

News from IMO

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This contribution presents a compilation of information on 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 readers 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

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INTRODUCTION

World Maritime Day

World Maritime Day 2017 was formally celebrated at IMO on 28 September 2017 and was marked around the world in a series of events and celebrations led by IMO from its London headquarters under the 2017 theme “Connecting Ships, Ports and People”. The aim of the 2017 theme is to focus on helping IMO Member States to develop and implement maritime strategies to invest in a joined-up, interagency approach that addresses the whole range of issues, including the facilitation of maritime transport, and increasing efficiency, navigational safety, protection of the marine environment, and maritime security. In this way, IMO will be contributing to achieving the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which are a broad response to the challenges facing the world today – increasing world population; climate change; threats to the environment; unsustainable exploitation of natural resources; threats to food security; societal threats posed by organized criminals and violent extremists; and instability leading to mixed migration. Ultimately, more efficient shipping, working in partnership with a port sector supported by governments, will be a major driver towards global stability and sustainable development for the good of all people.

Summary

Selected decisions and outcome of 98th session of the Maritime Safety Committee (MSC), which was held in London at the IMO Headquarters from 7 to 16 June 2017, and 71th session of the Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC), which met from 3 to 7 July 2017, have been outlined in this review, along with the IMO instruments and their amendments that entered into force since the last issue of ToMS.

Read more

More information and highlights on the work of IMO can be found on its website (<http://www.imo.org>), including press briefings and meeting summaries available in "Media Centre" area.

IMO programme of meetings, meeting documents and circulars are publicly available on the Organization's IMODOCS website (<https://docs.imo.org>).

Most of the IMO's technical and operational data, some of which is available to the public, is stored in the Global Integrated Shipping Information System (GISIS) (<https://gis.imo.org>).

98TH SESSION OF THE MARITIME SAFETY COMMITTEE (MSC 98)

Scoping exercise on autonomous vessels put on agenda

The MSC agreed to include the issue of marine autonomous surface ships on its agenda. This will be in the form of a scoping exercise to determine how the safe, secure and environmentally sound operation of Maritime Autonomous Surface Ships (MASS) may be introduced in IMO instruments. The MSC recognized that IMO should take a proactive and leading role, given the rapid technological developments relating to the introduction of commercially operated ships in autonomous/unmanned mode. The scoping exercise is seen as a starting point and is expected to touch on an extensive range of issues, including the human element, safety, security, interactions with ports, pilotage, responses to incidents and protection of the marine environment. It is anticipated that the work would take place over four MSC sessions, through to mid-2020.

Adoption of passenger ship stability amendments

The MSC adopted a set of amendments to SOLAS chapter II-1, with an expected entry into force 1 January 2020, relating to subdivision and damage stability. The amendments were developed following a substantive review of SOLAS chapter II-1, focusing in particular on new passenger ships. The review has taken into account recommendations arising from the investigation into the 2012 Costa Concordia incident.

Other amendments adopted by MSC

SOLAS amendments (Expected entry into force 1 January 2020)

- Amendments to SOLAS regulation II-2/3.56, relating to the definition of vehicle carrier and draft new SOLAS regulation II-2/20.2 on fire safety requirements for cargo spaces containing vehicles with fuel in their tanks for their own propulsion,

specifically vehicles which do not use their own propulsion within the cargo space.

- Amendments to SOLAS regulation II-2/9.4.1.3 to clarify the requirements for fire integrity of windows on passenger ships carrying not more than 36 passengers and on special purpose ships with more than 60 (but no more than 240) persons on board.

- Amendments to SOLAS regulations III/1.4, III/30 and III/37 on damage control drills for passenger ships, to require damage control drills to take place on all passenger ships from 2020.

IMSBC Code

- The 2017 set of draft amendments (04-17) to the International Maritime Solid Bulk Cargoes Code (IMSBC Code), to update requirements for a number of cargoes, was adopted.

HSC Code

- Amendments to the 1994 and 2000 High-Speed Craft (HSC) Codes, clarifying the exemption applicable to certain smaller vessels from the requirement to carry a rescue boat, provided that minimum requirements for carrying survival craft are met and provided that a person can be rescued from the water in a horizontal or near horizontal body position.

LSA Code

- Amendments to the International Life-saving Appliances (LSA) Code, chapter VI, section 6.1 relating to the proof load tests and safety factors that launching appliances and their elements have to withstand. Also related amendments to the Revised Recommendation on testing of life-saving appliances (resolution MSC.81(70)).

MODU Code

- Amendments to the Code for the Construction and Equipment of Mobile Offshore Drilling Units, 2009 (2009 MODU Code) to update and amend the 2009 MODU Code, taking into account recommendations arising from the investigation into the explosion, fire and sinking of the Deepwater Horizon in the Gulf of Mexico, in April 2010. Key revisions concern machinery and electrical installations in hazardous areas, fire safety and life-saving appliances and equipment.

Cyber risk management resolution adopted

The MSC adopted a resolution on Maritime cyber risk management in safety management systems. The resolution reminds stakeholders that the mandatory International Safety Management (ISM) Code includes a requirement for all identified risks to ships, personnel and the environment to be assessed and for appropriate safeguards to be established. The resolution encourages Administrations to ensure that cyber risks are appropriately addressed in safety management systems no later than the first annual verification of the company's Document of Compliance after 1 January 2021.

Piracy and armed robbery against ships

The MSC was updated on the latest statistics concerning piracy and armed robbery against ships, based on incidents reported to IMO. A total of 221 piracy and armed robbery incidents occurred worldwide in 2016, a fall of about 27% compared to 303 incidents reported in 2015, although the Committee noted with concern that incidents in some areas of the world had increased or piracy activity was still active.

Adoption of ships routing systems

The MSC adopted a number of new and amended ships' routing measures, including the establishment of a new area to be avoided (ATBA) as an associated protective measure for the "Tubbataha Reefs Natural Park Particularly Sensitive Sea Area (PSSA) in the Sulu Sea" (the Philippines) and the recommended route "Off the western coast of Izu O Shima Island" (Japan).

Implementation of E-navigation strategy and operational safety

The MSC adopted and approved a number of new and revised performance standards and guidelines related to operational safety, including those to implement the e-navigation strategy.

The MSC also adopted amendments to the revised guidelines and criteria for ship reporting systems (resolution MSC.43(64)), addressing mandatory ship reporting systems established in accordance with SOLAS regulation V/11. The revisions update the resolution and encourage the use and recognition of automated electronic means of ship reporting.

Goal-based standards verification audit completed

The MSC confirmed that the initial verification audit of ship construction rules for oil tankers and bulk carriers submitted

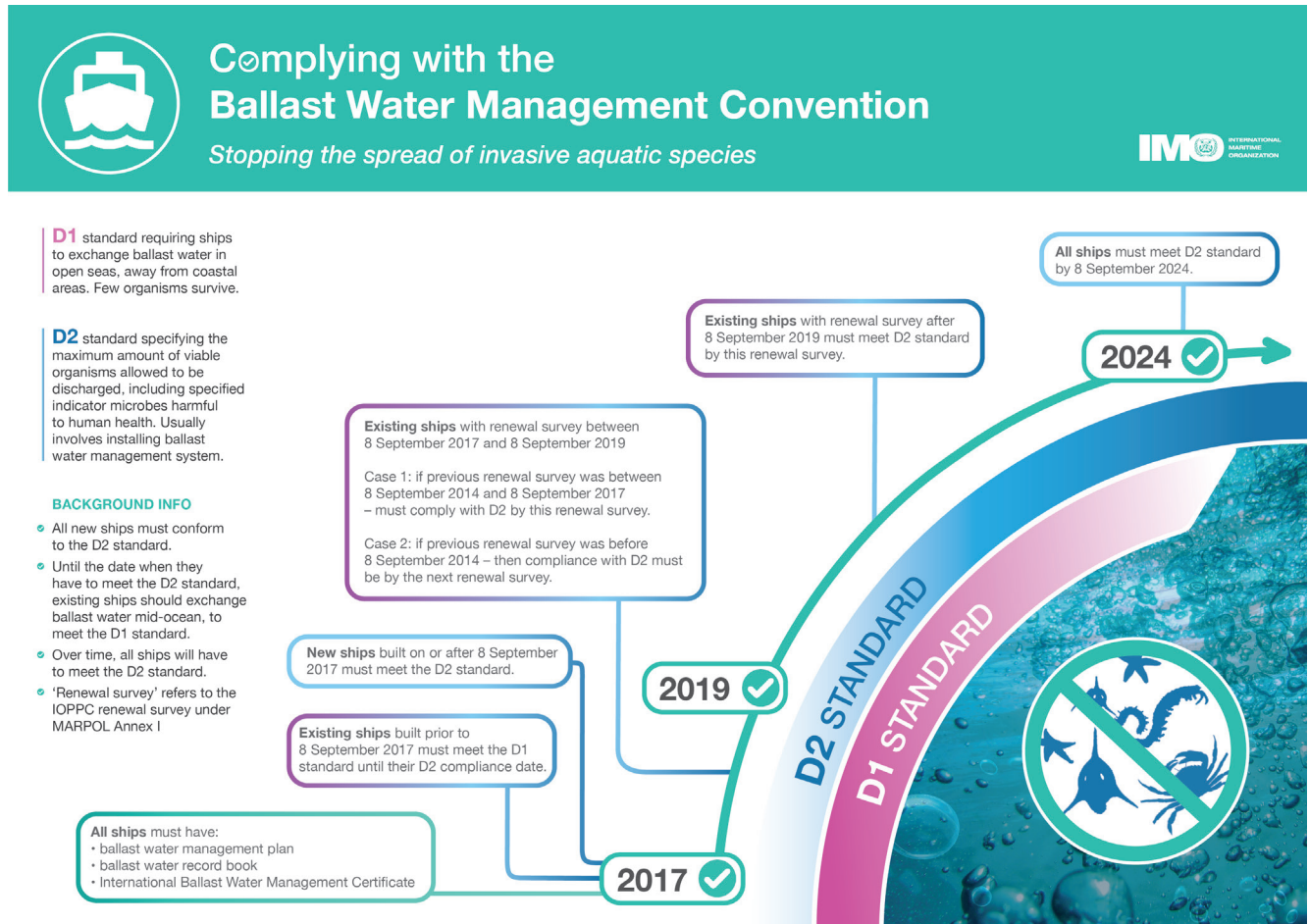


Figure 1.

Source: Image provided by courtesy of the International Maritime Organization (IMO).

by 12 classification societies had been successfully completed, following rectification of the non-conformities reported, as instructed by MSC 96.

GMDSS modernization plan

The MSC approved the Modernization Plan of the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS), prepared by the Sub-Committee on Navigation, Communications and Search and Rescue (NCSR). The plan envisages the development of amendments to SOLAS and related instruments for approval in 2021 and their adoption in 2022, with entry into force in 2024.

71TH SESSION OF THE MARINE ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION COMMITTEE (MEPC 70)

Ballast Water Management Convention clarity

The MEPC agreed a practical and pragmatic implementation schedule for ships to comply with the IMO Ballast Water Management (BWM) Convention, which aims to stem the transfer of potentially invasive species in ships' ballast water.

The treaty entered into force on 8 September 2017 and, as at 15 September, the BWM Convention has been ratified by more than 60 countries, representing more than 70% of world merchant shipping tonnage.

From the date of entry into force, ships are required to manage their ballast water to avoid the transfer of potentially invasive species. All ships are required to have a ballast water management plan and keep a ballast water record book. Ships will be required to manage their ballast water to meet the so-called D-1 standard or D-2 standard.

Draft amendments to the treaty approved by the MEPC clarify when ships must comply with the requirement to meet the D-2 standard and are expected to be adopted at the next MEPC session (MEPC 72 in April 2018). The infographics "Complying with the Ballast Water Management Convention" shows the important milestones in compliance with the Convention.

The MEPC adopted a resolution which resolves that Parties to the BWM Convention should implement the schedule for compliance outlined in the draft amendments, ahead of their adoption and entry into force.

MEPC also made progress in other work focusing on implementation of the BWM treaty, with the adoption and approval of a number of related documents.

Implementation of the global sulphur limit - scope of work agreed

The MEPC agreed the scope of work needed to achieve consistent implementation of the 0.50% m/m global limit of the

sulphur content of ships' fuel oil, which will come into effect from 1 January 2020. The 0.50% limit is prescribed in regulation 14.1.3 of MARPOL Annex VI.

Reduction of greenhouse gas emissions from ships

The MEPC continued to build on the solid work the Organization has undertaken to address greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from international shipping, with work on track for the adoption of an initial IMO strategy on the reduction of GHG emissions from ships in 2018, in accordance with a Roadmap approved at MEPC 70.

Energy efficiency measures for ships

Energy-efficiency design standards for new ships and associated operational energy-efficiency measures for existing ships became mandatory in 2013, with the entry into force of relevant amendments to MARPOL Annex VI. The Committee was informed that nearly 2,500 new ocean-going ships have been certified as complying with the energy efficiency standards.

In other work related to the implementation of the mandatory energy efficiency measures in MARPOL Annex VI, the MEPC adopted a number of related documents.

Oil pollution model courses approved

Updated IMO Model Courses on Oil Pollution Preparedness, Response and Cooperation (OPRC Model Training Courses) were approved by the MEPC. The OPRC model training courses have been revised to provide up-to-date guidance for preparedness and response to marine oil spills.

IMO instruments and their amendments that entered into force

The following treaties and/or their amendments entered into force **on 8 September 2017**:

- **Ballast Water Management Convention**; and
- **2016 amendments to MARPOL**, including amendments to Annex II – Appendix I – Abbreviated legend of the revised GESAMP hazard evaluation procedure (MEPC.270(69)); amendments to regulation 13 of MARPOL Annex VI – Record requirements for operational compliance with NOX Tier III emission control areas (MEPC.271(69)); amendments to the Technical Code on Control of emission of nitrogen oxides from marine diesel engines (Testing of gas-fuelled and dual fuel engines) (MEPC.272(69)); and amendments to MARPOL Annex IV – Amendments to regulations 1 and 11 concerning the Baltic Sea Special Area and to the appendix concerning the form of the International Sewage Pollution Prevention Certificate (MEPC.274(69)).