global trade, shipping is unmatched by any other transport sector. Overall, quality is high and getting higher - and, yet, it always seems to be the small minority, at the lower end of the scale, that grab the headlines and – unfortunately – shape public opinions.

What tends to be overlooked is that vast supplies of seaborne oil, for example, are needed every day, literally to fuel the lives and lifestyles we have become accustomed to. The real picture is revealed in industry figures which show that 60 per cent of the annual world oil consumption of 3.6 billion tonnes is transported by sea and, of this, 99.9997 per cent is delivered safely.

The challenges ahead

Gazing into a crystal ball to glimpse the future may be nothing more than a parlour game but even so-called experts with the benefit of experience, research and proper academic discipline have found trends in the transport industries notoriously hard to predict with any accuracy. In 1838, for example, the philosopher, physicist and astronomer Dionysius Lardner told the British Association for the Advancement of Science that “Men might as well project a voyage to the moon as attempt to employ steam navigation against the stormy north Atlantic Ocean.” In similar vein is the statement by Lord Kelvin in 1880 that “heavier-than-air flying machines are impossible” and that he would not have “the smallest molecule of faith in aerial navigation other than ballooning...”.

History may be the harshest of judges but few commentators today would consider it reckless to predict that no form of commercial transport is likely to emerge to challenge shipping as the carrier of world trade in the foreseeable future. Nevertheless, shipping cannot afford to be complacent and the shipping community is preparing to face up to some important challenges in the coming years.

There will, for example, undoubtedly be a continuing and growing emphasis placed on environmental protection, emanating from public pressure and expectations, and affecting the international regulatory framework adopted through IMO. Matters such as the ready supply of appropriate fuel to ensure compliance with the new air pollution requirements; the development of environmentally friendly hull coatings in
compliance with the IMO’s Anti-Fouling Convention and improved ballast water management methods will all have an impact. But the shipping industry is a responsible one and it will adjust to these new international requirements conscientiously and effectively.

As far as maritime security is concerned, it is appropriate to recall, once again, the words of UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan in his report to the up-coming September World Summit. He says: “We will not enjoy development without security, we will not enjoy security without development, and we will not enjoy either without respect for human dignity. Unless all these causes are advanced, none will succeed.”

In the current global climate the challenge for the maritime community in this respect will be twofold: on the one hand, to ensure that security consciousness and heightened vigilance become so ingrained as to become second nature; and, on the other, to achieve an effective and workable balance between security measures, which inevitably impose a degree of inconvenience, and the free and uninterrupted flow of maritime traffic – which does, after all, underpin the entire global economy. Maintaining strategically vital sea passages, such as the Malacca Strait, as trouble-free shipping routes is of crucial importance to everyone, not just those involved in shipping. Failure in this respect could result in very serious consequences indeed.

Another important issue that has to be faced without delay is whether or not the physical assets and the infrastructures of the shipping and port industries are able to adapt quickly enough to keep pace with changes in global trading patterns and, more fundamentally, whether it is commercially sensible to equip for levels of activity and for patterns of activity that may or may not be long-lasting. Commercial considerations of this nature have always vexed the maritime industries and they will continue to be among the issues that will dominate them over the next decade.

Two other key challenges are also emerging. First, there is the question of how to secure the industry’s future manpower resource – adequate in numbers, properly trained and of sufficient calibre to operate the increasingly sophisticated and valuable ships already in service and those that will emerge over the next decade. This will be crucial. And, second, the innovative use of information technology to combine environmental, safety, operational and navigational systems and data in ways that we are only just beginning to explore, will have a major impact on shipping. The information revolution seems set to take hold of shipping over the next decade and will present new ways of blending economic and safety considerations into common applications.

One very important challenge that faces IMO, but which again has potentially far-reaching consequences, is the preservation of unity among the Organization’s Members. As stressed earlier on, the very structure of shipping, in which the prime assets physically move between countries, between different regions of the world and, therefore, between different legal regimes, makes internationally agreed and universally applied standards an absolute pre-requisite. There is simply no room for unilateralism or even regionalism in the regulation of shipping – unless, of course, the need for regional standards has been recognized and sanctioned by IMO itself, such as in the case of the Stockholm Agreement ro-ro passenger ship damage stability standards or the MARPOL Special Areas and Particularly Sensitive Sea Areas (PSSAs), and so on.

IMO was founded to provide a global forum for Governments to meet, discuss, exchange views and conclude the adoption of international technical standards, which, once ratified through national legislation, these same Governments must respect and implement throughout. Through IMO, countries with maritime interests consent to be bound by international conventions on maritime safety and protection of the marine environment which they themselves develop and adopt (at the international (IMO) level) and ratify (at the national level). Indeed, on his appointment, IMO Secretary-General Efthimios E. Mitropoulos said that he considered the preservation of unity among the IMO Members as his paramount duty. A united membership finds it easier to make decisions by consensus and standards adopted by consensus stand a good chance of being implemented widely and effectively globally, which is what an industry as international as shipping needs.

Conclusion

For IMO, creating the conditions in which international shipping can operate safely, securely and with a minimal impact on the global environment remains the Organization’s mission. Through the diligence, expertise and commitment of all those involved in any capacity in the Organization, considerable, measurable success towards these goals has been achieved and will continue into the future. Shipping affects us all. No matter where you may be in the world, if you look around you it is almost certain that you will see something that either has been or will be transported by sea, whether in the form of raw materials, components or the finished article.

The sea knows no international boundaries and, although most maritime enterprise takes place out of sight of land, the ship is as important now as it ever was, perhaps more so. Standards of living in the industrialized and developed world, the jobs and livelihoods of billions in the developing world: all depend on ships and shipping.
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Portraits of former IMO Secretaries-General unveiled

Portraits in oil of the six former Secretaries-General of IMO have been unveiled during a special ceremony held to coincide with the 94th session of the IMO Council.

The portraits of Mr Ove Nielsen from Denmark (IMO Secretary-General 1959-1961); Mr William Graham from the United Kingdom (Acting Secretary-General 1961-1963); Mr Jean Roullier from France (1963-1967); Sir Colin Goad from the United Kingdom (1968-1973); Dr Chandrika Prasad Srivastava from India (1974-1989); and Mr William A. O’Neil from Canada (1990-2003) were painted by Robert Lloyd, a British artist who specializes in maritime subjects.

A leading shipowner, who has indicated that he wishes to remain anonymous, generously sponsored the artist’s work.

Speaking at the unveiling, IMO Secretary-General Mr. Efthimios E. Mitropoulos said that the portraits had been commissioned to pay tribute to the former Secretaries-General of the Organization and to recognize the heritage that, collectively, they have created.

“IMO’s position in the maritime world, its ‘quiet successes’ as they were described by Secretary-General Kofi Annan when he visited IMO last February, and the credibility of its outcomes have been founded on its ability to develop technically sound and practicable measures. It is, therefore, fitting that we should recognize the part played in this by those who have led the Organization during their tenure, from the day IMO came into being to the most recent times,” he said.

The ceremony was attended by Secretary-General Emeritus, Mr O’Neil.

Secretary-General Emeritus Dr. Srivastava was unable to attend in person, but was represented by his daughter, Mrs Kalpana Srivastava. Also present were Mr. Jean-Eudes Roullier and Mr. Philippe Roullier, sons of Mr Roullier, and Mr. Peter Goad, son of Sir Colin.

Mr. Mitropoulos expressed his hope that, as with the Seafarers’ Memorial, the portraits will provide a source of inspiration to staff, delegates and visitors alike, serving as a reminder of the contribution these individuals have made to the success of IMO and as a tribute to their tireless efforts to promote safety, security and environmental protection.

“The course of IMO’s history can be traced through their respective tenures of office and the achievements of each of them, in their time, reflect the achievements of the Organization in its perennial quest to attain its objectives. Each, in his own way, has put his strong mark on the evolution of IMO,” he said.

The portraits will be placed on permanent display at IMO Headquarters.
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Secretary-General lays foundation for LNG training in Egypt

The foundation stone of a new maritime training institute for LNG operations has been laid by IMO Secretary-General Efthimios E. Mitropoulos during an official visit to Egypt last week at the invitation of Transport Minister Dr Essam Sharaf. His programme included the renewal of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on technical co-operation matters between Egypt and IMO, a visit to a number of important Egyptian maritime centres and meetings with key officials from Egypt’s maritime and political communities.

The new LNG training facility will form part of the Arab Academy for Science, Technology & Maritime Transport (AASTMT) in Abu Quir, Alexandria. Commenting on this latest development, Mr Mitropoulos praised the Academy and expressed his appreciation to Dr. Gamal Mokhtar, President of AASTMT, for his leadership, foresight and vision in creating a new training centre to serve such an expanding maritime sector. He also expressed his confidence that the new facility would make a significant contribution to the excellent training that students at the Academy receive and would represent an important addition to the diversity of maritime-related career training available.

The new facility is expected to become operational during the first half of 2006, and will complement the existing amenities at the Academy’s Maritime Complex, which include the College of Maritime Transport & Technology, the Integrated Simulators Complex, the Maritime Safety Centre and the Regional Maritime Examination Centre.

During his visit, Mr. Mitropoulos had discussions with Minister Essam, which culminated in the signing of a renewed and expanded MoU on technical co-operation between the Ministry of Transport, the AASTMT and IMO.

Among the activities included under the terms of the MoU, AASTMT and IMO will, during 2006/2007, jointly organize two regional seminars for simulator instructors from maritime academies of the Arab/Mediterranean region; they will also implement and deliver a four-week training course for ship inspectors from the region on the inspection of non-Convention ships, as well as a one-week course to train auditors from Arab/Mediterranean countries on preparation for and participation in the IMO Voluntary Member State Audit Scheme. A draft regional Strategic Action Plan for the control and management of ships’ ballast water and sediments will be developed and a regional task force established.

The MoU will also see the Government of Egypt, represented by AASTMT, grant scholarships for six students from Africa to enrol in the Academy’s four-year programme leading to the award of a bachelor’s degree in maritime navigation, at a cost over US$100,000. The Government of Egypt has undertaken to contribute a total of US$50,000 over five years for the implementation of technical co-operation activities as well as US$30,000 for the delivery of a regional course for the training of the auditors to assist in the operation of the IMO Scheme.

While in Egypt, Mr Mitropoulos also visited the headquarters of the Suez Canal Authority in Ismailia. He was updated on recent developments on traffic, safety and security matters by the Chief of the Authority, Admiral Ahmed Ali Fadel; and visited the Canal Simulation Centre used for the training and retraining of Suez Canal pilots.

IMO, Chile extend technical co-operation understanding

Vice-Admiral Francisco Martínez Villaroel, Director General of Chile’s maritime authority Directemar, and IMO Secretary-General Efthimios E. Mitropoulos sign an addendum to the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the two Organizations at IMO headquarters in London.

The MoU formalizes the close co-operation between Directemar and IMO in the execution of technical assistance activities in the Latin American countries, in particular with regard to the introduction of the Global SAR Plan in all IMO Member States. Under the agreement, Directemar will, depending on the availability of its personnel and facilities, designate appropriate experts, on a no fee basis, for the execution of various activities, such as advisers for consultancy missions or instructors for the delivery of courses, seminars and workshops.

Greek owners to give massive boost to tsunami fund

The Union of Greek Shipowners (UGS) is to donate a sum of at least one million U.S. dollars to the Tsunami Maritime Relief Fund that was inaugurated by IMO in the wake of the 2004 Boxing Day disaster.

In a letter to IMO Secretary-General Efthimios E. Mitropoulos, pledging the donation, UGS President Mr Nicos D. Ethymiou spoke of the shock that the Greek shipping community had felt following the disaster and stressed the importance of providing material help. He said “Words of condolence and the extension of sympathy alone cannot fill the gap and alleviate the grief and suffering currently experienced by the people of the region, especially as they now start to rebuild their livelihoods.”

The Greek donation will be dispensed after mutual consultations between IMO and UGS and taking into account the priorities of specific projects in areas of need in the Indian Ocean.

In thanking the UGS for its donation, Mr Mitropoulos drew parallels with the age-old humanitarian customs of the sea. He said “Seafarers have always gone to the aid of their fellows in distress and this most generous gesture on the part of the Union of Greek Shipowners is truly in the spirit of that tradition.”

The Tsunami Maritime Relief Fund was established by Secretary-General Mitropoulos early in January in order to coordinate the maritime community’s wider response to the UN’s immediate efforts. Contributions have come in from the shipping industry, the IMO staff and individuals and the Fund remains open to provide assistance for the longer term task of capacity building in the affected maritime communities. A previous donation from the Tsunami Maritime Relief Fund was made by Mr Mitropoulos to UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan in April when the two met in Switzerland and Mr Mitropoulos handed over to Mr Annan a cheque for £86,580 to be used for the restoration of the maritime infrastructure in the region affected and the reconstruction of the devastated fishing industry in the Indian Ocean.
Mitropoulos visit confirms continued Russian support for IMO initiatives

During his week-long official visit to the Russian Federation in July, IMO Secretary-General Efthimios E. Mitropoulos received pledges of continued support for a full range of IMO activities, including the important IMO Voluntary Member State Audit Scheme.

In a packed programme that included high-level talks as well as a series of visits to key Russian maritime centres, Mr. Mitropoulos received repeated assurances of the Russian Government’s firm intention to continue supporting the development and adoption of global standards for shipping engaged in international trade only through IMO and for the work programme and initiatives of the Organization.

Among the senior figures with whom Mr. Mitropoulos enjoyed productive talks during his visit were Mr. M. E. Fradkov, Prime Minister of the Russian Federation; Mr. I. E. Levitin, Minister of Transport and Mr. A.N. Chelingarov, Deputy Chairman of the Parliament of the Russian Federation.

Mr. Mitropoulos also went to Murmansk, where he saw a demonstration of the VTS system in Kola Bay and visited the nuclear icebreaker Rossia; he also met the Governor of St. Petersburg, Mrs. V.I. Matvienko; Mr. S. Frank, Chairman of Sovcomflot, as well as senior representatives from the Russian Maritime Register of Shipping.

In addition to his visit to Moscow, Mr. Mitropoulos also went to Murmansk, where he saw a demonstration of the VTS system in Kola Bay and visited the nuclear icebreaker Rossia; and St Petersburg, where he was shown the Gulf of Finland VTMIS as well as the oil export ports of Primorsk and Visotsk.

On his return to IMO Headquarters in London, Mr. Mitropoulos expressed his appreciation for the concern shown by the Russian Federation over environmental issues, particularly at the port of Primorsk, and of the systems it has put in place to ensure the protection of the marine environment, such as the collection of information and laboratory examination and analysis of the ballast water of incoming tankers and the strict measures applied in the case of tankers found to be carrying ballast water exceeding the levels required to allow discharge.

He added, “The work done to safeguard life and the environment in the Gulf of Finland, in cooperation with the Governments of the two other littoral States, Estonia and Finland, in designing, installing and seeking IMO’s approval and adoption, as appropriate, of an integrated Vessel Traffic Management and Information System, AIS and GMDSS stations and RCCs, mandatory ship reporting systems and routing measures, including traffic separation schemes, should be recognized and appreciated.”

Korea gives security fund boost

A MARPOL reception facility is now fully operational in Tema Port, Ghana, as a result of an IMO technical co-operation project.

The project began in 2000 when the IMO Regional Co-ordinator based in Accra, Ghana mobilised some funds from the UNDP country office for a feasibility study on the establishment of a MARPOL Reception Facility in Ghana’s ports. IMO recruited a consultant for the feasibility study and the mission report was subsequently forwarded to the Ghanaian Government. The

IMO assists Ghana port in reception facility project

management of Ghana Ports & Harbours Authority invited tenders from the private sector and Tilbury Environmental Group (TEG) were awarded the concession on a Build, Operate and Transfer basis. Today the facility is in full operation in Tema Port.

The Ghanaian delegation to MEPC 53, and TEG made a joint presentation on the project during the meeting, illustrating the success of the venture from technical assistance by IMO to a Member State to full implementation of the resulting recommendations, including the involvement of the private sector.

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Strait security on Malaysia agenda

In a courtesy call to IMO, Mr Sri Chan Kong Choy, Malaysia’s Minister of Transport, discussed the importance of the Malacca Strait to global trade and the world economy and IMO’s efforts aimed at ensuring uninterrupted traffic through the Strait with Secretary-General Mitropoulos. The two also discussed the need for support for the littoral states, the importance of Malaysia’s ratification of the SEA Treaties in view of their upcoming revision and the importance of co-operation among neighbouring states with regard to safety at sea and the marine environment.

IMO helps children speak out on marine environment at world summit

As a result of an initiative from the International Maritime Organization and a number of Marine Environment Protection Agencies (MEPAs), four IMO child ambassadors have presented messages on behalf of these organizations to the Children’s World Summit for the Environment in Aichi, Japan. The Children’s Summit was organized by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) to run concurrently with the World Exposition 2005 (26 to 29 July 2005), the theme of which was “Nature’s Wisdom.”

The four children were Nikolaos Theofilidis from Greece, sponsored by HELMEPA Junior; Çağla Gänze Seten and Beril Esen from Turkey, sponsored by TURMEPA Junior and Nikolas Adami, sponsored by CYMEPA Junior.

At the Summit, the children read out a short message about MEPA Junior activities and the relationship between IMO’s marine environment protection activities and the overall themes of the Summit. They also expanded on the practical ways that MEPAs are helping to protect the marine environment.

The participation of the four children in the Summit will help boost public awareness of IMO’s role in protecting the marine environment from pollution by ships and, in particular, will help get the message across to younger generations.

Overall, the summit gave the children attending the conference, as well as all children around the world, an opportunity to consider environmental issues. Through the Internet and by other means, the children worked with the Japanese organizing committee in promoting discussion about the conference’s themes and details in advance of the summit.

The goals of the Summit itself were to increase children’s understanding of environmental issues through the sharing of experiences and opinions; to improve the environment by sharing best practices and encouraging new initiatives; to give the children of the world a chance to forge lifelong friendships; to provide opportunities for children to collectively voice their concerns for the environment and to inspire children to think globally and act locally.

It is expected that the four IMO child ambassadors will report the outcomes of the Summit to the IMO’s Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC) in the near future. The initiative has already generated much interest in the MEPA Junior concept and it is hoped that it will encourage the establishment of more Junior MEPAs in the future, in other regions of the world.

Japanese benefactor addresses Maritime human resources

The President of The Nippon Foundation of Japan, Mr. Yohei Sasakawa, gave a special presentation on “Maritime Human Resource Development and its Future” on Tuesday, 21 June 2005 at IMO headquarters in London.

The Nippon Foundation is a non-profit, grant-making organization established for philanthropic purposes. For the past forty years the Foundation has provided aid for humanitarian projects both in Japan and around the world. The global maritime community, in particular, has benefited from the achievements of the training institutions associated with IMO and the generous support provided by the Nippon Foundation which has made a significant contribution to their success.
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