

News from IMO

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The paper presents current work of selected IMO bodies in the period preceding the publication of this issue of ToMs. The outcome of IMO bodies responsible for safety and environment protection has been covered, aiming at informing seafarers and shipping industry at large on the decisions taken, as well as on the IMO instruments and/or their amendments that have entered into force.

KEY WORDS

- ~ IMO
- ~ Safety
- ~ Environment protection

INTRODUCTION

Since the last issue of ToMS, the Maritime Environment Protection Committee (MEPC) met at the Organization's London Headquarters for its 66th session from 31 March to 4 April 2014, and the Maritime Safety Committee (MSC) held its 93rd session from 14 to 23 May 2014. Both committees made significant progress in various areas of their work. Their selected decisions and outcome of discussions have been presented in this review. Complete information is available to the public in the reports of the MEPC and MSC Committees on the Organization's IMODOCS website (<http://docs.imo.org/>).

66th session of the Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC 66)

Amendment on implementation date for Tier III adopted

The MEPC adopted amendments to MARPOL Annex VI, regulation 13, on Nitrogen Oxides (NO_x), concerning the date for the implementation of "Tier III" standards within emission control areas (ECAs). The amendments provide for the Tier III NO_x standards to be applied to a marine diesel engine that is installed on a ship constructed on or after 1 January 2016 and which operates in the North American Emission Control Area or the U.S. Caribbean Sea Emission Control Area that are designated for the control of NO_x emissions. In addition, the Tier III requirements would apply to installed marine diesel engines when operated in other emission control areas which might be designated in the future for Tier III NO_x control. The amendments are expected to enter into force on 1 September 2015.

NOx control requirements apply to installed marine diesel engines of over 130 kW output power, and different levels (Tiers) of control apply based on the ship construction date. Outside emission control areas designated for NOx control, “Tier II” controls, required for marine diesel engines installed on ships constructed on or after 1 January 2011, apply.

Other amendments adopted

- Amendments to MARPOL Annex I, the Code for the Construction and Equipment of Ships carrying Dangerous Chemicals in Bulk (BCH Code) and the International Code for the Construction and Equipment of Ships Carrying Dangerous Chemicals in Bulk (IBC Code), on mandatory carriage requirements for a stability instrument for oil tankers and chemical tankers, expected to enter into force on 1 January 2016;
- Amendments to MARPOL Annex VI concerning the extension of the application of the Energy Efficiency Design Index (EEDI) to LNG carriers, ro-ro cargo ships (vehicle carriers), ro-ro cargo ships, ro-ro passenger ships and cruise passenger ships with non-conventional propulsion; and to exempt of ships not propelled by mechanical means and independently operating cargo ships with ice-breaking capability, expected to enter into force on 1 September 2015.

Draft Polar Code environmental provisions reviewed

The MEPC reviewed the environmental requirements under the proposed draft mandatory International Code for ships operating in polar waters (Polar Code) and considered the proposed draft amendments to MARPOL to make the Polar Code mandatory. The draft Polar Code covers the full range of design, construction, equipment, operational, training, search and rescue and environmental protection matters relevant to ships operating in the inhospitable waters surrounding the two poles. Environmental provisions include requirements covering prevention of oil pollution; prevention of pollution from noxious liquid substances from ships; prevention of pollution by sewage from ships; and prevention of pollution by discharge of garbage from ships.

Energy-efficiency measures for ships considered

The MEPC continued its work on further developing guidelines to support the uniform implementation of the regulations on energy-efficiency for ships that entered into force on 1 January 2013, and adopted the 2014 Guidelines on the Method of Calculation of the Attained Energy Efficiency Design Index (EEDI), applicable to new ships.

NOX Technical Code guidelines adopted

The MEPC adopted amendments to the NOx Technical Code, 2008, concerning the use of dual-fuel engines, as well as the 2014 Guidelines in respect of the information to be submitted by an Administration to the Organization covering the certification of an Approved Method as required under regulation 13.7.1 of MARPOL Annex VI (relating to “Marine Diesel Engines Installed on a Ship Constructed Prior to 1 January 2000”); and the 2014 Guidelines on the Approved Method process, which apply to new Approved Methods notified to IMO only.

2014 shipboard incineration standard adopted

The MEPC adopted the 2014 standard specification for shipboard incinerators, which covers the design, manufacture, performance, operation and testing of incinerators intended to incinerate garbage and other shipboard wastes generated during the ship’s normal service.

Sulphur review correspondence group established

The MEPC considered the timing of the review, required under MARPOL Annex VI, regulation 14.8, on control of emissions of sulphur oxides (SOx) from ships, on the availability of compliant fuel oil to meet the requirements set out in the regulation. Following the inter-session work, the terms of reference of the study are expected to be adopted at MEPC 68 in 2015. The sulphur content (expressed in terms of % m/m – that is, by weight) of fuel oil used on board ships is required to be a maximum of 3.50% m/m (outside an Emission Control Area (ECA)), falling to 0.50% m/m on and after 1 January 2020. Depending on the outcome of a review, to be completed by 2018, as to the availability of compliant fuel oil, this requirement could be deferred to 1 January 2025.

Ballast water management systems approved

The MEPC granted Basic Approval to four, and Final Approval to two ballast water management systems that make use of Active Substances.

The MEPC also approved BWM-related guidance, including Guidance on entry or re-entry of ships into exclusive operation within water under the jurisdiction of a single Party and a revision of the GESAMP-BWWG Methodology for information gathering and conduct of work.

Guidance for port reception facility providers and users agreed

The MEPC approved consolidated guidance for port reception facility providers and users.

93rd session of the Maritime Safety Committee (MSC 93)

Polar Code and SOLAS amendments approved

The MSC approved, for consideration with a view to adoption at its November 2014 session (MSC 94), the draft new SOLAS chapter XIV "Safety measures for ships operating in polar waters", which would make mandatory the Introduction and part I-A of the Polar Code.

Mandatory audit scheme amendments adopted

The MSC completed the legal framework for the implementation of the mandatory IMO audit scheme from 2016, with the adoption of amendments to the following treaties to make mandatory the use of the IMO Instruments Implementation Code (III Code) and auditing of Parties to those treaties: SOLAS, 1974, as amended (adding a new chapter XIII); STCW, 1978, and the STCW Code; and the 1988 Load Lines Protocol), as amended.

This follows the adoption, by the IMO Assembly at its twenty-eighth session, of similar amendments to COLREG 1972, as amended, LL 1966 and TONNAGE 1969.

The Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC), at its 66th session, in April 2014, adopted similar amendments to MARPOL Annexes I through to VI.

Adoption of other amendments

The MSC also adopted, inter alia, the following amendments to SOLAS, which are expected to enter into force on 1 January 2016:

- amendments to SOLAS regulation II-1/29 on steering gear, to update the requirements relating to sea trials
- amendments to SOLAS regulations II-2/4, II-2/3, II-2/9.7 and II-2/16.3.3, to introduce mandatory requirements for inert gas systems on board new oil and chemical tankers of 8,000 dwt and above, and for ventilation systems on board new ships; together with related amendments to the International Code for Fire Safety Systems (FSS Code) on inert gas systems
- amendments to SOLAS regulation II-2/10, concerning fire protection requirements for new ships designed to carry containers on or above the weather deck
- amendments to SOLAS regulation II-2/13.4, mandating additional means of escape from machinery spaces
- new SOLAS regulation II-2/20-1 Requirement for vehicle

carriers carrying motor vehicles with compressed hydrogen or natural gas for their own propulsion.

Passenger ships safety: revised action plan agreed

The MSC agreed a revised long-term action plan on passenger ship safety, following extensive discussion. A number of matters relating to damage stability and survivability of passenger ships were referred to the Sub-Committee on Ship Design and Construction (SDC) for further work. Meanwhile, the Committee instructed the Sub-Committee on Implementation of IMO Instruments (III) to complete its consideration of the report on the grounding, in 2012, of the Costa Concordia, as a matter of priority and to bring to the attention of MSC 94 the contributing factors, issues raised/lessons learnt and observations on the human element factors involved.

Revised IGC Code adopted

The completely revised International Code for the Construction and Equipment of Ships Carrying Liquefied Gases in Bulk (the IGC Code) was adopted by the MSC, following a comprehensive five-year review, and is intended to take into account the latest advances in science and technology. It will enter into force on 1 January 2016, with an implementation/application date of 1 July 2016.

Piracy and armed robbery against ships reviewed

The MSC reviewed the latest statistics on piracy and armed robbery against ships and discussed current initiatives to suppress piracy and armed robbery, noting that the number of worldwide piracy attacks had decreased and that no SOLAS ship had been hijacked in the western Indian Ocean area since May 2012, as a welcome result of the robust actions taken by the international naval forces in the region, the shipboard measures implemented by shipping companies, masters and their crews as well as the deployment of professional security teams.

However, the Committee noted with concern the situation in the Gulf of Guinea which had not substantially improved, noting that a revised and comprehensive IMO strategy for implementing sustainable maritime security measures in west and central Africa had been developed and was being implemented.

Other issues

In connection with other issues arising from the reports of IMO sub-committees and other bodies, the MSC, inter alia:

- adopted a number of new traffic routing systems, including traffic separation schemes, as well as amendments to existing systems

- adopted performance standards for the shipborne “Beidou” satellite navigation system (BDS) receiver equipment
- approved guidance on the bridge navigational watch alarm system (BNWAS) auto function
- approved guidelines for the reactivation of the Safety Management Certificate following an operational interruption of the SMS due to lay-up over a certain period
- approved guidance on safety when transferring persons at sea.

Amendments to IMO instruments that have entered into force on 1 June 2014

- 2012 amendments to the International Code for the Construction and Equipment of Ships Carrying Dangerous Chemicals in Bulk (IBC Code) (resolutions MEPC.254(64) and MSC.340(91))

Amendments to IMO instruments that have entered into force on 1 July 2014

- Code on Noise Levels on Board Ships (under SOLAS 1974) and related 2012 amendments (chapters II-1, II-2 and III and appendix) to the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea, 1974, as amended (resolutions MSC.337(91) and MSC.338(91), respectively)
- 2012 amendments to the International Code for Fire Safety Systems (FSS Code) (resolution MSC.339(91))
- 2012 amendments to the Performance Standard for protective coatings for dedicated seawater ballast tanks in

all types of ships and double-side skin spaces of bulk carriers (resolution MSC.341(91))

- 2012 amendments to the Performance Standard for protective coatings for cargo oil tanks of crude oil tankers (resolution MSC.342(91))
- 2012 amendments to the Protocol of 1978 relating to the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea, 1974, as amended (resolution MSC.343(91))
- 2012 amendments to the Protocol of 1988 relating to the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea, 1974, as amended (resolution MSC.344(91))
- 2012 amendments to the Protocol of 1988 relating to the International Convention on Load Lines, 1966, as amended (resolution MSC.345(91))
- 2013 amendments to the International Convention for Safe Containers (CSC), 1972 (resolution MSC.355(92))

Amendments to IMO instruments that have entered into force on 1 October 2014

- 2013 amendments to the annex of
- the Protocol of 1978 relating to the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships, 1973 (amendments to Form A and Form B of Supplements to the IOPP Certificate under MARPOL Annex I) (resolution MEPC.235(65))
- 2013 amendments to the Condition Assessment Scheme under MARPOL Annex I (resolution MEPC.236(65))