COVER STORY
IMO: 100 years after the Titanic

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100 years after the Titanic disaster, passenger shipping today is safer than ever before – yet IMO’s work to improve standards goes on. See page 25.

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The meaning of “sustainability”, and the necessity of achieving it, is, I think, gradually becoming widely acknowledged and understood by the public worldwide. What was once an aspiration is now an expectation. Indeed, sustainability has, itself, become a strong driver for growth. Whole new industries have developed as a result of it, and the quests for energy efficiency and new sources of power have inspired something of a renaissance in technological development and innovation.

This year’s Rio+20 conference, with its two main themes of the green economy and the institutional framework for sustainable development, was a crucial waypoint on the route to a sustainable and responsible future.

Shipping contributes significantly to the three pillars of sustainable development – social, environmental and economic. It facilitates global commerce and the creation of wealth and prosperity among nations and peoples, creating a wide variety of jobs aboard ships and ashore, with beneficial impacts, both direct and indirect, on the livelihoods of others.

But to achieve sustainable development in shipping, it is important to establish a coordinated and integrated approach to maritime policies. With more than half the world’s population living near the coast, the importance of integrated coastal zone management, including port development and the protection of coastal and marine resources, is also of particular importance to sustainable development.

Twenty years ago, the “Agenda 21” (established at the original United Nations Conference on Environment and Development at Rio in 1992) included a set of recommendations related to shipping and the role of IMO. IMO’s responses have been both multifaceted and robust. Shipping and IMO have made significant progress in environmental protection since the Earth Summit and, at Rio+20, IMO, together with the shipping industry, renewed its commitment to sustainable maritime development.

I strongly believe that establishing a sustainable maritime transportation sector is essential to the development and growth of the world’s economy. Indeed, without shipping, we cannot really think about the future of the global economy. The world relies on a safe, secure and efficient international shipping industry, and this is created within the comprehensive regulatory framework developed and maintained by IMO.

The regulatory regime developed by IMO provides a blueprint for countries to develop their maritime transport infrastructure in a safe, efficient and environmentally sound manner.

Through its technical co-operation activities, IMO helps build capacity to enable developing countries to participate fully in maritime activities. This generates wealth, jobs and economic activity not only in the maritime sector but in other areas that rely on maritime trade for access to global markets.

Through IMO, the Organization’s Member States, civil society and the shipping industry are already working together to ensure a continued and strengthened contribution towards a green economy and growth in a sustainable manner.

The development and implementation, through IMO, of global standards covering maritime safety, environmental protection, maritime security and the facilitation of maritime traffic, will underpin green and sustainable shipping and confirm IMO’s ability to provide the appropriate institutional framework for sustainable maritime development.

I see the promotion of sustainable shipping and sustainable maritime development as one of the major priorities of my tenure as IMO Secretary-General. IMO participated in Rio+20 held in June this year to reaffirm our commitment to supporting sustainable maritime development and explained how international shipping contributes significantly to the three pillars of sustainable development, the eradication of poverty and the widespread development of green growth. One of the outcomes of Rio+20 was a process for the development of sustainable development goals. IMO will contribute actively to this process and will consider specifically how to ensure sustainable development of the maritime sector.

The Council of IMO, upon my suggestion, decided that the theme for the 2013 World Maritime Day, and indeed the focus of IMO’s work in 2013, should be: “Sustainable development: IMO’s contribution beyond Rio+20”. Through this theme, IMO’s leadership towards environmentally sound shipping will be extended to the wider context of more sustainable development and a “greener” world economy.”
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Guidance for private maritime security companies agreed by IMO’s Maritime Safety Committee

Interim guidance to private maritime security companies (PMSCs) was agreed by IMO’s Maritime Safety Committee (MSC), when it met at the Organization’s London Headquarters for its 90th session from 16 to 25 May 2012.

A special high-level segment of the MSC saw an intense debate, over the first day and a half of the Committee’s session, on how the international community should deal with issues related to the deployment of privately contracted armed security personnel (PCASP) on board ships and the carriage of arms on board.

Following further debate during a working group, the MSC agreed Interim Guidance to private maritime security companies (PMSCs) providing contracted armed security personnel on board ships in the High Risk Area.

The guidance covers:
- **PMSC Professional Certification**, including the recommendation that PMSCs should seek certification with relevant national and international private maritime security service standards when these are established;
- **PMSC Company requirements**, including the recommendation that PMSCs should establish procedures to provide maritime security services to ship owners and ship operators and comply with all relevant legal requirements;
- **Management**, including recommendations on selection, vetting and training of personnel for a PCASP team;
- **Deployment considerations**, addressing the specific aspects of PCASP deployment and the role of the PMSC in ensuring efficient and successful deployments, including communications with the ship owner or operator, and including recommendations relating to management of firearms and ammunition from embarkation to disembarkation and use of force. (The PMSC should recognize that laws governing the use of force may differ over time and according to location. The applicable national law, including any criminal laws, for an incident on a ship from which PCASP will be operating will be principally that of the flag State. It may also include the laws and regulations of coastal, port and other States.)

The MSC agreed that the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) would be best placed to develop international standards for PMSCs based on the IMO-developed guidance and with relevant IMO liaison and participation in the ISO process for standards’ development.

The MSC also agreed to consequential revisions to the interim guidance for shipowners, ship operators and shipmasters; flag States; and port and coastal States on the use of PCASP on board ships to counter Somali-based piracy, to reflect the new guidance to PMSCs.

The MSC also approved interim guidance for flag States on measures to prevent and mitigate Somalia-based piracy, which lists recommended practices that flag States are encouraged to apply, taking into account their own circumstances and subject to their national law, in order to maximize their efforts to implement counter-piracy measures.

The MSC noted that, globally, the number of acts of piracy and armed robbery against ships reported to IMO and which occurred in 2011 was 544, an increase of 65 (11.3%), compared with the 489 reported for 2010.

The areas most affected in 2011, as in 2010, were East Africa and the Far East, in particular the South China Sea, followed by the Indian Ocean, West Africa, South America and the Caribbean. The majority of incidents occurred off East Africa and increased to 233 in 2011, from 172 in 2010. The deployment of motherships by Somali pirates and the increased range of their operation contributed to the rise in the number of incidents occurring in the Arabian Sea increased to 28 in 2011, up from 16 in 2010. However, the number of incidents in the Indian Ocean decreased from 77 to 63 in 2011. Despite the high number of Somalia-based piracy attacks, the pirates’ success rate has been significantly reduced. In 2011, out of 286 attacks, 33 resulted in the ship being hijacked (11.5%), while in 2010 Somali pirates attacked 172 ships in 2010 and hijacked 50 of them (29%).

Worldwide, seven crew members were killed in 2011, up from two in 2010, while 589 crew members were reportedly taken hostage/kidnapped, in 2011, down from 1,027 in 2010.

The Committee urged, once again, all Governments and the industry to intensify and coordinate their efforts to eradicate piracy and armed robbery against ships.

The Committee agreed that:

- the carriage of firearms by seafarers continues to be strongly discouraged;
- the use of PCASP was an exceptional measure to be used only in exceptional circumstances in the high risk area and that use of armed personnel on board ships should not become institutionalized;
- the carriage of armed personnel on board ships for enhancing their protection should be left to flag States to decide, once a thorough risk assessment exercise has been carried out and following consultations with the shipowners concerned;
- Governments should decide, as a matter of national policy and taking into account the guidance developed by the Organization, whether ships entitled to fly their flag should be authorized to carry privately contracted armed security personnel and, if so, under what conditions, and promulgate that information widely, including to the Organization.
IMO signs strategic counter-piracy capacity building partnerships with UN agencies and EU

The commitment of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) to combat piracy off the coast of Somalia through boosting capacity building in the region has been underlined with the signing of five strategic partnerships with a number of UN agencies and the EU, following a Conference on Capacity Building to Counter Piracy off the Coast of Somalia, held at IMO Headquarters in London on 15 May 2012.

The Conference was attended by some 300 delegates from States as well as a number of organizations. It saw presentations on capacity building as a mechanism to tackle the piracy issue, focusing on matters such as building maritime infrastructure and law enforcement capacity and the implementation of the Code of Conduct for the Repression of Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in the Gulf of Aden and the Western Indian Ocean (Djibouti Code of Conduct), which had been the subject of a Ministerial meeting held at IMO on 14 May, also at IMO.

The Ministerial meeting was attended by Ministers, Ambassadors and senior officials of the States participating in the Djibouti Code of Conduct, as well as representatives of the donor States to the Djibouti Code of Conduct Trust Fund.

The Ministerial meeting agreed that the Djibouti Code should not be open to other States, and should continue to be a non-binding Code. However, the meeting agreed to review the status of the Code in the coming two years. The meeting noted that the implementation of the Code would also enhance capabilities and capacities to counter such threats.

The meeting also noted that IMO had agreed to be part of the combined UN efforts on the ground in Somalia, based on the Somalia Roadmap and the Transitional Federal Government National Security and Stabilization Plan.

The meeting also noted an initiative to focus the implementation of the Djibouti Code of Conduct in terms of maritime awareness and operational capability in the southern high-risk area, including the Mozambique Channel. The details of the initiative, including liaison with African organizations such as the Southern African Development Community (SADC), were still to be worked out. The “protection of the southern shipping lanes” initiative in the high-risk area is aimed at combining counter-piracy and maritime capacity-building projects within one single overarching apparatus, to deliver a programme for the development and protection of the maritime domain in the south-west Indian Ocean. The aim is that the signatory States to the Djibouti Code of Conduct will work together, supported by IMO and other development partners, to create a regional co-operative mechanism to this effect.

Strategic partnerships

Strategic partnerships were signed on 15 May with the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO); the United Nations Political Office for Somalia (UNPOS); the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC); and the World Food Programme (WFP). A further agreement with the European Union, acting through the European External Action Service (EEAS) was signed on Wednesday 16 May.

The joint commitments to combat piracy in the Western Indian Ocean and Gulf of Aden Area reaffirm the mutual commitments to improving coordination at all levels and across all relevant programmes and activities, with a view to strengthening the anti-piracy and maritime capacity of States in the Western Indian Ocean and Gulf of Aden area and developing viable and sustainable alternatives to piracy in Somalia.

The Organizations have pledged to work together to deliver effective assistance to those States under the framework of existing institutional arrangements as well as under new joint enterprises. Projects may be undertaken multilaterally or in conjunction with other international organizations. In signing the partnership agreements, the Organizations stated their determination to make every effort to act in a coordinated and complementary manner in pursuit of common goals, with the aim of ensuring that their investments under the strategic partnerships make an effective and long-lasting contribution to capacity building in the region.

IMO and the other international Organizations have already been working with the Transitional Federal Government of Somalia and the authorities of the Galgudug, Puntland, Somali and regions of Somalia through the “Kampala Process” to promote an integrated approach to the development of a safe and secure maritime sector in Somalia.

Specific projects are anticipated to be initiated or continued under the newly-signed partnerships. Each Organization will complement IMO’s competence in maritime situational awareness, and maritime security and counter-piracy measures.
Interim recommendations agreed on passenger ship safety

Recommended interim measures aimed at enhancing the safety of passenger ships, in the wake of the Costa Concordia incident in January, were agreed by IMO’s Maritime Safety Committee (MSC), when it met at the Organization’s London Headquarters for its 90th session from 16 to 25 May 2012.

The MSC adopted a resolution, which invites Member States to recommend that passenger ship companies conduct a review of operational safety measures, to ships flying their flag, on a voluntary basis and "with all possible urgency and efficiency", taking into consideration the recommended interim operational measures listed in an MSC circular.

The recommended interim measures include:

- carrying additional lifejackets, to be readily accessible in public spaces, at the muster/assembly stations, on deck or in lifeboats, so that in the event of an emergency passengers need not return to their cabins to retrieve the lifejacket stored there;
- reviewing the adequacy of the dissemination and communication of the emergency instructions on board ships;
- carrying out the muster for embarking passengers prior to departure from every port of embarkation, if the duration is 24 hours or more;
- limiting access to the bridge to those with operational or operationally related functions, during any period of restricted manoeuvring, or while manoeuvring in conditions that the master or company bridge procedures/policy deems to require increased vigilance (e.g. arrival/departure from port, heavy traffic, poor visibility); and
- ensuring that the ship’s voyage plan has taken into account IMO’s Guidelines for voyage planning, and, if appropriate, Guidelines on voyage planning for passenger ships operating in remote areas.

The adoption of the resolution followed consideration of information provided by the Government of Italy on the investigation into the Costa Concordia incident, as well as preliminary proposals on enhancing the safety of passenger ships brought to the Committee’s attention by the Government of Italy and other Member States, as well as by the Cruise Industry Operational Safety Review.

The resolution encourages “Member States and the passenger ship industry to take the necessary actions to ensure that their current safety standards, procedures and best management practices are fully and effectively implemented.”

The MSC also agreed, in principle, to an action plan on long-term work for passenger ship safety, pending the review of the report of investigation into the loss of the Costa Concordia.

IMO Secretary-General Koji Sekimizu welcomed the “appropriate and timely actions in response to the loss of the Costa Concordia.”

The MSC also approved, for adoption at MSC 91, new draft SOLAS requirements (new regulation III/17-1) to require ships to have plans and procedures to recover persons from the water, as well as related Guidelines for development of plans and procedures for recovery of persons from the water. The MSC also approved a draft MSC resolution on Implementation of SOLAS regulation III/17-1 to ships other than those engaged in international voyages.
IMO anti-piracy Code reaches 20 signatories

The Code of Conduct concerning the Repression of Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in the Western Indian Ocean and the Gulf of Aden (the Djibouti Code of Conduct) has been signed by both South Africa and Mozambique.

The Code, set up by IMO to develop regional capacity to counter piracy in the Gulf of Aden and Western Indian Ocean, now has 20 signatories, the others being: the Comoros, Djibouti, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Jordan, Kenya, Madagascar, Maldives, Mauritius, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Seychelles, Somalia, the Sudan, the United Arab Emirates, the United Republic of Tanzania and Yemen.

Signatories to the Djibouti Code of Conduct, which has been in effect since 29 January 2009, undertake to co-operate in a variety of activities, including:

• the investigation, arrest and prosecution of persons reasonably suspected of having committed acts of piracy and armed robbery against ships, including those inciting or intentionally facilitating such acts;
• the interdiction and seizure of suspect ships and property on board such ships;
• the rescue of ships, persons and property subject to piracy and armed robbery and the facilitation of proper care, treatment and repatriation of seafarers, fishermen, other shipboard personnel and passengers subject to such acts, particularly those who have been subjected to violence; and
• the conduct of shared operations – both among signatory States and with navies from countries outside the region – such as nominating law enforcement or other authorized officials to embark on patrol ships or aircraft of another signatory.

In addition, the Code provides for the sharing of related information, through the three

2010 FTP Code mandatory from 1 July 2012

Amendments to the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS) to make mandatory the International Code for the Application of Fire Test Procedures (2010 FTP Code) came into force on 1 July 2012, thereby enhancing the fire safety provisions onboard all ships.

The 2010 FTP Code provides the international requirements for laboratory testing, type-approval and fire test procedures for products referenced under SOLAS chapter II-2 (which includes regulations on fire protection, fire detection and fire extinction).

The 2010 FTP Code includes the following: test for non-combustibility; test for smoke and toxicity; test for “A”, “B” and “F” class divisions; test for fire door control systems; test for surface flammability (surface materials and primary deck coverings); test for vertically supported textiles and films; test for upholstered furniture; test for bedding components; test for fire-restricting materials for high-speed craft; and test for fire-resisting divisions of high-speed craft.

It also includes annexes on products which may be installed without testing and/or approval and on fire protection materials and required approval test methods.

Other amendments entering into force on 1 July 2012

Other amendments to international treaties which entered into force on 1 July 2012 include:

• amendments to SOLAS regulation V/18 to require annual testing of automatic identification systems (AIS);
• amendments to SOLAS regulation V/23 on pilot transfer arrangements, to update and to improve safety aspects of pilot transfer;
• amendments to safety certificates in the SOLAS appendix and SOLAS Protocol of 1988, relating to references to alternative design and arrangements;
• amendments to the International Convention for Safe Containers, 1972, to include addition of new paragraphs in Regulation 1 Safety Approval Plate, specifying the validity of and elements to be included in approved examination programmes; the addition of a new test for containers being approved for operation with one door removed; and the addition of a new Annex III Control and Verification, which provides specific control measures to enable authorized officers to assess the integrity of structurally sensitive components of containers and to help them decide whether a container is safe to continue in transportation or whether transport should be stopped until remedial action has been taken; and
• a new chapter 9 of the International Code for Fire Safety Systems (FSS Code), related to fixed fire detection and fire alarm systems.
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Guidance and model courses for implementation of Manila amendments to STCW agreed

Guidance and model courses relating to the implementation of the Manila Amendments to the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers, 1978, and the Seafarers’ Training, Certification and Watchkeeping (STCW) Code, (which were adopted in Manila, the Philippines, in June 2010 and entered into force on 1 January 2012) were agreed by the Sub-Committee on Standards of Training and Watchkeeping (STW), when it met for its 43rd session.

Revised Guidelines for Medical Examination approved
The Sub-Committee endorsed the revised Guidelines for Medical Examination of Seafarers, which were developed jointly by IMO and the International Labour Organization (ILO) to implement the international standards for medical fitness for seafarers set out in the STCW Convention, as amended, and the Maritime Labour Convention (MLC), 2006, in order to promote and support their effective, uniform, global, implementation.

The revised Guidelines for Medical Examination of Seafarers will be submitted for approval to the IMO’s Maritime Safety Committee (MSC) and the ILO Governing Body and will replace the Guidelines for Conducting Pre-sea and Periodic Medical Fitness Examinations for Seafarers, published by the ILO and the World Health Organization (WHO) in 1997.

ECDIS training guidance agreed
The Sub-Committee approved a draft STCW.7 circular providing guidance on Electronic Chart Display and Information System (ECDIS) training.

Guidance to STCW Parties agreed
The following guidance was agreed, for submission to the MSC for approval:

- draft revised circular on Procedures regarding the consideration of information communicated in accordance with article IV and regulation IV/7 of the STCW Convention (MSC.1/Circ.796/Rev.2);
- draft revised circular on Guidance on the preparation, reporting and review of independent evaluations and steps taken to implement mandatory amendments required by regulations IV and V/8 of the STCW Convention (MSC.1/Circ.997/Rev.1); and
- draft revised circular on Guidance on arrangements between parties to allow for recognition of certificates under regulation IV/10 of the STCW Convention (MSC.1/Circ.950/Rev.1).

Model courses validated
The Sub-Committee validated four model courses that have been updated to provide the necessary guidance to maritime Administrations and training institutions to develop their training programmes to meet the new standards set out in 2010 Manila Amendments to the STCW Convention and Code. The validated courses relate to:

- Operational use of Electronic Chart Display and Information Systems (ECDIS);
- Security awareness training for seafarers with designated security duties, and Security awareness training for all seafarers;
- Ship Security Officer; and
- Train the Simulator Trainer and Assessor.

Guidance on ECDIS training and its operational use has been agreed.
The Sub-Committee also reviewed draft model courses for Master and Chief Mate, Chief Engineer Officer and Second Engineer Officer and Officer in charge of an Engineering Watch and referred them back to the co-ordinators to further revise the courses to reflect closely the requirements of the 2010 Manila Amendments.

The Sub-Committee reiterated that validation of model courses by the Sub-Committee in this context meant that it found no grounds to object to their contents. In doing so, the Sub-Committee did not approve the document and, it could therefore, not be regarded as an official interpretation of the Convention.

**IMO mandatory audit scheme**

The Sub-Committee agreed draft amendments to the STCW Convention and Code, to make mandatory the draft *IMO Instruments Implementation Code*, which has been developed by the Sub-Committee on Flag State Implementation (FSI) and is being forwarded for consideration and approval by the Maritime Safety Committee (MSC) and the Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC), for submission to the Assembly at an appropriate session, for adoption.

Effectively, the proposed amendments would mean that the STCW Convention and Code would also be added to the list of mandatory IMO instruments intended to be covered by the mandatory audit scheme being developed to replace the current Voluntary IMO Member State Audit Scheme.

Areas expected to be covered under the mandatory audit scheme would include issues related to: confirming that an STCW Party had completed the process to be confirmed as giving full effect to the STCW provisions; issuance of dispensations; port State control and watchkeeping provisions; quality standards systems; and reporting of independent evaluations.

**ISM Code discussed**

The Sub-Committee agreed draft amendments to the International Management Code for the Safe Operation of Ships and for Pollution Prevention (International Safety Management (ISM) Code), intended to improve its efficiency and user-friendliness. It also approved revised guidelines on implementation of the ISM Code by Administrations (A.1022(26)) and revised guidelines for the operational implementation of the ISM Code by companies (MSC-MEPC.7/Circ.5), with a view to approval by the MSC and MEPC.

**Contingency planning guidelines agreed**

The Sub-Committee prepared draft amendments to the Guidelines for the structure of an integrated system of contingency planning for shipboard emergencies (resolution A.852(20)) with a view to approval by the MSC and MEPC, and subsequent adoption by the Assembly.

**Guidelines on transferring persons at sea**

The Sub-Committee agreed to recommend to the MSC that guidelines on safety when transferring persons at sea should be developed, as there was a need for a set of uniform guidelines that may help to prevent unsafe situations and mitigate unplanned consequences during transfers. This was agreed following the discussion of a submission which referred to several incidents during transfer of persons from small transport tenders to larger ships lying at anchor in coastal waters, resulting in fatalities.

**Gap analysis completed for e-navigation training**

The Sub-Committee endorsed a final draft list of gaps relevant to training aspects in the context of the development of the e-navigation strategy, for submission to the Sub-Committee on Safety of Navigation (NAV). While there was general agreement that most elements identified were already covered in the revised STCW Code, the training aspects would need to be reviewed again as the e-navigation strategy was further developed.

The NAV Sub-Committee is co-ordinating the development of the e-navigation strategy in cooperation with the Sub-Committees on Radiocommunications, Search and Rescue (COMSAR) and STW, with the aim being to integrate existing and new navigational tools in an all-embracing transparent, user-friendly, cost-effective and compatible system that will contribute to enhanced navigational safety (with all the positive repercussions this will have on maritime safety overall and environmental protection) while simultaneously reducing the burden on the navigator.

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Maritime Safety Committee adopts SOLAS amendments

Interim guidance for private maritime security companies (PMSCs) was agreed by IMO’s Maritime Safety Committee (MSC), when it met at the Organization’s London Headquarters for its 90th session, from 16 to 25 May 2012.

The MSC also adopted a resolution recommending operational measures aimed at enhancing the safety of large cruise passenger ships, as well as a work plan to address passenger ship safety matters, in the wake of the Costa Concordia incident in January.

The busy agenda further saw the adoption of amendments to the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS) and adoption and approval of other guidelines, codes and circulars, submitted by the IMO Sub-Committees.

Piracy and armed robbery

The MSC agreed Interim Guidance to private maritime security companies (PMSCs) providing privately contracted armed security personnel (PCASP) aboard vessels transiting the high-risk area off the east coast of Africa. (See p.7 for full story)

Passenger ship safety

The MSC agreed that a number of operational measures should be implemented immediately, on a voluntary basis, prior to the adoption of any measures following the analysis of the official marine investigation report into the loss of the Costa Concordia. (See p.9 for full story)

SOLAS amendments

The MSC adopted the following amendments, with expected entry into force on 1 January 2014:

- SOLAS regulation II-1/8-1, to introduce a mandatory requirement for new passenger ships for either onboard stability computers or shore-based support, for the purpose of providing operational information to the Master for safe return to port after a flooding casualty;
- SOLAS regulation III/20.11.2, regarding the testing of free-fall lifeboats, to require that the operational testing of free-fall lifeboat release systems shall be performed either by free-fall launch with only the operating crew on board or by a simulated launching. A related circular encouraging early implementation of the amendment was also approved;
- SOLAS regulation V/14 on ships’ manning, to require Administrations, for every ship, to establish appropriate minimum safe manning levels following a transparent procedure, taking into account the guidance adopted by IMO (Assembly resolution A.1047(27) on Principles of minimum safe manning); and issue an appropriate minimum safe manning document or equivalent as evidence of the minimum safe manning considered necessary;
- SOLAS chapter VI, to add a new SOLAS regulation VI/5-2, to prohibit the blending of bulk liquid cargoes during a sea voyage and to prohibit production processes on board ships;
FROM THE MEETINGS

IMO NEWS  |  ISSUE 3  |  2012

MARITIME SAFETY COMMITTEE (MSC) | 90TH session | 16-25 MAY 2012

- SOLAS chapter VII, to replace regulation 4 on documents, covering transport information relating to the carriage of dangerous goods in packaged form and the container/vehicle packing certificate; and
- SOLAS chapter XI-1, regulation XI-1/2, on enhanced surveys, to make mandatory the International Code on the Enhanced Programme of Inspections during Surveys of Bulk Carriers and Oil Tankers, 2011 (2011 ESP Code, resolution A.1049(27)).

Load Lines amendments

The MSC adopted amendments to regulation 47 of the International Convention on Load Lines (LL), 1966 and the 1988 LL Protocol, to shift the Winter Seasonal Zone off the southern tip of Africa further southward by 50 miles. The amendments to the 1988 LL Protocol are expected to enter into force on 1 January 2014 under the tacit acceptance procedure.

The amendments to the Convention, which require positive acceptance by two-thirds of Contracting Parties to enter into force, will now be submitted to the next session of the IMO Assembly for adoption, as required by the Convention.

Adoption of amendments to codes mandatory under SOLAS

The MSC adopted amendments to the following codes, with expected entry into force on 1 January 2014:
- International Code of Safety for High-Speed Craft, 2000 (2000 HSC Code), relating to radiocommunication, on testing of satellite EPIRBs;
- International Code for Fire Safety Systems (FSS Code), relating to fixed foam fire extinguishing systems; and automatic sprinkler, fire detection and fire alarm systems;
- International Maritime Dangerous Goods (IMDG) Code and supplements (amendment 36-12), including harmonization of the Code with the amendments to the UN Recommendations on the transport of dangerous goods, seventeenth revised edition. Amendment 36-12 will enter into force on 1 January 2014, but Contracting Governments may apply the aforementioned amendments voluntarily, in whole or in part, from 1 January 2013.

LRIT status updated

The MSC was updated on developments in relation to the establishment and testing of LRIT Data Centres (DCs) and the operation of the LRIT system since its last session. The MSC was informed that the International LRIT Data Exchange (IDE) had been fully operational at the European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA) premises, in Lisbon (Portugal), since 18 October 2011. The offer of the European Union States for the continued hosting, maintenance and operation of the IDE by EMSA, beyond 2013, at no cost either to the SOLAS Contracting Governments or to the Organization, was welcomed by the Committee.

An overview of the IDE operations (status as at November 2011) showed that 66 LRIT Data Centres were connected to the IDE; 275,000 messages were processed per week by the IDE (30 messages/minute); 111 SOLAS Contracting Governments and overseas territories to which the 1974 SOLAS Convention has been extended and 325 Search and Rescue services were users of the IDE; and the average processing time per message was less than one second.

The MSC also welcomed the offer of the United States to continue hosting, maintaining and operating the disaster recovery site of the IDE, beyond 2013, subject to their national procurement regulations, at no cost either to the SOLAS Contracting Governments or to the Organization, with the understanding that they reserved the right to revisit their decision should the circumstances associated with the configuration and operation of the permanent IDE change in the future.

The Committee adopted updated and amended performance standards for LRIT and approved a number of updated and amended circulars relating to LRIT operations.

Goal-based standards’ implementation discussed

The MSC established a correspondence group on goal-based standards to develop draft guidelines for the approval of equivalents and alternatives as provided for in various IMO instruments, and endorsed a work plan for the development of interim guidelines for the safety level approach. A working group on goal-based standards will be established at MSC 91 to further consider matters related to the safety level approach and the draft guidelines to be developed by the correspondence group.

“The average processing time per LRIT message is less than one second”
Other issues
In connection with other issues arising from the reports of IMO Sub-Committees and other bodies, the MSC also:

- adopted revised performance standards for voyage data recorders (VDRs) to update the current performance standards (resolution A.861(20), as amended by resolution MSC.214(81)) and provide for VDRs to continuously maintain sequential records of preselected data items relating to the status and output of the ship’s equipment, and command and control of the ship in a fixed recording medium; a float-free recording medium; and a long-term recording medium;
- adopted several new and amended ships’ routing measures;
- approved, for adoption at MSC 91, new draft SOLAS requirements (new regulation III/17-1) to require ships to have plans and procedures to recover persons from the water, as well as related Guidelines for development of plans and procedures for recovery of persons from the water. Also, approved a draft MSC resolution on Implementation of SOLAS regulation III/17-1 to ships other than those engaged in international voyages;
- approved, for adoption at MSC 91, the draft revised Code on noise levels on board ships, which sets out mandatory noise level limits for machinery spaces, control rooms, workshops, accommodation and other spaces on board ships, updates and revises the previous version published in 1973 (resolution A.468(XII)). Also approved, for adoption at MSC 91, a related draft new SOLAS regulation II-1/3.12 to require new ships to be constructed to reduce onboard noise and to protect personnel from noise, in accordance with the Code;
- approved Unified Interpretations of the Convention on the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea, 1972, as amended (COLREG), relating to navigation-light arrangements (described in Annex V/9(a)(i) and 10(a)(i) of COLREG);
- approved an MSC circular on Pilot transfer arrangements, which includes a revised graphic depiction of required boarding arrangements for pilots, reflecting amendments adopted to SOLAS regulation V/23 by MSC 88 in 2010 and Assembly resolution A.1045(27) on Pilot transfer arrangements;
- adopted an MSC resolution on amendments to performance standards for speed and distance measuring equipment, to add a new paragraph referring to the need for two separate devices, if ships are required to carry speed logs measuring speed through the water and speed over the ground. Also, approved a related draft MSC circular on the interpretation of SOLAS regulation V/19.2.9.2, to clarify the requirement for two separate devices;
- approved MSC circulars on Revised Guidelines for the design and approval of fixed water-based fire-fighting systems for ro-ro spaces and special category spaces; Guidelines for the approval of
helicopter facility foam fire-fighting appliances; and Revised Guidelines for the maintenance and inspection of fire-protection systems and appliances;

- adopted amendments to the Guidelines for the design and construction of offshore supply vessels, 2006 (resolution MSC.235(82)), concerning damage stability standards;

- approved, for future adoption, draft amendments to SOLAS regulation II-2/10 on fire fighting to require a minimum of duplicate two-way portable radiotelephone apparatus for fire fighters’ communication to be carried; and draft amendments to regulation II-2/15 Instructions, on-board training and drills, to require an on-board means of recharging breathing apparatus cylinders used during drills, or a suitable number of spare cylinders;

- approved an MSC circular on Basic Safety Guidance for yacht races or oceanic voyages by non-regulated craft;

- approved an MSC circular on Guidance to prospective GMDSS satellite service providers;

- approved amendments to the International Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue (IAMSAR) Manual for inclusion in the 2013 edition of the IAMSAR Manual and decided that the amendments should become applicable on 1 June 2013. The amendments include revised paragraphs relating to common language (English serves as the default SAR operational language in all cross-boundary operations where there is no other common language) and references to 406 MHz Distress Beacons;

- approved an MSC circular on Revised Guidelines on annual testing of 406 MHz satellite EPIRBs;

- agreed, in principle, to draft MSC-MEPC circulars on the Revised Guidelines for Formal Safety Assessment (FSA) for use in the IMO rulemaking process (Revised FSA Guidelines), and on the Guidelines for the application of Human Element Analysing Process (HEAP) to the IMO rule making process (HEAP Guidelines);

- agreed that the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS) should be reviewed and included an item on Review and modernization of the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS), with a target completion year of 2017, on the agenda of the Sub-Committees on Radiocommunications, Search and Rescue (COMSAR), Safety of Navigation (NAV) and Standards of Training and Watchkeeping (STW), assigning the COMSAR Sub Committee as the coordinating organ;

- in recognition of recent incidents associated with the liquefaction of cargoes, approved an MSC circular on Interim measures for early implementation of the draft amendments to the International Maritime Solid Bulk Cargoes (IMSBC) Code, recommending the early voluntary implementation of proposed draft amendments to the IMSBC Code, set to be adopted in 2013, relating to the carriage of a concentrate or other cargo which may liquefy.
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our chart-update-service.
The idea behind the project is to establish how, using maritime trade facilitation as a mechanism, IMO’s programme of technical co-operation and assistance can contribute towards the achievement of one of the principal Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) identified by the United Nations: MDG 1 “Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger”.

The terms of reference outline several stages leading to the evaluation of a pilot project which could show the value of maritime transport development in reducing poverty, particularly in Least Developed Countries (LDCs), Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and Land Locked Countries (LLCs), through improved trade facilitation processes and procedures, thus contributing to poverty reduction in the country or countries and region of the demonstration.

The first step will be to identify a country or region which would meet criteria for a pilot project. Following this, the project would look at:

- identifying all barriers in the country of demonstration (administrative, human, cost and infrastructure) impeding the simplification, harmonization of procedures and smooth flow of international trade (in the maritime domain);
- identifying current trade facilitation procedures and associated costs in the country of demonstration;
- identifying best practice and cost-effective procedures in the country of demonstration;
- carrying out a gap analysis; and
- producing recommendations on what needs to be improved to enhance cost-effectiveness; smooth flow of goods and priorities, taking into account the outcome of the earlier work.

Co-operation with other relevant organizations, including UN agencies, is envisaged.

The Committee agreed the preliminary work should begin immediately, through needs’ assessment missions and sourcing of donor funding for larger projects.

Review and reform initiative

The Committee supported the Secretary-General’s initiative to adopt a more targeted approach towards addressing the real needs of developing countries when planning technical co-operation activities and agreed that country profiles, as proposed by the Secretary-General, would be useful tools to identify capacity-building needs and to ensure effective delivery of IMO’s Integrated Technical Co-operation Programme (ITCP).

Further, the Committee agreed with the Secretary-General that assistance from IMO in the formulation of national maritime transport strategy and policy should be strengthened in order to provide a springboard for the development of maritime clusters in developing countries.

Support for MDGs continues

Meanwhile, the Committee noted that IMO’s technical co-operation programme continued to support the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Activities related to the implementation of search and rescue (SAR) and Global Maritime Distress and Safety (GMDSS) systems, the safety of non-SOLAS vessels, the protection of the marine environment and improvement in partnerships arrangements, combating HIV/AIDS and other diseases, and promotion of gender equality in the maritime sector, all contributed to the MDGs.

US$15.47 million spent on TC activities in 2011

The Committee adopted its report on the implementation of the Integrated Technical Co-operation Programme (ITCP) for the 2010-2011 biennium, noting that the total expenditure on technical co-operation activities in 2011 reached US$15.47 million, the highest level of annual expenditure on IMO’s technical co-operation ever recorded and representing a delivery rate of 87 per cent of the resources programmed for that year.

Funding came from 23 different sources, with the Organization’s Technical Co-operation Fund accounting for US$7.38 million in 2011, representing 48 per cent of the total spend. There was also additional input in the form of non-financial contributions (in-kind donations, experts provided, for example) which contributed to the overall success of the ITCP activities.

During the two-year period (2010-2011) more than 350 activities were successfully delivered, including 45 advisory missions and assignments; and 180 training courses, seminars and workshops held at the national, regional and global levels. These training events covered an extensive range of maritime topics and resulted in the training of approximately 4,340 persons. In addition, some 2,940 officials attended events aimed at developing and harmonizing regional strategies on maritime technical matters.

“... the highest level of annual expenditure on IMO’s technical co-operation ever recorded”
Sustainable financing

The Committee expressed its appreciation to all donors who had made contributions to IMO's technical co-operation activities through various arrangements, noting that, since 1 June 2011, some US$7.3 million had been contributed to the multi-donor trust funds and financial arrangements held by IMO, and that one-off cash donations to specific ITCP activities amounted to US$415,657.

There are currently 19 financial arrangements in operation, 10 of which have been established with government agencies of Canada, Egypt, Italy, Norway, the Republic of Korea, the United Kingdom and the United States and the rest with international and regional organizations and industry.

There are six multi-donor trust funds: the International Maritime Security Trust Fund, the International Search and Rescue Fund, the International Ship Recycling Trust Fund, the IMO Malacca and Singapore Straits Trust Fund, the IMO Djibouti Code of Conduct Trust Fund and the London Convention/Protocol TC Trust Fund.

A new multi-donor trust fund for technical assistance activities related to the promotion of energy efficiency measures in shipping is also being established.

Furthermore, following IMO's inclusion in the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)/Development Assistance Committee (DAC) list, financial support had been provided by the Republic of Korea through its Official Development Assistance (ODA) budgetary allocations for two environmental projects. Member States of the OECD, international and regional organizations were urged to make financial contributions to the ITCP through their ODA budgetary allocations.

IMO regional presence success continues

The Committee was updated on the progress made towards delivering technical assistance through the regional presence scheme in Africa and east Asia (hosted in Côte d’Ivoire, Ghana, Kenya and the Philippines), and through the Regional Maritime Adviser (RMA) in the Caribbean (based in Trinidad and Tobago).

Major achievements delivered by IMO’s Regional Coordinators and the Regional Maritime Adviser for the Caribbean during 2011, included the implementation of 26 national/regional ITCP activities, the facilitation of 30 national/regional workshops, the representation of IMO at 29 national or regional meetings, conferences and workshops and the completion of 46 advisory missions to Member States.

The Committee also noted that 75 partnerships were currently in operation for the delivery of technical co-operation activities, 43 of which had been concluded with developing and developed countries as well as dependent territories and 32 with international organizations, regional institutions and the industry. These partnerships have made a significant contribution to the effective delivery of ITCP activities.

The six most recently signed partnerships included: a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed with the Black Sea Commission for the management and execution of ITCP activities dealing with marine pollution prevention and response for the benefit of Black Sea littoral States; a Joint Declaration signed with the European Union for the establishment of a new partnership agreement to counter maritime piracy and armed robbery in the Western Indian Ocean; and four new strategic partnerships were established between IMO and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the United Nations Political Office for Somalia and the World Food Programme, as part of their joint commitment to combat piracy in the Western Indian Ocean and the Gulf of Aden.

Following the Committee meeting, on 12 June, a further MoU was concluded with the Australian Maritime Safety Authority in support of technical capacity-building.

Voluntary Member State Audit Scheme

The Committee was updated on the training programme for auditors for the Voluntary IMO Member State Audit Scheme (VIMSAS), noting that a total of 410 individuals from 146 countries had been trained through 28 regional courses/workshops, four of which were delivered in 2011. In addition, two regional training courses for auditors and three regional workshops for maritime administrators were scheduled for delivery during 2012.

The audit scheme is being institutionalized into a mandatory scheme, and a revised Code for the implementation of mandatory IMO instruments, now renamed “IMO Instruments Implementation Code” (III Code), has been finalized for approval by the Maritime Safety Committee (MSC) and Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC) later in 2012, and for subsequent submission to the twenty eighth session of the Assembly in 2013.
NAV issues guidance on ECDIS operating anomalies

Guidance to mariners on dealing with operating anomalies, which have been identified in some Electronic Chart Display and Information Systems (ECDIS), has been issued by the IMO’s Sub-Committee on Safety of Navigation (NAV), which met for its 58th session from 2 to 6 July, 2012

The Sub-Committee approved a Safety of Navigation Circular (SN.1/Circ. 312) on Operating anomalies within ECDIS, which highlights the importance of maintaining ECDIS software to ensure that operational capability and reliability are maintained, and that appropriate checks are made with the equipment manufacturer. The circular includes a list of the known anomalies, with advice and information on whether or not the International Hydrographic Organization (IHO) ECDIS Data Presentation and Performance Check (DPPC) dataset checks for each anomaly.

An ECDIS anomaly is an unexpected or unintended behaviour of an ECDIS unit which may affect the use of the equipment or navigational decisions made by the user. Examples of those which have been identified include, but are not limited to:

- failure to display a navigational feature correctly, such as: navigation areas recently recognized by IMO such as PSSAs (Particularly Sensitive Sea Areas) and ASLs (Archipelagic Sea Lanes);
- lights with complex characteristics;
- underwater features and isolated dangers;
- failure to detect objects by “route checking” in voyage planning mode;
- failure to alarm correctly; and
- failure to manage a number of alarms correctly.

Routing of ships, ship reporting and other relevant measures

The Sub-Committee approved the following new and amended ships’ routing measures, for submission to the Maritime Safety Committee (MSC) for adoption:

Traffic separation schemes (TSSs)

- Amendments to the existing TSS “Off Texel” (Netherlands);
- Amendments to the existing TSS “Off Ushant” (France);
- Amendments to the existing TSS “Off San Francisco”, to decrease the co-occurrence of commercial vessels and endangered blue, fin and humpback whales (United States);
- Amendments to the existing TSS “In the Santa Barbara Channel”, to reduce the likelihood of ship strike deaths and serious injuries to blue whales and other whales (United States);
- Amendments to the existing TSS “In the Approaches to Los Angeles – Long Beach”, to significantly reduce the likelihood of ship strike deaths and serious injuries to blue whales and other whales (United States).

Routeing measures other than TSSs

- Establishment of two new precautionary areas and an Area To Be Avoided (ATBA) as part of establishing a new routeing system “In the approaches to Ujimuiden” (Netherlands);
- Amendments to the existing “Deep-water route leading to Ujimuiden” (Netherlands);
- Establishment of a new precautionary area, a new recommended route and a new ATBA as part of establishing a new routeing system in the area “West of Rijnveld” (Netherlands);
- Amendments to the existing routeing measures other than traffic separation schemes, as part of the revision of the routeing system “In the Approaches to Hook of Holland and at North Hinder” (Belgium, Netherlands);
- Amendments to the existing deep-water route leading to Europoort, as part of the revision of the routeing system “In the Approaches to Hook of Holland and at North Hinder” (Belgium, Netherlands);
- Revocation of the existing deep-water route inside the borders of the Traffic Separation Schemes from Gogland Island to Rodsher Island (Russian Federation);
- Establishment of new recommended tracks and traffic separation line between the Traffic Separation Schemes “Off Rodsher Island” and “Off Gogland Island” (Russian Federation);
- Establishment of a new recommendatory ATBA off the Ningaloo Coast, Western Australia, which had been listed as UNESCO’s World Heritage region.
since 2011, with a view to mitigating risk created by increasing shipping activity;

- Establishment of two new ATBAs, in Brazil’s Espírito Santo Basin region, in order to improve the safety of navigation and that of the offshore activities in the vicinity of Golfinho and Jubarte Fields;
- Recommendatory measure for vessels crossing the Traffic Separation Scheme and Precautionary Areas in the Singapore Strait during hours of darkness.

**Mandatory ship reporting system**
- Establishment of a new mandatory ship reporting system “In the Barents Area (Barents SRS)” (Norway and the Russian Federation).

**Associated Protective Measures (APMs)**
- Establishment of a new mandatory No Anchoring Area for all ships and a new ATBA for ships 300 gt or over in Saba Bank (Netherlands). (The designation of the Saba Bank, off the Caribbean island of Saba as a Particularly Sensitive Sea Area (PSSA) was approved in principle by the MEPC at its 62nd session, with a view to final designation at MEPC 64, pending the approval of associated protective measures.)

**Electronic inclinometers**
The Sub-Committee agreed a draft MSC resolution on performance standards for electronic inclinometers, for any advice on appropriate criteria for alarming functionality of inclinometers by the Sub-Committee on Stability, Load Lines and Fishing Vessel Safety (SLF) and submission to the MSC for adoption next year.

Electronic inclinometers are intended to support the decision-making process on board in order to avoid dangerous situations as well as assist in, and facilitate, maritime casualty investigation by providing information about the roll period and the heel angle of the ship.

The performance standards state that electronic inclinometers should, in a reliable form:

- determine the actual heel angle with the required accuracy;
- determine the roll amplitude with the required accuracy;
- determine the roll period with the required accuracy;
- present the information on a bridge display; and
- provide a standardized interface to instantaneous heel angle to the VDR.

**E-navigation strategy implementation plan**
The Sub-Committee made further progress in the development of the e-navigation strategy implementation plan, which aims to integrate existing and new navigational tools, in particular electronic tools, in an all-embracing transparent, user-friendly, cost-effective and compatible system that will contribute to enhanced navigational safety (with all the positive repercussions this will have on maritime safety overall and environmental protection) while simultaneously reducing the burden on the navigator.

The Sub-Committee completed the gap analysis, approved the final list of gaps and endorsed the preliminary list of potential e-navigation solutions, the methodology of the Human Element Analysing Process, the procedure for the Formal Safety Assessment methodology and the further development of Maritime Service Portfolios (which define and describe the set of operational and technical services and their level of service provided by a stakeholder in a given sea area, waterway, or port, as appropriate).

Potential solutions to address the identified gaps include those relating to:

- improved, harmonized and user-friendly bridge design;
- means for standardized and automated reporting;
- improved reliability, resilience and integrity of bridge equipment and navigation information; integration and presentation of available information in graphical displays received via communication equipment;
- information management Improved access to relevant information for search and rescue; improved reliability, resilience and integrity of bridge equipment and navigation information for shore-based users;
- improved and harmonized shore-based systems and services;
- improved communication of vessel traffic services (VTS) service portfolios.

The Correspondence Group on e-navigation was re-established to further the work.

The e-navigation concept is being developed in cooperation with the Sub-Committees on Radiocommunications, Search and Rescue (COMSAR) and Standards of Training and Watchkeeping (STW).

**Navigation bridge visibility**
The Sub-Committee agreed a draft revised MSC.1/Circ.1350 on Unified Interpretations of SOLAS regulation V/22.1.6 relating to navigation bridge visibility, to include a new paragraph covering the use of a remote camera system as means for achieving the view of the ship’s side from the bridge wing.

**AIS aids to navigation**
The Sub-Committee agreed on the revised draft text of the policy on use of Aids to Navigation and re-established the Correspondence Group to further review and finalize it at the next session.
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On 14 April 1912, the White Star liner ‘Titanic’ was transformed in a few short hours from the world’s most celebrated ship into a name forever associated with disaster.

Many ships have sunk – too many – but few have had the lasting impact of the seemingly invulnerable Titanic, sparking a chain of events that led ultimately to the formation of the International Maritime Organization (IMO), the specialized agency of the United Nations responsible for so many of the improvements to maritime safety that make shipping today so much safer than it was at the time of the Titanic.

But the story really begins long before the Titanic sank, when the question of how to ensure mutually acceptable standards on ships from different jurisdictions was becoming increasingly important. As global trade increased, it became apparent that the best way to achieve significant and widespread improvements in safety at sea would be through the development of international regulations that would be applied by all shipping nations. From the mid-19th century onwards a number of treaties to this end were adopted. One example is the 1863 rules of the road at sea – known as articles – which were adopted by more than 30 maritime countries.

But it was the Titanic disaster of 1912 which led to the adoption, two years later, of the first International Safety of Life at Sea convention – SOLAS. SOLAS was adopted after the United Kingdom called a conference following the Titanic disaster and it was the first convention to lay down international rules governing safety of shipping, such as making sure enough lifeboats and lifejackets are provided for all the people on board a ship.

Even as recently as the 1950s, however, most shipping nations had their own maritime laws and there were comparatively few international treaties. Those that did exist were by no means accepted or implemented by all maritime states. The result was that standards and requirements varied considerably.

It was generally accepted that this situation was damaging to shipping safety at the global level. Not only were standards different, but some were far higher than others. Shipowners who spent relatively little money on safety had an economic advantage over their more conscientious rivals and this was a threat to any serious
attempt to improve shipping safety. But it was not until the foundation of the United Nations itself that a permanent international body was set up to promote maritime safety more effectively – and that body is IMO. IMO was established by means of a convention adopted in Geneva in 1948. The convention received sufficient signatures to enter into force ten years later and the first meeting of IMO was held in 1959.

The most immediate and important task allocated to IMO, when it met for the first time, was to develop international standards to replace the multiplicity of national legislation that then existed. And the very first of these was a new version of the SOLAS Convention, which was adopted in 1960. Thereafter, IMO turned its attention to other matters, such as the facilitation of international maritime traffic, load lines on ships, the carriage of dangerous goods and revising the system of measuring ships’ tonnage.

Although safety was, and remains, IMO’s most important responsibility, a new problem began to emerge soon after the Organization came into being – pollution. The growth in the amount of oil being transported by sea, and in the size of oil tankers, was of particular concern and the Torrey Canyon disaster of 1967, in which 120,000 tonnes of oil were spilled, demonstrated the scale of the problem.

During the next few years IMO introduced a series of measures designed to prevent tanker accidents and to minimize their consequences. It also tackled the environmental threat caused by routine operations such as the cleaning of oil cargo tanks and the disposal of engine room wastes – in tonnage terms, a bigger menace than accidental pollution.

The most important of all these measures was the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships, 1973, as modified by the Protocol of 1978, (MARPOL 73/78). It covers not only accidental and operational oil pollution but also pollution by chemicals, goods in packaged form, sewage, garbage and air pollution.

IMO was also given the task of establishing a system for providing compensation to those who had suffered financially as a result of pollution. Two treaties were adopted, in 1969 and 1971, which enabled victims of oil pollution to obtain compensation much more simply and quickly than had been possible before. Both treaties were amended in 1992, and again in 2000, to increase the limits of compensation payable to victims of pollution. A number of other legal conventions have been developed since, most of which concern liability and compensation issues.

In the realm of safety at sea, the advances have been numerous and wide ranging. In the 1970s, for example, the Convention on the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea was adopted and a global search and rescue system was initiated, with the adoption of the International Maritime Search and Rescue Convention.

In 1988, the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System was adopted and began to be phased in from 1992. In February 1999, it became fully operational. Which means that now, unlike in the days of the Titanic, a ship that is in distress anywhere in the world can be virtually guaranteed assistance. This applies even if the ship’s crew do not have time to radio for help, as the message will be transmitted automatically.

Despite huge improvements in maritime safety since the era of the Titanic, accidents do, nevertheless, still occur and there is clearly a great deal of work that still needs to be done. While the regulatory regime, fostered by IMO, undoubtedly has its part to play, the underlying reason why accidents continue to befall ships, can, in the vast majority of cases, be traced back to a human error.
This is why IMO’s focus on people continues to be so important. Two initiatives of the 1990s are especially significant in this respect, as they relate directly to the human element in shipping.

On 1 July 1998 the International Safety Management Code (ISM Code) entered into force and became applicable to passenger ships, oil and chemical tankers, bulk carriers, gas carriers and cargo high speed craft of 500 gross tonnage and above. It became applicable to other cargo ships and mobile offshore drilling units of 500 gross tonnage and above from 1 July 2002. The ISM Code provides a blueprint for the way shipping companies manage and operate their fleets and sets out to promote the development of a widespread safety culture and environmental conscience in shipping. By defining the company’s responsibility for safety and ensuring that senior management can more easily be held accountable, the Code seeks to ensure that safety is given the appropriate priority.

And, in 1997, the 1995 amendments to the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers, 1978 entered into force. These amendments greatly improved seafarer standards and, for the first time, gave IMO itself powers to check Government actions, with Parties required to submit information to IMO regarding their compliance with the Convention. Subsequently, a major revision of the STCW Convention and Code was completed in 2010 with the adoption of the so-called “Manila Amendments”, aimed at ensuring that the necessary global standards will be in place to train and certify seafarers to operate technologically-advanced ships for some time to come.

The 2000s also saw IMO place a strong focus on maritime security. In 2004, a new, comprehensive security regime for international shipping entered into force, including the International Ship and Port Facility Security (ISPS) Code, made mandatory under amendments to SOLAS adopted in 2002. In 2005, IMO adopted amendments to the Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts (SUA) Against the Safety of Maritime Navigation, 1988 and its related Protocol (the 2005 SUA Protocols). And, for many years, IMO has been at the forefront of global efforts to mount a coordinated response to the menace of piracy, which continues to plague the shipping industry.

All too often, regulatory policy has been dictated by events. If the Titanic spurred the creation of the SOLAS Convention, other disasters have also made their mark. The Torrey Canyon was instrumental in providing the impetus for the MARPOL Convention; the Estonia prompted a thorough review of the safety of ro-ro ferries; the Nakhodka and the Prestige incidents led to increases in the amount of compensation available to the victims of oil spills; the Prestige and Erika incidents caused the regulations surrounding single and double-hull tankers to be reviewed, while both those vessels and the Castor incident served to bring the question of places of refuge for stricken vessels into sharp focus. The losses of the Derbyshire in 1981, the Herald of Free Enterprise in 1987, the Exxon Valdez in 1989, the Scandinavian Star in 1990 and the Al-Salam Boccaccio in 2006 all resulted in either a heavy loss of life or a significant impact to the marine environment and lent direction and purpose to the work of IMO.

That these and other major casualties made the news headlines and television screens around the world should not obscure the fact that, in the majority of cases, it is either a new technical development, a response to changing circumstances within the industry, or anticipation of something that may happen in the future, that provides the catalyst for the Organization’s work. A proposal from a Member State, typically to amend or revise part of the existing regulatory framework, may be passed through the appropriate committee to a sub-committee and then on to a working group for detailed consideration. In this process it will go through the hands and under the scrutiny of the best experts that the shipping industry and the Member Governments of IMO have to offer, usually several times, before it emerges as a balanced measure, ready for adoption and implementation throughout the industry as a whole.

A perfect example of this proactive approach in action is the comprehensive package of amendments to the international regulations affecting new passenger ships, which entered into force on 1 July 2010. The amendments, which affect passenger ship regulations in SOLAS, came about as the result of a comprehensive review of passenger ship safety initiated in 2000 by IMO. The aim of the review was to assess whether the existing regulations were adequate to meet future challenges, in particular to address issues related to the increased size of passenger ships now being built.

The guiding philosophy behind this important review was based on the dual 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, in a ‘safe area’ as the ship proceeds to port.

Adopted in 2006, the amendments placed increased emphasis on reducing the chance of accidents occurring and on improved survivability, embracing the concept of the ship as ‘its own best lifeboat’. The amendments include new concepts such as the incorporation of design criteria for the casualty threshold (the amount
of damage a ship is able to withstand, according to the design basis, and still safely return to port) into SOLAS chapters II-1 and II-2. They also provide regulatory flexibility so that ship designers can meet future safety challenges.

The amendments, which largely affect new ships built from 1 July 2010, include:

- alternative designs and arrangements;
- provision of safe areas and the essential systems to be maintained while a ship proceeds to port after a casualty, which will require redundancy of propulsion and other essential systems;
- on-board safety centres, from where safety systems can be controlled, operated and monitored;
- fixed fire-detection and alarm systems, including requirements for fire detectors and manually operated call points to be capable of being remotely and individually identified;
- fire prevention, including amendments aimed at enhancing the fire safety of atriums, the means of escape in case of fire and ventilation systems; and
- time for orderly evacuation and abandonment, including requirements for the essential systems that must remain operational in case any one main vertical zone is unserviceable due to fire.

And all this was prompted, not by a particular accident or casualty, but by the fact that IMO understood the potential implications of rapid growth in the size of passenger ships and had the foresight to look proactively for ways to address them.

One of the Organization’s greatest strengths today is the fact that its 170 Member States, together with the more than 60 NGOs and over 30 Intergovernmental organizations that enjoy consultative status with IMO, can embrace many different viewpoints on any given subject. The combined capacity of the expertise available within the Organization that is brought to bear on any standard, guideline, code of practice or any other matter that it deals with results in a balanced, sensible and effective regulatory regime that applies to nearly 100 per cent of shipping engaged in international trade. No other organization, either international or regional, can muster this capability.

**IMO shapes shipping**

The figures speak volumes. SOLAS, MARPOL Annexes 1 and 2, the Load Lines Convention, the Tonnage Convention, the STCW Convention, the collision regulations all now apply to more than 97 per cent of the world’s fleet. IMO measures such as these have come to define much of the very essence of shipping today. To a great extent, shipping’s technical, operational and administrative profiles are all shaped by developments emanating from IMO.

The fact that Governments come to IMO in this way is a tribute to the confidence they have in the Organization’s ability to get things done. Also, there is no doubt that the actions taken by IMO as a result of these and other accidents has helped to make shipping safer and to reduce pollution. This reinforces IMO’s “raison d’être” as it remains the only effective international body to promote uniform maritime safety and pollution standards on a global basis. When IMO Member States act unilaterally, they ultimately undermine the credibility of the global regulatory system that was created in 1914 in response to the tragic loss of the Titanic.

There can be no doubt that, in matters of safety, environmental protection and security, the shipping industry looks to IMO for leadership in creating and raising standards. IMO’s response to serious accidents has been swift and decisive and its proactive policies have created a regulatory infrastructure that covers everything from measures designed to prevent casualties and accidents and to minimize damage to the environment, through measures aimed at ensuring an effective response when accidents do happen, and on to those activities which have created the compensation regime which ensures that innocent victims of pollution and other mishaps can receive adequate recompense.

Of course, adopting international treaties and standards is only part of the story. Effective implementation and enforcement is also required. And for this, States need efficient maritime administrations staffed by well-trained and experienced personnel.

Modern passenger vessels are built to new and exacting standards that entered into force in 2010...
That is why IMO’s sphere of activities also includes technical co-operation. Many of today’s shipping nations did not even exist when IMO started functioning in 1959 (let alone when the Titanic sank in 1912), and the expectation is that still more countries will wish to expand their shipping activities in the years to come. For many, a lack of experience and resources will be a handicap. IMO has recognized this and has done a great deal to overcome this problem by building capacity in these newly emerging shipping nations.

The World Maritime University and the IMO International Maritime Law Institute, for example, were set up by IMO in the 1980s to help developing countries to acquire the necessary knowledge and skills.

Since its establishment, IMO has continuously kept the regulations under its purview up to date, not least to reflect the rapidly changing and developing state of technology in the shipping industry. And, today, IMO regulations and other measures enjoy near-universal recognition and application, a situation that could barely have been envisaged in 1912, when the Titanic sank.

**New ships, new challenges**

Each new generation of ships brings new challenges, reinforcing the need for continual improvement. IMO’s efforts to promote maritime safety, not least of passenger ships, will never stop. It is also imperative that IMO ensures that the measures it adopts do not impede the deployment of new technologies and the benefits that they provide to the entire maritime industry. Moreover, IMO must continue to address today’s pressing safety and environmental concerns proactively, and promote the use of latest technologies, to ensure that others do not feel the need to impose inappropriate, unilateral solutions on the shipping industry.

As one would expect, the IMO that exists today is very different from the Organization envisaged in Geneva in 1948 – but so is the world of merchant shipping. The success of the this evolution can be measured by the global extent of IMO Membership, and, more importantly, by the consistent overall reduction of lives lost at sea due to the rigorous enforcement of the international treaties for which the Organization has been responsible.

**Comprehensive framework**

Today, 100 years since the Titanic, IMO has developed – and maintains – a comprehensive regulatory framework for shipping and its remit has expanded to include not only safety, but also environmental protection, legal matters, technical co-operation, maritime security and the efficiency of shipping.

IMO provides the mechanism through which the Governments of every country with an interest in shipping can come together to decide on standards that are to be applied on ships engaged in international voyages. The Membership of IMO includes not just countries in which ships are owned or registered but also coastal states, importing and exporting states, and countries which supply support services and manpower to the shipping industry. The fact that so many nations have elected to join the Organization reflects not only the universal impact that shipping has on global trade and the global community, but also the diverse range and scope of the activities undertaken by the Organization.

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

For the first few decades of its existence IMO was involved in laying foundations. But it has now adopted more than 50 different conventions and protocols, the majority dealing with maritime safety and the prevention of marine pollution. This process was essential, for in many areas there were no international standards at all and, in others, the regulations that did exist were in need of modification or replacement.

It could fairly be said the Titanic disaster of 1912 was the catalyst that eventually led shipping into a new era of maritime safety. Looking ahead, technological developments, new risks, changing priorities and altered public expectations are collectively building momentum towards another such quantum leap. IMO has helped maritime safety to come a very long way since the Titanic; and now, 100 years later, it stands ready to examine whether the prescriptive regulatory framework that can trace its roots back to the Titanic in 1912 is still the best model for addressing tomorrow’s maritime safety issues.
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Australia supports IMO’s technical co-operation programme with new agreement

The International Maritime Organization (IMO) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA), to support IMO’s Integrated Technical Co-operation Programme (ITCP) capacity-building activities through the provision of experts and hostship facilities for the delivery of ITCP activities, as well as the secondment of staff from AMSA.

The MoU between IMO and AMSA was signed on Monday 11 June by Mr. Jianxin Zhu, Director, Technical Co-operation Division, IMO (right), and Mr. Graham Peachey, Chief Executive Officer, AMSA, in London during the 108th session of the IMO Council, which met at the Organization’s London Headquarters earlier this year.

The MoU is aimed at assisting developing countries to comply with international maritime safety and environmental protection laws and standards by understanding, implementing and enforcing IMO instruments.

AMSA has a long history of engagement in technical capacity-building, particularly in the Asia and Pacific Region, and actively supports partnerships in the international maritime community to transfer skills and knowledge. Australia is also a significant participant in IMO’s Technical Co-operation Committee.

2012 IMO Bravery Award to go to Canadian and Chilean rescuers

The 2012 IMO Award for Exceptional Bravery at Sea will go to members of rescue crews from Canada and Chile for their actions in saving the lives of persons in distress at sea.

The IMO Council has decided that the award will go to Sergeant Janick Gilbert (posthumously), Master Corporal Max Lahaye-Lemay and Master Corporal Marco Journeyman, crew members of the Royal Canadian Air Force’s 424 (Transport and Rescue) Squadron, nominated by the Government of Canada; and to Able Seaman César Flores Flores, a rescue swimmer in the aerial detachment of the Chilean Navy, nominated by the Government of Chile.

Sergeant Janick Gilbert (posthumously), Master Corporal Max Lahaye-Lemay and Master Corporal Marco Journeyman were nominated for saving the lives of two Inuit hunters, who were stranded in an open boat in icy waters near Igloolik, Nunavut, in freezing temperatures, strong winds and 20 to 30 foot (six to nine metre) swells, during an operation that lasted five hours, in October 2011.

Able Seaman César Flores Flores was selected for his role as rescue swimmer in the operation to rescue the crew of the motor launch Rosita V, undertaken by the Chilean Navy aerial detachment from Puerto Montt, Fifth Naval Zone, at Locos islet, in extremely dangerous, stormy conditions.

The IMO Council unanimously endorsed the decision of a Panel of Judges that these were the worthy recipients of the Bravery Award for 2012, from a total of 40 nominations from 15 Member States and one non-governmental organization in consultative status with IMO that were received. The Council also decided that, of the other nominees or groups of nominees, three should receive Certificates of Commendation and nine, Letters of Commendation.

The Awards ceremony will take place at IMO Headquarters, on Monday, 26 November 2012, at the end of the first day of the ninety-first session of the Maritime Safety Committee (MSC 91).
On 25 June 2012, the international Day of the Seafarer, IMO asked people around the world to use social networks to highlight just how important seafarers are to everyone on the planet, as they transport, all over the world, the vital items, commodities and components on which we all rely in our daily lives.

In a message to mark the occasion, IMO Secretary-General Koji Sekimizu said, “On the Day of the Seafarer, let us pay tribute to the world’s 1.5 million seafarers for the unique and all-too-often overlooked contribution they make to the well-being of all of us. Let us take the opportunity to remember all those things that came by sea and which we could not live without. And, most importantly, let all of us make this the occasion on which we say ‘Thank you, seafarers’.”

In his message, Mr. Sekimizu recognized the sometimes harsh conditions that seafarers face, and encouraged shipowners and States to provide good facilities for crew and to promote fair treatment of seafarers.

“As we thank today’s seafarers, it is worthy of note that, to meet the growing demands of the world trade and the needs of the shipping and related industries, some 20,000 additional trained seafarers are required every year. To this end, in recognition of the vital role those seafarers will continue to play, I urge shipowners to meet their aspirations through providing comfortable accommodation, access to the internet and other facilities that we all take for granted ashore in the 21st century. At the same time, flag States and port States should promote their fair treatment and training providers and educational institutes should ensure that young persons are trained effectively so that they can perform well on board ships,” he said.

“My final message is to all young persons on the verge of choosing a future career to seriously consider seafaring, as even today it provides the chance to see the world and get paid for doing so! It also provides for a fulfilling and rewarding professional career either as a lifelong seafarer or as a springboard for related professional jobs in the maritime industries ashore,” Mr. Sekimizu added.

UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon also highlighted the Day of the Seafarer, with a special message in which he drew attention to the threat of piracy that seafarers face in high-risk areas.

“I have made addressing this complex problem a priority in the UN’s action agenda for the coming five years. United Nations agencies, including IMO, have achieved real progress by working with partners to combat piracy. But we must do more to offer solutions that include security, deterrence and alternative livelihoods. At the same time, we must recognize the outstanding courage of seafarers who continue their work amidst formidable peril,” he said.

Mr Ban also acknowledged the contributions that seafarers have made in significantly improving the shipping industry’s environmental performance.

“On this Day of the Seafarer, let us celebrate the brave women and men, from master to deck hand, from sandy shores to the deepest ocean blue, from all corners of the world, who make it possible for the shipping industry to underpin our global economy and foster greater progress for all,” Mr. Ban said.

IMO has undertaken a field mission to Zanzibar, United Republic of Tanzania, following the accident in July 2012 involving the passenger ferry Skagit, in which at least 73 people lost their lives and many more are still missing.

William Azuh, head of IMO’s Africa (Anglophone) Section in the Organization’s Technical Cooperation Division, met the President of Zanzibar, the Honourable Dr Mohammed Shein, to pass on the Organization’s condolences and to explore ways in which IMO could assist Zanzibar to prevent such accidents from occurring in the future.

A number of areas in which IMO could provide technical assistance were identified, including:

- an urgent update and drafting of safety regulations for the operation of domestic passenger ferries and small vessels for Zanzibar
- organization of a workshop for passenger ferry inspectors and operators
- holding a sensitization seminar for senior government officials in the Ministry of Transport, Maritime Authority and other relevant stakeholders.

IMO will now prepare to field missions to Zanzibar in respect of those requests for assistance.
IMO reaffirms commitment to sustainable maritime development at Rio+20

IMO has reaffirmed its commitment to supporting sustainable maritime development, during a side-event organized by IMO on 20 June at the Rio+20 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

Presenting his vision at the panel discussion on “Sustainable Maritime Development – Contribution of Maritime Transport to Green Growth and Inclusive Development”, IMO Secretary-General Koji Sekimizu said that the promotion of sustainable shipping and sustainable maritime development would be one of the major priorities of his tenure as IMO Secretary-General.

“The development and implementation, through IMO, of global standards covering maritime safety, environmental protection, maritime security and the facilitation of maritime traffic, will underpin green and sustainable shipping and confirm IMO’s ability to provide the appropriate institutional framework for sustainable maritime development,” he added.

World Maritime Day theme for 2013 reflects Rio+20 concerns

The IMO Council has endorsed a proposal by Secretary-General Koji Sekimizu to adopt “Sustainable Development: IMO’s contribution beyond Rio+20” as the World Maritime Day theme for 2013.

The theme was chosen in order to focus IMO’s efforts during 2013 on the commitments made at the UN Conference on Sustainable Development, better known as Rio+20, held from 20 to 22 June in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

Addressing the IMO Council, meeting for its 108th session in London, Mr. Sekimizu said that IMO had renewed its commitment to sustainable maritime development at Rio+20.

“The theme for 2013 had been selected, “to focus our efforts next year on giving true meaning and impetus to the commitments to be made at the Rio+20 Conference,” Mr. Sekimizu said.

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“The development and implementation, through IMO, of global standards covering maritime safety, environmental protection, maritime security and the facilitation of maritime traffic, will underpin green and sustainable shipping and confirm IMO’s ability to provide the appropriate institutional framework for sustainable maritime development,” he added.
IMO launches ‘Bookshelf’ CD

A new CD from IMO Publishing includes all IMO publications in electronic format.

Suitable for use on board ship, the IMO Bookshelf includes all titles in English (and some in French and Spanish) in e-reader format. Once the IMO Bookshelf and free e-reader software have been installed on a PC, the entire library can be searched; titles can then be purchased individually and unlocked.

The IMO Bookshelf is compiled in a similar manner to electronic charts, where all charts are available in locked form and can be unlocked as required. Users can gain access to IMO titles anywhere in the world at any time of the day or night.

Major titles such as SOLAS, MARPOL, the IAMSAR Manual, the GMDSS Handbook, Ships’ Routeing and the IMDG Code are included. All are exact copies of the printed book and comply with the IMO requirements on carriage of publications on board ships (MSC-MEPC.2/Circ.2, 1 June 2006): “The publications may be carried in the form of electronic media such as CD-ROM in lieu of hard copies. Acceptable publications in electronic form should be those issued by IMO or an Administration or a body authorized by an Administration to ensure correctness of their contents and to safeguard against illegal copying.”

Typically, a flag State will have similar requirements for the acceptance of publications in electronic format.

The IMO Bookshelf uses the EBK format adopted by industry organizations such as OCIMF, INTERTANKO, SIGTTO and the International Chamber of Shipping. It was created in partnership with Witherby Seamanship, which has been involved in producing, protecting and publishing e-books for more than 10 years.

The IMO Bookshelf CD was specifically developed for the efficient control and management of technical and regulatory publications on board ships. All titles have been tagged, and precise regulations or guidance can be found in seconds. Users of the CD have access to an additional search functionality which returns a small excerpt of text from any relevant IMO title, whether unlocked or not, and provides the opportunity to purchase the right titles to meet the immediate need. The product, including the e-reader software, may also be downloaded. The e-reader software is for Windows use: Mac users will need to use a Windows emulator in order to view the files.

The IMO Bookshelf is suitable for shipowners, operators and management companies and complements many other electronic products, such as the digital chart corrections and digital regulations that ships may already be using. The IMO Bookshelf accommodates synchronization, to obtain updates such as errata or free material.

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Each e-reader title requires activation and is locked to one computer. All licence codes can be purchased from IMO distributors (www.imo.org/publications/distributors).

Former Secretary-General to get 2011 International Maritime Prize

The IMO Council has unanimously agreed to award the prestigious International Maritime Prize for 2011 to Mr. E.E. Mitropoulos, Secretary-General Emeritus of IMO, Secretary-General of the Organization from 2004 to 2011, for his significant contribution to the work of IMO during a long and distinguished career with the Organization.

In nominating his candidature, the Government of Greece drew attention to Mr. Mitropoulos’s many achievements, which have resulted in increased worldwide recognition of IMO’s organizational effectiveness and efficiency as a UN body. The nomination highlighted his strong and insistent advocacy of a united Membership and the adoption of an effective global maritime safety and security culture, environmental consciousness and corporate responsibility, noting in particular the efforts made by the Organization under his leadership to assist in the prevention and suppression of acts of piracy and armed robbery against ships, including the adoption of guidance to shipowners, ship operators, shipmasters and crew, as well as recommendations to Governments.

The nomination also stressed Mr. Mitropoulos’s advocacy and foresight in working towards the protection of the environment, whether marine or atmospheric; enhancing maritime security; improving the efficiency of maritime traffic; ensuring the consideration of relevant legal matters and fostering and promoting global acceptance and uniform, effective implementation and enforcement of IMO’s treaty instruments, including through the provision of technical assistance to developing countries, as well as the establishment of a scheme for auditing IMO Member States’ maritime Administrations.

International Maritime Prize

The International Maritime Prize is awarded annually by IMO to the individual or organization judged to have made the most significant contribution to the work and objectives of IMO. It consists of a sculpture in the form of a dolphin and includes a financial award, upon submission of a paper written on a subject relevant to IMO.

The prize will be presented to Mr. Mitropoulos on 27 November 2012.
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