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goal-based standards for new ship construction under development
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IMO News

Issue 1 2005

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Sustainable shipping – a record to be proud of

In order to satisfy our material and societal needs, we strive to achieve economic prosperity. 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, and with it the social cohesion that is a prerequisite to meeting society’s material requirements, is maintained.

As far as the sustainability of shipping is concerned, we need 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, mainly on our environment but also in other regards.

If we have “sustainable shipping” as our aim, then anything we can do to help “push the envelope” in either direction can be considered beneficial in the wider sense.

Shipping has always provided the only really cost-effective method of bulk transport over any great distance, and so 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 - which, compared with all other modes of transport, enjoys the unrivalled superiority of being able to carry massive quantities of cargo (and, more recently, large numbers of passengers as well). 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 - UNCTAD - show that shipping carried a staggering 24,589 billion ton-miles in 2003, a figure that continues to increase year on year. This statistic underlines the fact that, today, 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.

I believe it is clear that shipping makes a very significant positive contribution to the total sum of our economic capital and of our social capital. And what is particularly important in this respect is that it contributes not just in terms of the social capital that is a natural consequence of increased economic prosperity, but also helps spread the benefits of that prosperity more evenly by embracing the developing world as strongly as possible.

Before we can form any opinion on whether or not shipping can be considered sustainable, however, we need to consider the other side of the equation. If shipping were to consume environmental capital (in the form of pollution), or social capital (by being an inherently unsafe activity that cost 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 would not be “sustainable”.

In any assessment of the sustainability of shipping, every occasion in which a ship becomes involved in a pollution incident or a major casualty must be set against the literally millions of trouble-free, clean and economically efficient ton-miles that shipping achieves every day, and all the consequent benefits that accrue from this activity.

Moreover, any steps we take towards making shipping a safer, more efficient and more environmentally-friendly activity must increase, overall, the positive contribution the activity makes to global sustainability and to sustainable development. 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.
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United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan visited IMO’s London Headquarters in February to meet IMO Secretary-General Efthimios Mitropoulos and to speak to staff.

Mr Annan and Mr Mitropoulos discussed matters of immediate concern, including the UN system’s response to the tsunami crisis in South Asia, as well as broader issues such as the global challenges that face the world today and the changing role of the UN in the longer term as it prepares to tackle them.

Mr Mitropoulos was able to brief Mr Annan on the specific response from IMO thus far in addressing the maritime aspects of the tsunami disaster, and the two men discussed the part IMO might play in the collaborative efforts across the UN system to help establish a tsunami early warning system for the Indian Ocean.

Addressing IMO staff, Mr Annan expressed his tremendous gratitude for the work of IMO, hailing the Organization as one of the UN system’s “quiet successes”, and acknowledged the new urgency that the Organization’s work, particularly in the field of maritime security, had assumed since the terrorist attacks of 9/11.

Mr Annan spoke of the interconnected nature of today’s world and of the global threats that now face us all – terrorism, entrenched poverty, environmental degradation and disease. He encouraged IMO staff to continue to play their part in deriving a positive response to these challenges.

Mr Mitropoulos assured Mr Annan that while discharging its own responsibilities, IMO was also pleased to work in close co-operation with others within the UN system on a wide variety of issues. Mr Annan’s visit, he said, served as a reminder of the broader objectives that are common to all and he stressed IMO’s eagerness to add its contribution to the achievement of the goals specified in the Millenium Declaration.

The existing maritime communications network could be used for tsunami warnings, it has been agreed in the wake of the Indian Ocean tsunami of 26 December 2004 which caused so much tragic loss of life and destruction of infrastructure.

During a special session devoted to the Indian Ocean tsunami, held during the 9th session of the IMO Sub-Committee on Radiocommunications and Search and Rescue (COMSAR) in February, IMO member States agreed that the robust and well-proven satellite and radio-based communication infrastructure that IMO had established, in co-operation with the International Hydrographic Organization (IHO) and the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), for the promulgation of maritime safety information to ships had the ability to play an important role in the dissemination of tsunami warnings.

The establishment of a tsunami early-warning system for the Indian Ocean is being co-

Banda Aceh (pic: © International Labour Organization/Crozet, M.)
ordinated by the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO following agreement to do so by Governments attending the World Conference on Disaster Reduction held in January in Kobe, Japan, in which IMO also participated.

COMSAR delegates discussed the likely role that such a system might play and agreed that promulgation of tsunami information to the maritime community held the greatest potential. The Sub-Committee agreed a COMSAR circular providing advice on the promulgation of tsunami and other urgent natural disaster warnings via the existing International SafetyNet and NAVTEX systems while a correspondence group was established to consider the promulgation of tsunami and other natural disaster warnings to vessels which are not subject to the 1974 SOLAS Convention and to develop guidelines for disaster emergency preparedness and response for ships at sea and in coastal areas.

Meanwhile, IMO has continued its collaborative efforts with other organizations in terms of the medium and longer term needs of the affected region. These efforts were initiated at a joint meeting with the International Association of Marine Aids to Navigation and Lighthouse Authorities (IALA) and IHO held at IMO headquarters in January, during which a joint action plan was agreed, which also involved the WMO.

In February, following a request from the United Nations Environment Programme, IMO seconded staff to assist in the establishment of an environmental crisis centre in Indonesia. In early March, experts from IMO and IALA visited Indonesia to carry out an assessment of the damage caused to the navigation and communications infrastructure to determine the scope and extent of the re-building work required. An IMO expert also visited Sri Lanka to meet with officials in that country.

IMO is also working with the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), which is supplying its experts to address related concerns in the fishing sector. According to the FAO, the fishing sector of the countries affected by the tsunami has recorded over 60,000 fatalities with over 110,000 fishing vessels destroyed or damaged. In this respect, it is anticipated that guidance in the Code of Safety for Fishermen and Fishing Vessels and the Voluntary Guidelines for the Design, Construction and Equipment of Small Fishing Vessels, approved by IMO’s Maritime Safety Committee (MSC 79) in December 2004, could prove of great value to all parties concerned and will provide a tremendous support to the rehabilitation of the fishing sector of the affected countries.

Generally speaking, according to initial assessments by IHO and IALA, the integrity of key shipping lanes did not appear to have been affected by the tsunami and, in the medium term, assessing any local changes to waterways and damage to navigational aids was the first priority in advance of undertaking any necessary repairs. Overall, it was reported that damage to ports represented some 5 per cent of the total infrastructure damage.

As part of IMO’s response to the tsunami disaster, IMO’s Regional Co-ordinator for the East Asian region conducted meetings with the Indonesian maritime authorities. From these discussions it emerged that there was no major concern regarding possible changes of water depths at the country’s ports, although coastal radio stations and maritime safety offices in Aceh province had been destroyed and the need for the assessment of the extent of damage to the navigational aids was recognized.

In the medium/long term, the joint action agreed between IMO, IALA, IHO and other organizations includes the following key elements:

- Technical co-operation activities including needs’ assessment missions; mobilizing and co-ordinating resources accordingly
- Assess and define new charting requirements
- Marking of new dangers, if necessary
- Assess the need to improve procedures for checking navigational aids and providing relevant warnings following natural disasters
- Participate in establishing an appropriate tsunami early warning system for the Indian Ocean, in co-operation with UNESCO/IOC and others
- Consider and incorporate consequential amendments to the Organizations’ basic documents as appropriate
Satcom terminals for tsunami relief made available through IMO

In January, the International Mobile Satellite Organization (IMSO) announced that, in cooperation with Inmarsat, it would make available up to 1000 digital land-mobile satellite communication terminals, free of charge, to the Secretary-General of IMO, for long term disaster response and relief purposes in the south Asia region. IMSO Director Dr Jerzy Vonau spoke of his organization’s horror and deep sadness at the catastrophic loss of life in the tsunami disaster and said that IMSO was firmly at the centre of global distress communication management within the IMO ambit and it was therefore very appropriate that he should now be in a position to make the offer of the satellite communication terminals.

Tsunami Maritime Relief Fund

In order to co-ordinate the maritime community’s wider response to the immediate efforts and the longer term task of capacity-building in the affected maritime communities, IMO Secretary-General Efthimios E. Mitropoulos has established the Tsunami Maritime Relief Fund and seeks the support of the wider shipping industry through donations to the Fund. Initial contributions to the Fund will go to support the UN-wide relief efforts and subsequent contributions will support the work of reconstruction. By the beginning of March, some £80,000 or US$155,000 had been collected and Secretary-General Mitropoulos has expressed his gratitude to all donors, including the IMO staff, interpreters, and international organizations including shipowner and seafarer organizations, shipping companies and individuals for their generosity.

“The UN System and the international community are maintaining their focus beyond the present emergency relief, in order to support the medium- and long-term rehabilitation, reconstruction and risk reduction efforts,” Mr Mitropoulos said. “This was underlined by the UN Secretary-General when he visited IMO in February, and I am certain that the Organization and the entire maritime community will continue to play a significant role to restore and rehabilitate the stricken region and, more importantly, to restore, among the peoples of the countries affected, their faith in humanity, to give them hope and, amongst their children, an assurance that they are not and will not be left alone.”

Contributions to the Fund in the form of cheques made payable to the International Maritime Organization can be forwarded to:

Tsunami Maritime Relief Fund
Office of the Secretary-General
International Maritime Organization
4 Albert Embankment
London
SE1 7SR
United Kingdom

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IMO Secretary-General Efthimios Mitropoulos (left) receives a donation of US$25,000 to the Tsunami Maritime Relief Fund from Stan Deno, Director of Operations, International Council of Cruise Lines (ICCL)
Ballast Water Convention gains first signatories

Spain and Brazil have become the first States to sign the International Convention for the Control and Management of Ships’ Ballast Water and Sediments, 2004. On Tuesday 18 January 2005, His Excellency Mr Carlos Miranda, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary and Permanent Representative of Spain to IMO signed the Convention, subject to ratification, on behalf of the Government of Spain.

And on Tuesday 25 January 2005, Admiral Sergio Gitarana Florencio Chagasteles, Permanent Representative of Brazil to IMO signed the Convention, again subject to ratification, on behalf of the Government of Brazil.

The Ballast Water Convention contains measures to prevent the potentially devastating effects of the spread of harmful aquatic organisms carried by ships’ ballast water. It will require all ships to implement a Ballast Water and Sediments Management Plan, to carry a Ballast Water Record Book and to carry out ballast water management procedures to a given standard. Existing ships will be required to do the same, but after a phase-in period.

The Convention was adopted on 13 February 2004 by the International Conference on Ballast Water Management for Ships, 2004, which was held at IMO Headquarters. It opened for signature at IMO on 1 June 2004 and will remain open for signature until 31 May 2005.

It will enter into force 12 months after the date on which not less than 30 States, the combined merchant fleets of which constitute not less than 35 percent of the gross tonnage of the world’s merchant shipping, have either signed it without reservation as to ratification, acceptance or approval or have deposited the requisite instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession in accordance with article 17 of the Convention.

New fund heralds better deal for oil pollution victims

Increased levels of compensation became available for victims of oil pollution from oil tanker accidents on 3 March 2005 with the entry into force of the 2003 Protocol establishing an International Oil Pollution Compensation Supplementary Fund.

The Fund supplements the compensation available under the 1992 Civil Liability Convention (CLC) and the International Convention on the Establishment of an International Fund for Compensation for Oil Pollution Damage (FUND), with an additional, third tier of compensation. Participation is optional and is open to all States which are parties to the 1992 Fund Convention.

The total amount of compensation payable for any one incident is limited to a combined total of 750 million Special Drawing Rights (SDR) (just over US$1,145 million) including the amount of compensation paid under the existing 1992 CLC/Fund Convention.

With the entry into force of the 2003 Protocol, IMO has substantially enhanced the compensation available under the 1992 Convention.

It is expected that the increased compensation should put an end to the practice of pro-rating of payment of claims, which, although it has been unavoidable, has led to criticisms of the 1992 Convention.

The 2003 Protocol will apply to damage in the territory, including the territorial sea and the Exclusive Economic Zone of a Contracting State.

Annual contributions to the Fund will be made in respect of each Contracting State by any person who, in any calendar year, has received total quantities of oil exceeding 150,000 tons. However, for the purposes of the 2003 Protocol, there is a minimum aggregate receipt of 1,000,000 tons of contributing oil in each Contracting State.

The Assembly of the Supplementary Fund will assess the level of contributions based on estimates of expenditure (including administrative costs and payments to be made under the Fund as a result of claims) and income (including surplus funds from previous years, annual contributions and any other income).

The 2003 Protocol currently has nine Contracting States. The entry into force requirements were ratification by at least 8 States who have received a combined total of 450 million tons of contributing oil.

IOPC Funds website: www.iopcfunds.org

Cleaning up: levels of compensation for victims of oil pollution from oil tanker accidents rise with the entry into force of the 2003 Supplementary Fund
Co-ordinated approach to ship scrapping

A Joint Working Group on ship scrapping established by IMO, the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the Conference of Parties to the Basel Convention (BC) held its first meeting at IMO headquarters in February. The overall task set by the three Organizations for the Group was to act as a platform for consultation, co-ordination and co-operation in relation to their work programmes and activities with regard to issues related to ship scrapping.

During the meeting, the Group considered the respective work programmes of the pertinent bodies of ILO, IMO and the Conference on the issue of ship scrapping and developed a list of the main items that are being considered by the three Organizations concurrently. The list includes the possible development of mandatory requirements, a reporting system for ships destined for recycling, the development of a “single list” of potentially hazardous materials on board, the issue of the abandonment of ships on land or in port, the promotion of the implementation of the Guidelines on ship scrapping and technical co-operation. For each item identified, a list of work programme activities being carried out or planned by each of the Organizations was developed, and a number of recommendations were proposed to be taken into account by the three Organizations during their future deliberations on these items.

Specifically, the Group agreed that the three Organizations should ensure that the issue of “abandonment of ships on land or in ports” would be adequately covered by an international legally binding instrument, as deemed appropriate.

With a view to identifying any possible gaps, overlaps, or ambiguities, the Group began a comprehensive initial examination of the relevant IMO, ILO and BC guidelines on ship scrapping based on a comparison of the issues presented in each of the guidelines and a draft overview paper outlining the purpose of each of the guidelines, their respective field of application and main contents. However, it was recognized that this was a large undertaking and further work would be needed.

The implementation of the guidelines was seen as being of paramount importance for the minimization of the environmental, occupational health and safety hazards related to ship recycling and the improvement of the protection of human health and the environment at ship recycling facilities.

The Group agreed that the implementation of the guidelines should be promoted through joint technical co-operation activities.
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- Opening Reception

MONDAY, 30 MAY 2005
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- GCC Regional Initiatives in Implementing IMO Conventions
- Seeking Harmonisation of International Maritime Regulations in GCC
- Worldwide Flag State, Coastal and Port State Control Initiatives
- Port State Control Developments and Case Studies in the GCC: Country Papers and Case Studies from Qatar and Oman
- A Review of Port State Control Requirements, Conventions and MOUs
- Inspections, Detentions & Banning – Classification Society’s View
- Role of the IMO
- Port State Control and Prevention of Oil Spills
- Administering and Enforcing Port State Control – Flag State View
- Future of Port State Inspections in Qatar

TUESDAY, 31 MAY 2005
- Preparing Ships and Crew for Successful Port State Inspection – A Master’s Guide
- Enforcement Measures under Port State Control
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Development of goal-based standards moves forward

The development of goal-based standards for new ship construction moved forward when IMO’s Maritime Safety Committee (MSC) met for its 79th session.

The MSC agreed, in general, that work on goal-based new ship construction standards would be based on the premise that the standards should be broad, over-arching goals against which ship safety should be verified at design and construction stages and during ship operation. They are not intended to set prescriptive requirements or to give specific solutions. The main objective is to introduce a system whereby the standards would be a measure against which the safety of a ship could be assessed during its design and construction, as well as later on during its operation.

A Working Group on goal-based new ship construction standards agreed in principle a five-tier approach to further development of the basic principles. Its work plan includes the further development of the first three tiers on which the standard setting process would be based: Tier I (Goals), Tier II (Functional requirements) and Tier III (Verification of compliance criteria). It was agreed that Tiers IV (Technical procedures and guidelines, classification rules and industry standards) and V (Codes of practice and safety and quality systems for shipbuilding, ship operation, maintenance, training, manning, etc.) would be developed by classification societies, other recognized organizations and industry organizations. The work plan also includes an item to explore the linkage between Formal Safety Assessment (FSA) and goal-based standards and an item on how goal-based standards could be incorporated in the appropriate IMO instruments.

The Working Group developed Tier I goals, along with working descriptions, which address safety and environmental friendliness with respect to structural integrity and strength, dismantling and recycling and the need for design and construction to provide for safe access, inspection and proper maintenance. The group also developed Tier II functional requirements, each with a working description. The Group recognized that while development of Tier I leads to the development of Tier II, the results of the development of Tier II will lead to further consideration and development of Tier I. Both the Tier I goals and the Tier II functional requirements will be subject to further consideration.

Maritime security

The Working Group on Maritime Security was re-established to consider 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 the following MSC circulars:

- Guidance to masters, companies and duly authorized officers on the requirements relating to the submission of security-related information prior to the entry of a ship into port;
- Interim Guidance on voluntary self-assessment by SOLAS Contracting Governments and by port facilities;
- Guidance relating to the implementation of SOLAS chapter XI-2 and of the ISPS Code;
- Reminder of the obligation to notify flag States when exercising control and compliance measures; and
- False security alerts and distress/security double alerts.

Maritime security - AIS ship data

The MSC agreed that the publication on the world-wide web or elsewhere of automatic identification system (AIS)-generated ship data could be detrimental to the safety and security of ships and port facilities and was undermining the efforts of the Organization and its Member States to enhance the safety of navigation and security in the international maritime transport sector. The Committee condemned the regrettable publication on the world-wide web, or elsewhere, of AIS data transmitted by ships and urged Member Governments, subject to the provisions of their national laws, to discourage those who make available AIS data to others for publication on the world-wide web, or elsewhere, from doing so.

Global Programmes on Maritime Security

The MSC noted that under the Integrated Technical Co-operation Programme there was a range of technical assistance activities planned within two global programmes,
From the meetings

Maritime Safety Committee (MSC)

79th session
1-10 December 2004

security seminars/workshops and train-the-trainer courses. The MSC urged Member States and industry to support the International Maritime Security Trust Fund and the two global programmes, in particular with regards to making experts with practical experience of the implementation of security measures available to assist in future technical co-operation projects for capacity-building.

Piracy and armed robbery against ships

The Committee noted that the number of acts of piracy and armed robbery against ships reported to have occurred during the first nine months of 2004 was 252, a decrease of 28% over the figure for the first nine months of 2003. However, the Committee noted with concern the reported increase in the level of violence used during attacks on ships and urged all Governments and the industry to intensify and co-ordinate their efforts to eradicate these unlawful acts.

In many of the reports received, the crews were violently attacked by groups of five to ten people carrying knives or guns. The Committee was particularly concerned to note that 30 crew members and passengers were reportedly killed, 94 were injured and 113 were taken hostage. Amongst those confirmed as still missing and unaccounted for to date were 36 crew members including 17 crew members thrown overboard in the reported incidents.

Passenger ship safety

The MSC agreed that as many of the issues discussed under the agenda item “Large Passenger Ship Safety” applied equally to all passenger ships, the agenda item should be renamed “Passenger Ship Safety”. The Committee approved a revised work plan for passenger ship safety and the revised guiding philosophy, strategic goals and objectives.

The revised guiding philosophy for future work on passenger ship safety 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 Committee agreed definitions for “time to recover”, “time to rescue” and “place of safety”. In relation to the “time to recover”, the Committee agreed to a five day maximum timeframe for which persons should be expected to stay in survival craft, taking into account the humanitarian needs of those aboard and the hazards to life and health persons may face on such craft.

The work on passenger ship safety will continue in the Radiocommunications, Search and Rescue (COMSAR), Ship Design and Equipment (DE), Fire Protection (FP), Safety of Navigation (NAV), Stability, Load Lines and Fishing Vessel Safety (SLF) and Standards of Training and Watchkeeping (STW) Sub-Committees, with a target completion date of 2006.

The MSC also approved an MSC circular on Guidance on the establishment of medical and sanitation programmes for passenger ships.

Bulk carrier safety – new SOLAS chapter XII

The MSC adopted a new text for SOLAS chapter XII (Additional safety measures for bulk carriers), incorporating revisions to some regulations and new requirements relating to double-side skin bulk carriers. The amendments are expected to enter into force on 1 July 2006.

The amendments include the addition of a new regulation 14 on restrictions from sailing with any hold empty and requirements for double-side skin construction as an optional alternative to single-side skin construction. The option of double-side skin construction will apply to new bulk carriers of 150m in length and over, carrying solid bulk cargoes having a density of 1,000 kg/m3 and above.

The MSC also adopted standards and criteria for side structures of bulk carriers of single-side skin construction and standards for owners’ inspections and maintenance of bulk carrier hatch covers.

Free-fall lifeboats on bulk carriers

The MSC adopted an amendment to regulation 31 in SOLAS chapter III (Life-saving appliances and arrangements) to make mandatory the carriage of free-fall lifeboats on bulk carriers.

Future work on passenger ship safety: the regulatory framework should place more emphasis on the prevention of a casualty from occurring in the first place and 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. (pic: Port of Hull)
Simplified Voyage Data Recorders - SOLAS amendments

The MSC adopted amendments to regulation 20 of SOLAS chapter V (Safety of Navigation) on a phased-in carriage requirement for a shipborne simplified voyage data recorder (S-VDR).

The regulation requires a VDR, which may be an S-VDR, to be fitted on existing cargo ships of 3,000 gross tonnage and upwards.

The S-VDR is not required to store the same level of detailed data as a standard VDR, but nonetheless should maintain a store, in a secure and retrievable form, of information concerning the position, movement, physical status, command and control of a vessel over the period leading up to and following an incident.

New mandatory ship reporting system (WETREP) in Western European Waters

The MSC adopted a resolution to establish a new mandatory ship reporting system - WETREP - as an associated protective measure in the Western European Waters particularly sensitive sea area (PSSA). The reporting system will be implemented at 0000 hours UTC on 1 July 2005. The Western European Waters PSSA was designated by the Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC) at its 52nd session in October 2004.

Pilotage in Torres Strait

The Committee agreed that Australia and Papua New Guinea’s proposal to extend the associated protective measure of a system of pilotage within the Great Barrier Reef to the Torres Strait should be adopted. The proposed MEPC resolution (to be considered by MEPC 53 in July 2005) would recommend that Governments inform ships flying their flag that they should act in accordance with Australia’s system of pilotage for merchant ships 70 m in length and over or oil tankers, chemical tankers and gas carriers, irrespective of size, when navigating the inner route of the Great Barrier Reef and the Torres Strait.

Implementation of the revised STCW Convention

The list of Parties deemed to be giving full and complete effect to the provisions of the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (STCW), 1978, as amended, was updated following the submission of a report by IMO Secretary-General Mitropoulos on those countries whose evaluations were completed since the previous MSC meeting. The list of confirmed STCW Parties now includes 114 Parties.

Survey certificates

The MSC adopted the addition of the words “Completion date of the survey on which this certificate is based” to certificates issued following surveys in respect of both mandatory and non-mandatory instruments. The aim is to clarify, for control purposes, the date of the last survey.

Revised fishing vessel safety code and voluntary guidelines approved


The Code of Safety for Fishermen and Fishing Vessels, 2005, and the Voluntary Guidelines for the Design, Construction and Equipment of Small Fishing Vessels, 2005 were approved for concurrent approval by FAO and ILO.
effective as a tool for the conduct of investigations. A proposal to look at ways to make the Code mandatory under SOLAS will also be discussed.

**Impact of the ISM Code and its effectiveness**

The Committee noted that an Independent Experts Group has been established by the Organization to study the impact of the ISM Code. An interim report on the activities of the Experts Group will be submitted to MSC 80 in May 2005.

**Other amendments adopted**

The MSC adopted the following amendments with an expected entry into force date of 1 July 2006 (except for the IBC and IGC Codes which have an effective date of 1 January 2007):

- SOLAS chapter II-1 regulation 18 Construction and initial tests of watertight doors, sideslittles, etc., in passenger ships and cargo ships to allow testing of watertight doors with a prototype pressure test in certain circumstances. Also amendments to regulation 45 - Precautions against shock, fire and other hazards of electrical origin in order to control the installation of electrical equipment in spaces where flammable mixtures are likely to collect and in hazardous locations on tankers.
- SOLAS chapter V regulation 19 Carriage requirements for shipborne navigational systems and equipment to add the words “being clearly readable by the helmsman at the main steering position” relating to carriage of a gyro compass, or other means to determine and display heading by shipborne non-magnetic means.
- SOLAS chapter VII regulation 10 to delete the superfluous words “For the purpose of this regulation, the requirements of the Code shall be treated as mandatory.”
- SOLAS chapter V - addition of Simplified Voyage Data Recorder (S-VDR) to the Record of Equipment for the Cargo Ship Safety Equipment Certificate (Form E).
- International Code for Application of Fire Test Procedures (FTP Code) in Part 2 - Smoke and toxicity test - the addition of “(200 ppm for floor coverings)” in the table of limits in 2.6 Classification criteria, 2.6.2 Toxicity.
- International Code for the Construction and Equipment of Ships Carrying Liquefied Gases in Bulk (IGC Code) - to reflect the amendments to SOLAS chapter II-1 Regulation 45 (entry into force date of 1 January 2007).
- STCW Code - amendments to Table A-VI/2-1 - Specifications of minimum standards of competence in survival crafts and rescue boats other than fast rescue boats.
- Adoption of ships' routing measures
  - The MSC adopted the following ships' routing measures, with entry into force set for 1 July 2005 at 0000 hours UTC.
- New traffic separation schemes (TSSs)
  - Approaches to the Cape Fear river (United States)
  - Off Mina Al-Ahmadi (Kuwait)
- Amendments to existing TSSs
  - In Puget Sound and its approaches in Haro Strait, Boundary Pass and in the Strait of Georgia (Canada and the United States)
  - In the approaches to Chesapeake Bay (United States)
  - Off Cape Roca and Off Cape S. Vicente (Portugal)
  - In the approaches to Puerto San Martin (Peru)
  - Off Berlenga (Portugal) (revoked)
- Routing measures other than TSSs
  - Establishment of a new area to be Avoided and a mandatory No-Anchoring Area in the West Cameron Area of the Gulf of Mexico (United States)
  - Amendments to the Notes in the existing deep-water route in the southern approach to Chesapeake Bay (United States)
  - Establishment of a new Area to be Avoided in the region of the Berlangas Islands (Portugal)
- Amendments to General Provisions on Ships’ Routinge
  - The MSC agreed, subject to confirmation by the Assembly, amendments to the General Provisions on Ships’ Routinge (resolution A.572(14), as amended) and amendments to Guidelines and Criteria for Ship Reporting Systems (resolution MSC.43(64)), as amended by resolution MSC.111(73), to standardize the use of WGS 84 datum for ships’ routing and ship reporting systems.
- Amendments approved for future adoption
  - The MSC approved the following amendments for adoption at MSC 80 in May 2005:
    - Draft revised SOLAS chapter II-1 parts A, B and B-1.
    - Draft new SOLAS regulation II-1/3-7 to require construction drawings to be maintained on board and ashore.
    - Draft new SOLAS regulation II-1/3-8 concerning anchoring, mooring and towing equipment.
    - Draft new SOLAS regulation II-1/23-3 concerning water level detectors on new single hold cargo ships other than bulk carriers.
    - Draft amendment to SOLAS regulation II-1/31 Machinery control to restrict the application of paragraph 2.10 relating to propulsion control automation systems to new ships only.
    - Draft amendments to the Guidelines on the enhanced programme of inspections during surveys of bulk carriers and oil tankers (resolution A.744(18)), as amended, to incorporate some elements of the Condition Assessment Scheme (CAS) required for certain single hull tankers and to add a new section aimed at double hull tankers.
    - Draft amendments to SOLAS regulation V/19 Carriage requirements for shipborne navigational systems and equipment, relating to information provided by the AIS.
Amendments to suppression of unlawful acts (SUA) treaties set for adoption October 2005

A diplomatic Conference to adopt amendments to the 1988 SUA Convention and Protocol will be held in October 2005, IMO’s Legal Committee agreed at its 89th session.

The main purpose of the SUA Convention is to ensure that appropriate action is 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 a ship which are likely to destroy or damage it. The Convention obliges Contracting Governments 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 October Conference will consider the adoption of two Protocols incorporating substantial amendments aimed at strengthening the SUA treaties in order to provide an appropriate response to the increasing risks posed to maritime navigation by international terrorism.

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

Work on the revision of the SUA treaties followed the adoption in 2001 of Assembly resolution A.924(22) Review of measures and procedures to prevent acts of terrorism which threaten the security of passengers and crews and the safety of ships. The SUA amendments will complement the International Ship and Port Facilities Security (ISPS) Code, which entered into force in July 2004, by providing a legal basis for the arrest, detention and extradition of terrorists in the unfortunate event that a terrorist attack against shipping nevertheless occurs.

Draft Convention on wreck removal

The Committee continued its consideration of the draft Wreck Removal Convention (WRC). The WRC is intended to provide international rules on the rights and obligations of States and shipowners with respect to wrecks and drifting or sunken cargo which may pose a hazard to navigation and/or pose a threat to the marine environment.

Implementation of guidelines on claims for death, personal injury and abandonment of seafarers


The Committee urged member States and non-governmental organizations to respond, without delay, to requests for information on the implementation of resolution A.930(22) Guidelines on Provision of Financial Security Cases of Abandonment of Seafarers and to report any cases of abandonment in order to assist the Committee in furthering its work on the subject.

Maritime security: The October 2005 SUA Conference will consider two draft Protocols aimed at strengthening the SUA treaties to provide an appropriate response to the increasing risks posed to maritime navigation by international terrorism. (pic: United States Coast Guard)
Follow-up to resolutions adopted by the International Conference on the Revision of the Athens Convention relating to the Carriage of Passengers and their Luggage by Sea, 1974

The Committee reviewed the interim results of a study into the current practice of bareboat charter registration and the implications for certificate-issuing obligations under IMO liability conventions carried out by the Comité Maritime International (CMI) with support from the IMO Secretariat. The Committee encouraged the CMI to continue its work.

The Committee also invited member States to contribute to further work on two issues relating to the Athens Convention on passenger liability: firstly, the fact that the Convention requires a higher amount of compulsory insurance and of liability than existing IMO pollution prevention conventions; and secondly, the fact that article 3 of the Athens Convention is not strictly confined to non-war protection and indemnity insurance, but may also affect war risk insurance.

Places of refuge

The Committee reviewed a report from the CMI on its thirty-eighth conference in Vancouver, Canada in June 2004, which had discussed topics relevant to places of refuge. The CMI informed the Committee that it had identified several concerns in the present arrangements (based on IMO's Guidelines on places of refuge for ships in need of assistance), one of which was that there was no single international convention establishing the rights and obligations of a coastal State when it was faced with a request to provide a place of refuge. The Committee agreed that the issues raised in the report needed further study.

Measures to protect crews and passengers against crimes committed on vessels

The Committee considered a resolution on Criminal offences on board foreign-flagged ships adopted by the CMI at its Vancouver conference, which recommended that the CMI establish a Joint International Working Group to draft a model national law concerning such offences.

The Committee took note of the information and suggested that the CMI might consider working with the Legal Committee with a view to developing an instrument that might be developed into customary international law.

Fair Treatment of Seafarers

The Committee agreed the terms of reference for the Joint IMO/ILO Ad Hoc Expert Working Group on the Fair Treatment of Seafarers in the Event of a Maritime Accident and nominated eight IMO Member Governments to represent the Organization at the Group's first meeting, held from 17 to 19 January 2005 at IMO Headquarters.

Implementation of the HNS Convention

The Committee was updated on the status of the implementation of the International Convention on Liability and Compensation for Damage in Connection with the Carriage of Hazardous and Noxious Substances (HNS) by Sea, 1996.

The HNS Convention is intended to add a vital component in the international compensation regime for pollution damage at sea. At the end of January 2005, it had been ratified by eight States, representing 5.37 per cent of world merchant shipping tonnage.

For entry into force, the HNS Conference requires ratification by 12 States, four of which have not less than two million units of gross tonnage, provided that persons in these States who would be responsible for paying contributions to the general account have received a total quantity of at least 40 million tonnes of contributing cargo in the preceding calendar year.

The Committee was informed that the IOPC Fund had a database for identifying and recording contributing cargo. Governments were also reminded that article 43 of the HNS Convention imposes a requirement on contracting Governments to report information on contributing cargo at the time of ratification and annually, including nil reports.

Compulsory pilotage arrangement in a strait used for international navigation

Following a request from the Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC) and the Sub-Committee on Safety of Navigation (NAV), the Legal Committee reviewed the legal aspects of compulsory pilotage in a strait used for international navigation.

There was general agreement on some of the fundamental principles of international law as codified in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), in particular the right of transit passage through a strait used for international navigation. There was also agreement that IMO is the competent international organization to adopt measures such as the one proposed by Australia and Papua New Guinea to extend the existing Great Barrier Reef compulsory pilotage scheme to the Torres Strait.

However, the Committee remained divided and was unable to resolve the issue of the legality of adopting requirements for compulsory pilotage in straits used for international navigation.
Training for SSOs - amendments to STCW Convention and Code endorsed

Minimum mandatory training and certification requirements for persons to be designated as ship security officers (SSOs) were endorsed by the Sub-Committee on Standards of Training and Watchkeeping when it met for its 36th session.

Candidates for a certificate of proficiency as a ship security officer will be required to demonstrate they have the knowledge to complete a 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 calibrated; and encouraging security awareness and vigilance.

The Sub-Committee endorsed draft amendments to the STCW Convention and to parts A and B of the STCW Code, to include:

- New STCW regulation VI/5 - Requirements for the issue of certificates of proficiency for Ship Security Officers;
- New STCW Code section A-VI/5 - Requirements for the issue of certificates of proficiency for Ship Security Officers, including table A-VI/5 Specifications of minimum standards of proficiency for ship security officers; and

- New STCW Code section B-VI/5 - Guidance regarding training for Ship Security Officers.

The Sub-Committee also agreed a draft MSC circular providing guidance on training and documentation for company security officers (CSOs) which includes a table of knowledge, understanding and proficiencies relevant to the company security officer.

**Amendments to STCW Code on fast rescue boats training endorsed**

The Sub-Committee endorsed draft amendments to part A of the STCW Code on additional training requirements for the launching and recovery operations of fast rescue boats, for submission to the MSC with a view to adoption at MSC 81 (in 2006).

The proposed amendments have been prepared in response to reports of injuries to seafarers in numerous incidents in launching and recovering of fast rescue boats in adverse weather conditions.

The Sub-Committee also endorsed a draft MSC circular providing guidance on training for launch and recovery teams and boat crews.

**Amendments to STCW Code on engine-room resource management endorsed**

The Sub-Committee endorsed draft amendments to part B of the STCW Code, section B-VIII/2, part 3-2, to provide guidance on engine-room resource management.

**Wing-in-Ground (WIG) craft - circular on training for officers endorsed**

The Sub-Committee endorsed a draft MSC circular on general principles and recommendations for knowledge, skills and training requirements for officers on WIG crafts operating in displacement and ground effect modes.

The STW Sub-Committee is developing standards for ratings, to include: competence; knowledge; understanding and proficiency; methods of demonstrating competence; and criteria for evaluating competence.

Draft amendments to part A of the STCW Code on additional training requirements for the launching and recovery operations of fast rescue boats were approved by the STW Sub-Committee. (pic: Norsafe)

**Training and certification related to ratings**

Following the decision of the ILO Preparatory Technical Conference to transfer the responsibility for training and certification related to ratings, excluding the ship’s cook, to IMO, the Sub-Committee considered issues relating to the development of standards for the inclusion of competencies for ratings in the STCW convention.

The Sub-Committee agreed that the term “able seaman” needed to be retained as it had implications within the ILO regulatory framework, in particular to minimum basic monthly pay or wages, and that the proposed standards to be developed should include both deck and engine-room ratings, with a possibility of also addressing general purpose ratings.

It was agreed that the proposed standards should follow the structure of the present STCW Convention, to include: competence; knowledge; understanding and proficiency; methods of demonstrating competence; and criteria for evaluating competence.

The Sub-Committee established a correspondence group to facilitate the development of standards of competence for ratings.

**Model courses**

The Sub-Committee validated model courses on Operational use of Integrated Bridge Systems (IBS)/Integrated Navigational Systems (INS) and Safety of fishing operations (support level).
From the meetings – Sub-Committee on Fire Protection (FP)

49th session: 24-28 January 2005

“Safe area” requirement for passenger ships further defined

Work on defining the functional requirements of a safe area, where people could be accommodated in the event of a fire onboard a passenger ship, was agreed at the Sub-Committee on Fire Protection (FP) when it met for its 49th session.

The Sub-Committee agreed that the “safe area should generally be an internal space, however, the use of an external space as a safe area may be allowed by an Administration, taking into account any restriction to the area of operation and relevant expected environmental conditions”.

The “safe area” concept was developed by the Maritime Safety Committee (MSC) working group on passenger ship safety and is linked to the guiding philosophy that future passenger ships should be designed for improved survivability so that, in the event of a casualty, people could stay safely on board as the ship proceeds to port or to a place of refuge. The MSC has agreed that: “A safe area(s), in the context of a fire casualty, is, from a perspective of habitability, any area outside the main vertical zone(s) in which a fire has occurred that can safely accommodate all persons onboard to protect them from hazards to life or health and provide them with basic services”.

The Sub-Committee agreed the list of basic services needed within a safe area, including sanitation; water; food; space for medical care; shelter from the weather and so on.

The Sub-Committee endorsed proposed draft amendments to SOLAS chapter II-2 in relation to the safe area concept as well as draft amendments to SOLAS chapter II-2 and to the International Fire Safety Systems (FSS) Code aimed at speeding up response to fire casualties, including new requirements for locally audible alarms and addressable detectors (detectors which enable rapid location of the fire). The Sub-Committee will further consider the draft amendments at FP 50.

The Sub-Committee agreed to re-establish the Correspondence Group on Passenger Ship Safety, to review the draft amendments to SOLAS chapter II-2 and the FSS Code; to review the list of new tasks relevant to the prevention of fire; and to submit a report to FP 50.

Evacuation guidance systems

The Sub-Committee agreed draft Guidelines on the assessment of evacuation guidance systems and draft Interim Guidelines for the testing, approval and maintenance of evacuation guidance systems alternative to the low-location lighting systems for submission to the MSC. The aim is to provide for the use of alternative means of satisfying SOLAS chapter II-2, which requires the marking of the means of escape by lighting or photoluminescent strips indicators placed not more than 300 mm above the deck at all points of the escape route. The alternatives could include directional sound systems.

Revision of the HSC Code

The Sub-Committee agreed a set of proposed amendments to the 2000 HSC Code for referral to the Sub-Committee on Ship Design and Equipment (DE 48) for coordination purposes. From the fire protection point of view, the revision includes integrating existing fire protection interpretations and provisions related to the use of asbestos.

The Sub-Committee also agreed a draft MSC circular on Guidelines for a simplified evacuation analysis for high-speed passenger craft, for submission to MSC 80 for approval.

In relation to dangerous goods and the relevant provisions of the IMDG Code, the Sub-Committee agreed on the inclusion of relevant proposed amendments to section 7.17 (requirements for craft and cargo spaces intended for the carriage of dangerous goods), of the 2000 HSC Code. The proposed amendments will be referred to the Sub-Committee on Dangerous Goods, Solid Cargoes and Containers (DSC) for ongoing referral to the DE Sub-Committee.

Performance Testing and Approval Standards for Fire Safety Systems

The Sub-Committee finalized the revised fire test protocol for machinery space water-based fire-extinguishing systems.

The Sub-Committee also agreed a draft MSC circular on Revised guidelines for the approval of equivalent water-based fire-extinguishing systems for machinery spaces and cargo pump-rooms, for submission to MSC 80 for approval. The amendments relate to the safety factor for the calculated extinguishing concentration of Halon replacement agents.

Safe area: functional requirements of a safe area, where people could be accommodated in the event of a fire onboard a passenger ship, were developed by FP Sub-Committee.

The Sub-Committee agreed draft amendments to the 2000 HSC Code as well as draft Guidelines for a simplified evacuation analysis for high-speed passenger craft (pic: Stena)
Draft revised FSS Code chapter 5 - fixed fire-extinguishing systems

The Sub-Committee agreed draft amendments to the FSS Code relating to fixed fire-extinguishing systems for submission to MSC 80 for approval and subsequent adoption.

Amendments to MSC/Circ.913 – fixed fire-fighting in category A spaces

The Sub-Committee agreed, in principle, draft amendments to MSC/Circ.913 on Guidelines for the approval of fixed water-based local application fire-fighting systems for use in category A machinery spaces relating to installation of nozzles, automatic release, the need to protect oil-fired equipment and discharge piping.

LHNS guidelines – amendments agreed

The Sub-Committee agreed draft amendments to the Guidelines for the transport and handling of limited amounts of hazardous and noxious liquid substances in bulk on offshore support vessels (resolution A.673(16)), to update the references to the fire protection requirements of the SOLAS Convention. The draft amendments will be referred to the DE Sub-Committee.

Unified interpretations of SOLAS chapter II-2

The Sub-Committee agreed a draft MSC circular on Unified interpretations to SOLAS chapter II-2, to include unified interpretations relating to regulation II-2/4.5.3.3 – Safety devices in venting systems and Regulation II-2/9.7.1.1 – Ventilation systems.

SOLAS regulation on lubricating oil

The Sub-Committee agreed a draft MSC circular on Application of the SOLAS regulation II-2/15 for lubricating oil and other flammable oil arrangements for ships built before 1 July 1998.
Focus on tsunami at COMSAR meeting

The IMO Sub-Committee on Radiocommunications and Search and Rescue (COMSAR) devoted an entire day to a special session on responses to the Indian Ocean tsunami crisis when it met for its 9th session. Presentations were given by a number of Governments, non-governmental organizations and the IMO Secretariat to update delegates on the measures that had been taken, so far, in the maritime context and with plans that were currently being put in place to enhance maritime recovery and reconstruction activities.

Much discussion focussed around the contribution that IMO might make towards the development of a tsunami early-warning system for the Indian Ocean, particularly in view of the robust and well-proven satellite and radio-based communication infrastructure that IMO had established, in co-operation with the International Hydrographic Organization (IHO) and the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), for the promulgation of maritime safety information to ships, which had the ability to play an important role in the dissemination of tsunami warnings. It was agreed that IMO should participate in the wider efforts to establish a tsunami early-warning system for the Indian Ocean, being co-ordinated by the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO.

The Sub-Committee agreed a COMSAR circular providing advice on the promulgation of tsunami and other urgent natural disaster warnings via the existing International SafetyNet and NAVTEX systems. A correspondence group was established to consider the promulgation of tsunami and other natural disaster warnings to vessels which are not subject to the 1974 SOLAS Convention, as amended.

Long-range identification and tracking of ships

The Sub-Committee held extensive discussions on long-range identification and tracking of ships (LRIT). The COMSAR Working Group on Maritime Security developed revised proposed amendments to the SOLAS Convention on LRIT and proposed draft performance standards for LRIT, to serve as a basis for further discussion and development.

The LRIT correspondence group has also been tasked with considering and making recommendations on various issues relating to LRIT, including the need for multiple copies of the LRIT international database; the requirement for data security; and whether a Contracting Government should be permitted to request LRIT information directly from an LRIT Tracking Service on any ship for which they are entitled to obtain LRIT information, or whether requests for information directly from LRIT Tracking Services should be limited to Administrations seeking information on ships flying their flag.

Amendments to the IAMSAR Manual

Draft amendments to the International Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue (IAMSAR) Manual were endorsed by the Sub-Committee for submission to the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) for approval and to the Maritime Safety Committee at its next session (MSC 80) for adoption. The draft amendments include the addition of a new section on underwater search and rescue and a comprehensive new section on mass rescue operations (MROs) – defined as search and rescue services characterized by the need for immediate response to large numbers of persons in distress, such that the capabilities normally available to search and rescue authorities are inadequate.

Amendments to HSC and DSC Codes

Draft amendments to the 2000 and 1994 International Codes of Safety for High-Speed Craft (2000 and 1994 HSC Codes) and the Code of Safety for Dynamically Supported Craft (DSC Code) were agreed. The draft amendments are intended to ensure the Codes include relevant provisions of the 1974 SOLAS Convention which are intended to apply to existing ships, in particular that the craft covered by the Codes should have a capability of distress and safety communications in accordance with the provisions of chapter IV of the SOLAS Convention, as amended.

Passenger ship safety

The Sub-Committee reviewed the tasks assigned to it in relation to the ongoing work by IMO on passenger ship safety and agreed to establish a correspondence group to work on a number of issues, including:
Emergency medical kit on certain passenger ships

A draft MSC circular on Identification of passenger ships, other than ro-ro passenger ships, which should benefit from being equipped with the emergency medical kit/bag (EMK) was agreed. These ships would include passenger ships not carrying a medical doctor on board but carrying more than 100 passengers on a route that would make the response time for a medical intervention from ashore longer than 30 minutes.

False alerts - reporting systems

The Sub-Committee agreed that reports of false alerts might best be handled at national level. The Rescue Co-ordination Centre (RCC) should report incidents to the relevant national Authority who should contact the offending party and ask for a report using the form developed by the COMSAR Sub-Committee. The national Authority should then take any necessary disciplinary or remedial action.

The Sub-Committee noted that much progress had been made in reducing the incidence of false alerts through equipment design and published guidance. Nonetheless, with real distress incidents at a mercifully low level, it is inevitable that false positives will outweigh real events.

Satellite services (Inmarsat and COSPAS-SARSAT)

Draft amendments to SOLAS chapter IV – Radiocommunications, to reflect the closure of the Inmarsat-E service, were agreed for approval by MSC 80. A draft MSC circular on Closure of Inmarsat-E services by Inmarsat Ltd. was also agreed, to provide information relating to the termination of the L-Band EPIRB service as from 1 December 2006.

A COMSAR circular superseding COMSAR/Circ. 18 - Guidance on minimum communication needs of MRCCs was also agreed.

Criteria for Provision of Mobile-Satellite Communication Systems in the GMDSS

A correspondence group to review resolution A.888(21) on Criteria for the Provision of Mobile-Satellite Communication Systems in the GMDSS was established, in order to review and update the resolution.

International SAR Fund

IMO Secretary-General Mr. Efthimios Mitropoulos thanked all donors and those who have pledged contributions to the International SAR Fund for their generosity; and invited potential donors to come forward to enable the Organization to further assist developing countries to enhance their maritime SAR capability and thus be in a stronger position to contribute to the effective implementation of the Global SAR Plan. He welcomed the provision of valuable communications equipment to the Mombasa regional MRCC and its two subordinate MRCs in the Seychelles and Tanzania and thanked Inmarsat Ltd. for their further financial pledges to the Fund, including a cheque for US$10,000 presented during the COMSAR meeting.

Recommendations on high-risk oceanic crossings by adventure craft

A draft MSC circular on Basic safety guidance for oceanic voyages by non-regulated craft was agreed, for submission to MSC 80. The circular provides guidance to those embarking on adventure craft voyages and to those maritime Administrations affected on how to avoid risks that would lead to loss of life or severe physical injury to both adventure craft crew and would be rescuers and how to reduce the requirement for extended and expensive SAR operations.

Further work on long-range identification and tracking of ships (LRIT) will be undertaken by a correspondence group and will continue at the next COMSAR session.

Andreas Sukawaty, Chairman and CEO of Inmarsat Ltd (left) presents a cheque for US$10,000 for the International SAR Fund to Maritime Safety Division Director Mr. Koji Sekimizu during the COMSAR meeting.
IMO moves to beat ballast bugs

The Global Environment Facility (GEF), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the International Maritime Organization (IMO), have all identified the issue of aquatic invasive species, including the transfer of harmful organisms in ships’ ballast water and sediments, as one of the greatest threats to global marine bio-diversity and ecosystems, and also a significant threat to coastal economies and even public health.

Global economic impacts from invasive aquatic species, including through disruption to fisheries, fouling of coastal industry and infrastructure and interference with human amenity, are estimated to exceed 100 billion US dollars per year. The US General Accounting Office (2003) has identified biological invasions as one of the greatest environmental threats of the 21st Century. The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and World Conservation Union (IUCN) announced at the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in Johannesburg in 2002, that invasive species are the second greatest threat to global bio-diversity after habitat loss. The impacts are set to increase in coming years with a three-fold increase in shipping activity predicted in the next decade. Developing countries in Africa, Asia and South America are at particular risk as globalisation of the world economy continues and new markets and therefore ports and shipping routes are opened-up in these areas.

New International Convention

In response to this threat, in February 2004 IMO member States adopted the International Convention for the Control and Management of Ships’ Ballast Water and Sediments, which provides a new international legal regime to address this problem.

The new Convention provides flexible options and builds on the complementary roles of coastal, port and flag States in protecting the marine environment. It retains the current management measure of ballast water exchange at sea, for the foreseeable future, while providing for continuous improvement by setting standards to stimulate the development of alternative, more effective management measures over time.

Adoption of this Convention marks one of the most significant marine environmental achievements since the adoption of the MARPOL Convention, by providing a uniform, global regime for the control of harmful species transferred by ships’ ballast.

The importance of international standards and a uniform global approach cannot be over-emphasised when dealing with a trans-boundary industry like shipping. The new ballast water Convention will certainly have impacts on the shipping industry. However these will be far less disruptive than the alternative, potentially disparate regional and unilateral regulatory responses, which would undoubtedly proliferate in the absence of the Convention. The Convention will enter into force one year after ratification by 30 countries representing 35% or more of world shipping gross tonnage.

Technical Assistance - the GloBallast Programme

In addition to developing the new Ballast Water Convention, IMO has also joined forces with GEF and UNDP to implement the Global Ballast Water Management Programme (GloBallast). The Development Objectives of this technical cooperation programme are to assist developing countries to:

- reduce the transfer of harmful aquatic organisms and pathogens in ships’ ballast water,
- implement existing IMO Guidelines, and
- prepare for the implementation of the new Ballast Water Management Convention.

The Pilot Phase of the programme ran from 1 March 2001 to 31 December 2004. It involved a four-person Programme Coordination Unit (PCU) based at IMO in London and six initial Demonstration Sites, located in six Pilot Countries. These represented the main developing regions of the world, as follows:

- Microscopic, “red-tide” algae (toxic dinoflagellates) can be transported in ships’ ballast water.

(pic: GloBallast)
Activities carried out at these sites focussed on institutional strengthening and capacity building and included:

- Establishment of National Lead Agencies and Focal Points for ballast water issues.
- Formation of cross-sectoral/inter-ministerial Country Task Forces.
- Communication and awareness raising activities.
- Ballast water risk assessments.
- Port biota baseline surveys.
- Ballast water sampling.
- Training in implementation of the IMO Ballast Water Guidelines.
- Assistance with national ballast water legislation and regulations.
- Training and technical assistance with compliance monitoring and enforcement.

- Assistance with developing national ballast water management strategies and action plans.
- Assistance with developing self-financing and resourcing mechanisms.
- Initiation of co-operative regional arrangements between neighbouring countries for ballast water management.

These efforts aim to expedite the Convention’s entry into force and establish frameworks for regional co-operation for the effective implementation of the Convention, particularly in developing countries.

The outstanding achievements of GloBallast received recognition in 2003 through the Queen’s Golden Jubilee Medal, awarded by the Institute of Marine Engineering, Science and Technology (IMarEST).

The Future

The GloBallast Programme has achieved many substantial, positive outputs and outcomes. Now, as we move forward, it is highly desirable that the investment placed by the GEF in this pilot phase is not lost, and that more developing countries are able to benefit from these achievements, through ensuring sustainability and continuity between the pilot phase and the proposed future project.

Without a follow-up GEF project, the significant global momentum and the increased engagement of developing countries, for which this pilot phase has been the catalyst, will be lost, and the results, impacts and other benefits from the initial GEF intervention will be substantially reduced.

IMO remains committed to facilitating an effective global response to the invasive species problem, both through its essential role as Secretariat to the Ballast Water Management Convention, and through working with GEF, UNDP, Member States and other partners to realize a follow-up technical co-operation project, called GloBallast Partnerships.

Steve Raaymakers
Former Chief Technical Adviser, GloBallast Programme
International Maritime Organization, http://globallast.imo.org
IMO Secretary-General meets EC Commissioners

IMO Secretary-General Efthimios E. Mitropoulos met Mr Jacques Barrot, Vice-President of the European Commission, in charge of transport policy, Mr Joe Borg, European Commissioner responsible for fisheries and maritime affairs and Mr Stavros Dimas, European Commissioner responsible for the environment, in separate meetings at IMO Headquarters early in 2005.

The meetings were organized following an invitation by Mr Mitropoulos to the EC Commissioners who had just taken on new portfolios, including matters of interest to IMO. The initiative was aimed at establishing good working relationships, providing the opportunity to reflect on recent developments and others anticipated in the future and setting a course to better serve the maritime community from IMO’s and the EC’s particular perspectives.

The two sides agreed to IMO’s leading role worldwide in the development and adoption of global standards for shipping engaged in international trade, whilst recognizing the European Union’s efforts aiming at ensuring a harmonized and controlled implementation of IMO rules in Europe.

The meeting with Mr Borg took place in January. During the meeting, Mr Mitropoulos referred to IMO’s work on the setting of safety, security and pollution prevention standards for shipping engaged in international voyages and, in particular, standards for the safety of fishing vessels and for the training and certification of fishing vessel personnel. Loss of life on fishing vessels is unacceptably high and two key international conventions adopted under the aegis of IMO (the 1993 Torremolinos Protocol for the Safety of Fishing Vessels and the 1995 International Convention on Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Fishing Vessel Personnel) aiming to address this have yet to enter into force.

Mr Mitropoulos said that the ratification of the two instruments by the Member States of the European Union would significantly expedite their entry into force and enhance their global implementation. Mr Borg, agreeing that international regulation of such measures was important, added that European funding was currently available to the EU Member States to facilitate the upgrading of the safety of fishing vessels.

Mr Borg outlined the measures that are being taken to ensure sustainable fisheries in the European Union. He said that a taskforce of commissioners with responsibility for maritime issues would soon be formed to prepare a consultation paper on a possible maritime policy for the European Union.

The meeting also focussed on protection of the marine environment and vulnerable resources, including the need to ratify and implement the newest marine environment conventions developed by IMO, i.e. the International Convention on the Control of Harmful Anti-fouling Systems, adopted in 2001, and the International Convention for the Control and Management of Ships’ Ballast Water and Sediments, adopted in 2004.

Mr Mitropoulos and Mr Borg agreed on the need for compliance with existing international standards and further harmonization of standards globally.

Mr Mitropoulos met Mr Dimas in mid-March. During the meeting, Mr Mitropoulos highlighted the role of IMO, particularly with respect to marine pollution prevention and response through the adoption of a series of relevant IMO instruments. He drew attention, in particular, to the Organization’s pollution prevention measures through the MARPOL Convention in the main and to response requirements incorporated in the International Convention on Oil Pollution Preparedness, Response and Co-operation and its HNS protocol. He also highlighted the importance of ratification, by as many States as possible, of the newest IMO conventions relating to the marine environment, such as the Ballast Water Management Convention and the Convention on Anti-fouling Systems, to enable them to come into force soon. He also referred to the ship recycling issue and explained IMO’s role in the process.

Specific mention was also made of the forthcoming entry into force, on 5 April 2005, of the 2003 amendments to the MARPOL Convention, including the revised phase-out schedule for single-hull tankers and a new regulation on the carriage of heavy grades of oil, which will ensure that this type of oil is carried in double-hull tankers.

Mr Mitropoulos stressed the importance of a universal approach to such legislation, given the global nature of shipping, and that IMO was the only place to bring proposals for, and seek global solutions in the context of, any such amendments in future.

The anticipated entry into force, on 19 May 2005, of MARPOL Annex VI containing regulations for the prevention of air pollution from ships, was also highlighted as a key piece of international legislation, developed and adopted by IMO, which will contribute to a cleaner environment for all.

The three meetings confirmed the desire on both sides to continue and enhance the existing co-operation between IMO and the European Commission so that maritime safety, security and environmental protection are well served in pursuit of common goals. The IMO Secretary-General and the EC Commissioners agreed to maintain a line of communication to foster further co-operation on all issues of common interest.
Environmental concerns on agenda as IMO and UNEP heads meet

IMO Secretary-General Efthimios E. Mitropoulos and United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) Executive Director Klaus Topfer (on the left) met at IMO in early January to discuss items of common interest between the two UN bodies. The two Executive Heads discussed a series of newly published UNEP reports relating to small island developing states (SIDS) and reviewed the on-going relief and recovery operations in the wake of the Indian Ocean tsunami disaster. IMO has seconded two IMO staff to UNEP to set up an environmental crisis centre in Indonesia to undertake work leading to the provision of relief and support for the stricken areas.

Panama makes IMO budget payment

Panama has made an initial financial contribution to the IMO operating budget for 2005 and has pledged to settle the remainder of the amount by July of this year. During his visit to Panama in February to participate in the opening of the Panama Maritime VII event, IMO Secretary-General Efthimios E. Mitropoulos received a payment from the Government of Panama for the amount of US$2,780,871 (GBP£1,473,700), representing the first tranche of Panama’s IMO budget contribution. As the world’s largest registry, Panama makes the highest single contribution to the IMO budget, representing around 16 per cent of the overall figure.

During his two-day visit to Panama, the Secretary-General undertook a busy programme of work. He had meetings with the President of the Republic of Panama, HE Martin Torrijos as well as a number of Ministers, and with Vice President and Administrator of the Panama Maritime Administration, HE Ruben Arosemena who explained in detail to the Secretary-General his plans to modernize the Panamanian registry and exercise effective control of the ships in the Panamanian fleet. The Secretary-General also visited the Panama Canal and discussed the proposed expansion plans with the Canal Administrator, Mr Alberto Aleman.

Bahamas settles IMO contribution

The Bahamas Government paid its assessed budget contribution to IMO in January. IMO Secretary-General Efthimios E. Mitropoulos welcomed the contribution and described it as an excellent example for all to follow. “The timely payment of assessments is essential for the Organization’s financial wellbeing and recognizes the critical contribution of the Organization’s work programme to enhancing global maritime safety, security and environmental standards in the interests of the global maritime community and civil society at large,” he said.

The annual budget of IMO (of £23,684,500) is distributed amongst the Organization’s 164 Member States and 3 Associate Members on the basis of a contribution formula which, broadly-speaking, apportions 85% of the budget on the basis of the gross tonnage of each Member State of ships registered, as recorded by Lloyds Register, and 15% broadly according to capacity to pay.

The Bahamas’ gross registered tonnage of 34,910,435 represents 5.6% of the world fleet.

 IMO News 3 2004 Correction

In the article on P.38 of IMO News, issue No 3, 2004, concerning the new navaids tender Rehume, we omitted to use the term Persian Gulf, which is a long-standing conventional practice within the United Nations, to describe the geographical area in which she will operate. We apologise to all concerned.
IMO Secretary-General meets US Secretary of Homeland Security and US Coast Guard Commandant

IMO Secretary-General Efthimios Mitropoulos met US Secretary of Homeland Security Tom Ridge and Commandant of the United States Coast Guard, Admiral Thomas H. Collins, in separate meetings at IMO Headquarters in January and February. The meetings focused in particular on maritime security.

Mr. Ridge, visiting IMO in February, expressed appreciation to IMO and its Member States for the rapid and comprehensive international response to maritime security issues following the September 2001 attacks in the United States, including the adoption of the special measures to enhance maritime security which entered into force on 1 July 2004 as part of the SOLAS Convention.

Mr. Mitropoulos referred to work carried out by IMO in collaboration with the International Labour Organization (ILO) on seafarer identification. He stressed the importance of treating seafarers as partners in the maritime security chain and highlighted the need for them to be able to take shore leave after working on board ships for long periods. He welcomed the input of the United States and, in particular, the United States Coast Guard to the work of IMO on maritime security and other issues and he urged the United States to make further contributions to the International Maritime Security Trust Fund in order to support technical assistance projects relating to maritime security around the world.

In February, Mr. Mitropoulos and Admiral Collins discussed the current implementation status of the maritime security measures. Mr. Mitropoulos noted that figures for ships subject to the ISPS Code indicated a high degree of compliance and almost no disturbance of the world trade while, for ports, information suggests that almost 94% of the Contracting Governments to the SOLAS Convention have approved security plans for 97% of the declared port facilities, which number in excess of 9,800 worldwide.

Mr Mitropoulos took the opportunity to stress that IMO’s efforts take fully into account the need to ensure the continuation of an efficient, uninterrupted and competitive maritime transport infrastructure, and the need to recognize, respect and uphold the traditional rights of seafarers and the rights and personal liberties of the individuals. He also re-affirmed the need to ensure that the achievements of the Organization make a meaningful contribution to the security agenda of United Nations and to the global efforts to eliminate terrorism.

In the context of maritime security, the two also discussed the United States’ proposals on long-range tracking of ships, the importance of access to shore leave for seafarers, and IMO’s technical co-operation activities to enhance maritime security.

Mr Mitropoulos and Admiral Collins agreed on the vital importance of ensuring and maintaining the security of strategic sea lanes, such as the Straits of Malacca, and the Secretary-General re-affirmed IMO’s commitment to this key objective. Last year, the IMO Council gave the go-ahead for the Organization to convene a high-level conference to consider ways and means of enhancing safety, security and environmental protection in the Straits of Malacca and Singapore. The event is due to take place in Jakarta, Indonesia, later this year. The Secretary-General also confirmed IMO’s plans to hold a similar sub-regional seminar in Aden, Yemen.

On broader issues, Admiral Collins and Secretary-General Mitropoulos discussed IMO’s work on the voluntary Member State audit scheme, goal-based standards for ship design and construction, passenger ship safety and formal safety assessment. The Secretary-General thanked Admiral Collins for the valuable contribution that the United States continued to make to the work of the Organization, and stressed once again the crucial importance of a universally-accepted regulatory framework for such an international industry as shipping. Admiral Collins expressed his appreciation to the Secretary-General for his continued efforts to enhance safety, security and environmental protection, and for his strategic management of the Organization during his first year as Secretary-General.

Technical co-operation fund receives major boost from Republic of Korea

The Republic of Korea has made a donation of more than US$400,000 to the IMO’s Integrated Technical Co-operation Fund, which supports IMO’s Integrated Technical Co-operation Programme (ITCP) activities. It also announced plans to increase its donations in the future, thereby continuing the country’s active participation in IMO’s technical co-operation activities.

A cheque was presented to IMO Secretary-General Efthimios E. Mitropoulos by the Republic of Korea’s Minister for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, Mr Keo-don Oh, who emphasised his country’s firm, long-term support for IMO’s important technical co-operation work. In thanking the Minister for his country’s generous and exemplary contribution, the Secretary-General stressed the vital part played by technical co-operation activities in helping the Organization to achieve its overall aims.

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Obituary: William Freeland Rea III

Vice Admiral William Freeland Rea III passed away on December 12, 2004 in Coral Gables, Florida. He worked for 37 years with the United States Coast Guard, leading US delegations to the IMO Assembly, the Maritime Safety Committee (MSC) and the Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC). He was chief of the US Coast Guard Marine Safety Program and was involved with the development of regulations at IMO, integrating new technologies such as LNG carriers, mobile offshore drilling units, and containerships. He led the US effort in improvement of passenger vessel safety and was an advocate for the complete revision of SOLAS Chapter III on Life Saving Appliances and Arrangements. Throughout his career and after retirement, VADM Rea focused on maritime safety and marine pollution prevention, with a long and positive influence on lifesaving and fire protection equipment and systems standards, nationally and internationally.

After retirement from the US Coast Guard, he served as chairman of the Board of Investigation for a number of maritime casualties. William F. Rea received the 1993 RADM Halert C. Shepheard Award for achievement in merchant marine safety and was elected Honorary Member of the US Marine Safety Association.

Appendix 2 gives information on the author who is often affectionately called “the father and the mother of WMU”. This double parent role for a steadily growing world-wide “family” of supporters is the red thread of the first 20 chapters. The following 12 chapters deal with the academic programme, the resident and visiting faculty, the students, graduates, governance, finance and some other topics related to elements, provisions and activities which are special at WMU.

The entire volume 1 is a most interesting report on successful international cooperation, on the development of WMU by an individual, the initiation by the IMO Council and Assembly, support by Sweden, the city of Malmö and other important and generous donors, on the bringing together, from countries in various states of development, of personalities - donors, governors, resident and visiting staff, students – for a joint determined effort to improve the safety, security, environment-friendliness and efficiency of maritime operations, on the development of a higher training institution to a respected university, on work for and progress towards enabling students to occupy more and more senior positions in maritime administration, education and industry in an increasing number of countries and, in the context of this mission, to contribute to the work of IMO.

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Review by Günther Zade, former Vice-Rector and Academic Dean of the World Maritime University.
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