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**IMPLEMENTATION OF THE IMO GUIDELINES ON SHIP RECYCLING
(Assembly resolution A.962(23))**

“Gas-free-for-hot-work” certification

1 The Assembly of the International Maritime Organization adopted on 5 December 2003, by resolution A.962(23), the IMO Guidelines on Ship Recycling with the aim of providing guidance to shipowners, ship recycling facilities, flag and recycling States and other involved stakeholders as to “best practice”, which takes into account the ship recycling process throughout the life cycle of the ship. This resolution invited Governments to take urgent action to apply the Guidelines, including the dissemination thereof to the shipping and ship recycling industries.

2 In considering the development of a new legally binding instrument on ship recycling, the Marine Environment Protection Committee, at its fifty-third session (18 to 22 July 2005), recognized that the progress towards the development of mandatory requirements should not shift the attention of the involved stakeholders away from the important work that is needed for the implementation of the IMO Guidelines on Ship Recycling.

3 MEPC 53, in noting that:

- .1 reports of explosions at recycling facilities during cutting operations are all too frequent with life threatening consequences;
- .2 the requirement for a “gas-free-for-hot-work” certification is the single measure with the greatest impact on safety in recycling facilities and that its implementation would greatly contribute to reducing the safety risks involved in recycling operations;
- .3 the implementation of the amendments to MARPOL Annex I, adopted by resolution MEPC.111(50) (amendments to regulation 13G and a new regulation 13H), is expected to increase the number of vessels to be recycled in the near future;
- .4 the estimated increase in the recycling of single hull oil tankers should not necessarily increase the environmental and safety risks involved;

agreed to urge all the involved parties to take appropriate action to implement the IMO Guidelines on Ship Recycling giving particular emphasis to the “gas-free-for-hot-work” certification. In this respect, MEPC 53 agreed to the following recommendations and guidance.

4 Recycling States are urged to introduce mandatory requirements on procedures to be followed regarding “gas-free-for-hot-work” certification in ship recycling operations and ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place to monitor and enforce these requirements.

5 Administrations are urged to provide appropriate guidance to ships flying their flag on the issue of “gas-free-for-hot-work” certification in connection with ship recycling.

6 Shipowners and recycling facilities are urged to arrange, in connection with the delivery of a ship at a recycling facility, for a “gas-free-for-hot-work” certification, to be carried out by a relevant and appropriate body, covering enclosed spaces, as defined in paragraph 2.1 of the Annex to Assembly resolution A.864(20), and, in particular, cargo spaces on board oil tankers. A general arrangement plan showing those enclosed spaces that are not certified as “gas-free-for-hot-work” should be provided.

7 It is recognized that any such certification has time limitations and, therefore, it is essential that recycling facilities ensure the continued monitoring of enclosed spaces during the recycling process, in accordance with proper procedures, to maintain safe working conditions. Shipowners are urged to enter into contracts with recycling facilities with the ability to maintain and monitor ships in “gas-free-for-hot-work” condition during the whole process of ship recycling.

8 The detailed arrangements for ensuring continuity of “gas-free-for-hot-work” certification should be included in the ship recycling plan to be developed by the recycling facility in consultation with the shipowner, in accordance with the Guidelines for the development of the ship recycling plan, which have been circulated by means of MEPC/Circ.419.

9 Recycling facilities are urged to keep their workers informed, during the recycling process, of the “gas-free-for-hot-work” status of the enclosed spaces. This information should be provided by suitable means in the working language of the workers.

10 Guidance with regard to safe working practices and procedures for hot work on board ships is provided in circular MSC/Circ.1084 “Principles for hot work on board all types of ships”. Further guidance on the safety measures related to this procedure is set out in the current edition of the “International Safety Guide for Oil Tankers and Terminals (ISGOTT)” (ICS, OCIMF and IAPH).

11 Member Governments are invited to bring this circular to the attention of all parties concerned.