THE 107th SESSION OF IMO's MARITIME SAFETY COMMITTEE (MSC). MEETING SUMMARY
The 107th session of the IMO’s Maritime Safety Committee (MSC 107) was held in London, UK, from 31st May to 09th June 2023. This notice is prepared based on information available about the MSC 107 meeting in the IMO website.

### Adoption of Amendments

#### SOLAS amendments

Safety of onboard lifting appliances and anchor handling winches

MSC adopted a new SOLAS regulation II-1/3-13 that covers requirements for the application, design and construction, operation, inspection, testing and maintenance of onboard lifting appliances and anchor handling winches. Two related sets of draft guidelines for lifting appliances and anchor handling winches were approved, to support the implementation of the new SOLAS regulation.

**Entry into force:** The regulation is expected to enter into force on 1 January 2026.

#### International Life-Saving Appliance (LSA) Code

MSC adopted amendments to the LSA Code related to ventilation requirements for totally enclosed lifeboats. The provisions should be applied to such lifeboats installed on or after 1 January 2029.

In this connection, MSC adopted associated amendments to the Revised recommendation on testing of life-saving appliances (resolution MSC.81(70)) and approved circulars on: Revised standardized life-saving appliance evaluation and test report forms (survival craft); and Revised standardized life-saving appliance evaluation and test report forms (personal life-saving appliances).

**Entry into force:** The amendments are expected to enter into force on 1 January 2026.

#### International Maritime Solid Bulk Cargoes (IMSBC) Code amendments

MSC adopted the latest set of amendments to the International Maritime Solid Bulk Cargoes (IMSBC) Code, following finalization by the Editorial & Technical Group. As usual, these amendments were adopted in the form of a consolidated version of the whole IMSBC Code.
The MSC also approved related circulars on: Guidelines for the submission of information and completion of the format for the properties of cargoes not listed in the International Maritime Solid Bulk Cargoes (IMSBC) Code and their conditions of carriage; Guidelines for developing and approving procedures for sampling, testing and controlling the moisture content for solid bulk cargoes which may liquefy or undergo dynamic separation; and Lists of solid bulk cargoes for which a fixed gas fire-extinguishing system may be exempted or for which a fixed gas fire-extinguishing system is ineffective.

MSC made further progress on the development of a non-mandatory goal-based instrument regulating the operation of maritime autonomous surface ships (MASS), expected to be adopted by 2025. A MASS Working Group was established to progress the work on the MASS Code and to identify issues that are relevant to instruments under the purview of the Legal and Facilitation Committee, to be considered by the Joint MSC/LEG/FAL Working Group on MASS, which was established as a cross-cutting mechanism to address common issues identified by the regulatory scoping exercises for the use of MASS conducted by the Maritime Safety, Legal and Facilitation Committees. The MSC noted, in particular, the common position of the Group on training, certification and competency requirements, namely that:
1. When there are seafarers on a MASS, STCW applies to them.
2. However, when remote operators and masters at ROC are not on board a ship, STCW does not apply to those persons, and the MASS Code will be required to address all training, certification and competency requirements with the STCW requirements should be considered as a basis.
3. There are certain principles (e.g. regarding watchkeeping) in STCW, when considering autonomy and remote operation, that should be addressed in the MASS Code, irrespective of the application of STCW.

Entry into force: The amendments will enter into force on 1 January 2025, with voluntary application from 1 January 2024.

Maritime autonomous surface ships (MASS)
The Working Group on Goal-based New Ship Construction Standards (GBS) considered examples of functional requirements (FRs) for the MASS Code and provided some observations and recommendations for the MASS Working Group, in particular, that an appropriate hazard identification (HAZID) study should be conducted to provide the necessary tool for identifying relevant hazards, mitigating functions, and expected performances (EPs) and associated functional requirements (FRs). The Joint MSC/LEG/FAL Working Group on MASS has developed a table – intended as a living document – to identify preferred options for addressing common issues, such as the role, responsibilities competencies required of the master and crew for MASS;

MSC is coordinating with the Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC) on the transition to low and zero-carbon fuels to meet the obligation to tackle climate change, in particular making sure that the safety aspects of any proposed measures are thoroughly considered.

A Symposium on “Making headway on the IMO MASS Code”, co-sponsored by IMO and the Republic of Korea, was held on 30 May 2023, i.e., the day before MSC 107 commenced.

The MSC approved joint MSC-MEPC guidelines for sampling procedures for oil fuel under both the SOLAS and MARPOL Conventions, subject to concurrent approval by MEPC. The primary objective of the Guidelines is to establish an agreed method to obtain a representative sample of the oil fuel for delivered for use on board ships for combustion purposes. The basis for these Guidelines is regulation 18.5 of Annex VI to MARPOL 73/78, as amended by resolution MEPC.176(58), which provides that details of fuel oil for combustion purposes delivered to, and used on board the ship, shall be recorded by means of a bunker delivery note which shall be accompanied by a representative sample of the fuel oil delivered. Additional aspects to assist in the implementation of the flashpoint related regulations in SOLAS II-2 regulation 4, especially for confirming cases where oil fuel not complying with SOLAS II-2/4.2.1 are included in the draft guidelines.

The MSC approved draft amendments to SOLAS regulation II-2/4 related to oil fuel parameters other than flashpoint, with a view for subsequent adoption. A new generic provision is added after existing paragraph 2.1.8: "Oil fuel delivered to and used on board ships shall not jeopardize the safety of ships or adversely affect the performance of the machinery or be harmful to personnel."
MSC approved Interim Guidelines for the safety of ships using liquefied petroleum gas (LPG). The basic philosophy of these Interim Guidelines is to provide provisions for the arrangement, installation, control and monitoring of machinery, equipment and systems using LPG as fuel to minimize the risk to the ship, its crew and the environment, having regard to the nature of the fuels involved.

The guidelines were developed by the CCC Sub-Committee, as part of the important work being carried out by the Sub-Committee in the context of shipping’s need for new fuels and propulsion systems to meet decarbonization ambitions set out in the Initial IMO GHG Strategy.

Matters related to innovative types of fuel are considered under the CCC agenda item on the International Code of Safety for Ships using Gases or other Low-flashpoint Fuels (IGF Code) and development of guidelines for alternative fuels and related technologies. The IGF Code, which entered into force in 2017, aims to minimize the risk to ships, their crews and the environment, given the nature of the fuels involved. The Code initially focused on liquefied natural gas (LNG), but work is now underway to also consider alternative fuel types.

Interim guidelines for the safety of ships using methyl/ethyl alcohol as fuel have already been developed by the Sub-Committee and were approved by MSC in 2020 (MSC.1/Circ.1621). Interim guidelines for ships using fuel cells were approved by MSC 105 in April 2022 (MSC.1/Circ.1647).

The MSC approved Interim guidelines on safe operation of onshore power supply service in port for ships engaged on international voyages.

The MSC considered proposals for a new output to deliver a framework for the safe operation of new technologies and alternative fuels aimed at reducing GHG emissions from ships, to support the safe delivery of IMO’s GHG Strategy.

Having noted the overwhelming support for the proposal, the MSC agreed to new output on “Development of a safety regulatory framework to support the reduction of GHG emissions from ships using new technologies and alternative fuels”, to be added to the MSC agenda, starting with MSC 108.

A correspondence group was established to: identify and update a list of fuels and technologies which will assist international shipping to support the reduction of GHG emissions from ships using new technologies and alternative fuels; conduct an assessment for each identified fuels and new technologies (e.g. the state of knowledge of risks and the technical considerations of solutions, Hazards and Risks, Risk Control Measures) in relation to persons, ships (new built and converted) and applicable operations for the same, from e.g. projects applying alternative design and approval process where permitted; based on the outcomes, develop a record for safety obstacles and gaps in the current IMO instruments that may impede the use of the alternative fuel or new technology; and submit a written report to MSC 108.
Following a proposal by several Member States, MSC adopted a resolution on "Strengthening measures for ensuring the safety of international shipping". The resolution notes that the IMO Council, at its 128th session, strongly condemned the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK)’s recent missile launches without proper prior notification, aside from the incompatibility of ballistic missile launches with the relevant UN Security Council resolutions, which seriously threatened the safety of international shipping.

The resolution:
1. Urgently calls upon the DPRK to comply strictly with SOLAS regulation V/4, the recommendations contained in resolution A.706(17), as amended, on World-wide Navigational Warning Service (in particular, paragraph 4.2.1.3.13 of annex 1 thereto) and relevant circulars, that Member States should provide prior notification via transmission as NAVAREA warning;
2. Urgently calls upon the DPRK to cease unlawful and unannounced ballistic missile launches across international shipping lanes;
3. Requests the Secretary-General to take appropriate and practicable actions to establish close and cooperative relationships with relevant other international organizations including the International Civil Aviation Organization, which face the common serious challenges posed by the afore-said DPRK missile launches endangering the safety of international transport, and to report an update to Member States and relevant maritime stakeholders.

MSC noted the latest update on global trends relating to piracy and armed robbery against ships. Figures based on reports submitted to the IMO show that the global number of incidents has generally continued to fall, with 131 incidents reported in 2022 compared to 172 incidents in 2021. This is attributed to the regional and international efforts to implement the Djibouti and Yaoundé Codes of Conduct and other important regional initiatives.

MSC approved, with a view to subsequent adoption, draft amendments to SOLAS chapter V with regard to the reporting of the loss of containers. Containers lost overboard present a serious hazard to navigation and safety at sea in general, in particular to recreational sailing yachts, fishing vessels and other smaller craft, as well as to the marine environment. The draft amendments on detection and reporting of lost containers developed by the CCC Sub-Committee are also relevant for the Organization’s work on addressing marine litter.
The draft amendments to SOLAS chapter V (Safety of navigation), address in particular regulation 31 (Danger messages) and would require the master of every ship involved in the loss of freight container(s) to communicate the particulars of such an incident to ships in the vicinity, to the nearest coastal State, and also to the flag State which would be required to report the incident to IMO. The draft amendments also address regulation 32 (Information required in danger messages), specifying the information to be reported, including position, number of containers, etc.

MSC approved, for subsequent adoption at MSC 108, a revision and update of the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Fishing Vessel Personnel (STCW-F), 1995. The 1995 STCW-F Convention is a binding treaty that sets certification and minimum training requirements for crews of fishing vessels with the aim to promote safety of life at sea and the protection of the marine environment, taking into account the unique nature of the fishing industry and the fishing working environment.

The STCW-F treaty eventually entered into force in 2012, 17 years after its adoption, and MSC agreed soon after to revise the treaty to respond to the current needs of the fishing industry.

The review, completed by the Sub-Committee on Human Element, Training and Watchkeeping (HTW), updates and amends the provisions in the Convention. In addition, an associated new mandatory Code on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Fishing Vessel Personnel (STCW-F), containing minimum standards of competence, has also been approved.

The STCW-F Convention and new Code support harmonization of qualifications by introducing a minimum level of competence for personnel working on fishing vessels to which the Convention applies. This, in turn, facilitates free mobility of fishers and recognition of certificates between countries that have ratified and implemented the STCW-F Convention.

Related draft amendments to the MARPOL Convention, under Article V (Reporting procedures), have also been developed, for approval and adoption by MEPC.

MSC also agreed a new holistic output on "Development of measures to prevent the loss of containers at sea", with a target completion year of 2025, assigning the CCC Sub-Committee as the coordinating organ, in association with the SDC, NCSR, HTW and III Sub-Committees, as and when requested by the CCC Sub-Committee.

MSC approved, for subsequent adoption at MSC 108, draft amendments to the Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (STCW) Code, to prevent and respond to bullying and harassment in the maritime sector, including sexual assault and sexual harassment (SASH). These draft amendments will also be considered at the next meeting of the joint ILO/IMO Tripartite Working Group to Identify and Address Seafarers'
SUMMARY OF 107TH SESSION OF MARITIME SAFETY COMMITTEE (MSC)

Issues and the Human Element (JTWG), before their adoption.
The new provisions will apply to all seafarers by means of amendments to the STCW Code, table A-VI/1-4

(Specification of minimum standard of competence in personal safety and social responsibilities).

Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the world's transport workers and the global supply chain – draft Assembly resolution approved

MSC approved a draft Assembly resolution on Recommendations emanating from the Joint Action Group to review the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the world’s transport workers and the global supply chain (JAG-TSC).
The draft resolution endorses and recommends a number of actions to address the impact of measures taken during Public Health Emergencies of International Concern (PHEICs) affecting transport sectors and their workers, and to encourage improved coordination at the national level within affected countries.

The recommendations stem from the work of the Joint Action Group established at a meeting of the Director-Generals of ILO and WHO with the Heads of international transport organizations on 6 December 2021. It included representatives of ICAO, ILO, IMO, WHO, as well as the International Air Transport Association (IATA), the International Chamber of Shipping (ICS), the International Road Transport Union (IRU) and the International Transport Workers’ Federation (ITF)

Proposals for new work program outputs

Apart from those mentioned above, following discussion on the work programme, MSC agreed to include, among others:

- Revision of the Guidelines on Maritime Cyber Risk Management (MSC-FAL.1/Circ.3/Rev.2);
- Comprehensive review of the Requirements for maintenance, thorough examination, operational testing, overhaul and repair of lifeboats and rescue boats, launching appliances and release gear (resolution MSC.402(96));
- Revision of appendices A and B of the Revised guidance on shipboard towing and mooring equipment (MSC.1/Circ.1175/Rev.1)
Following work in the Sub-Committees, and consideration of their reports, MSC 107:

- Adopted amendments to the 1979, 1989 and 2009 Codes for the Construction and Equipment of Mobile Offshore Drilling Units (MODU Codes) to prohibit materials which contain asbestos; approve a related unified interpretation, to clarify that existing materials stowed on board before 1 January 2024 are not prohibited from being retained on board but should not be installed unless they can be documented to be asbestos-free before use/installation; and approve draft new guidelines for maintenance and monitoring of materials containing asbestos on board MODUs.

- Approved unified interpretations of the IGC Code, related to performance of the cargo containment system in IGC Code; and to the IGF Code, related to performance of the cargo containment system.

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- Approved, for future adoption, draft amendments to SOLAS regulation II-1/3-4 (Emergency towing arrangements and procedures) to require emergency towing arrangements to be fitted on ships other than tankers of 20,000 gross tonnage and above, constructed on or after the entry into force date of the amendments. Such arrangements shall, at all times, be capable of rapid deployment in the absence of main power on the ship to be towed and easy connection to the towing ship.

- Approved, for future adoption, draft amendments to the International Code on the Enhanced Programme of Inspections during Surveys of Bulk Carriers and Oil Tankers, 2011 (ESP Code), relating to the procedures for approval and certification of a firm engaged in thickness measurement of hull structures contained in the Code, so as to permit Administrations to exercise the right of auditing a company conducting thickness measurement of hull structures.

- Approved, for future adoption, draft amendments to the LSA Code on lowering speed of survival craft and rescue boats; lifejackets’ in-water performance; and single fall and hook systems, together with consequential amendments to associated instruments.

- Approved, for future adoption, draft amendments to SOLAS chapter II-2 on fire safety on ro-ro passenger ships; and fire detection within control stations and cargo control rooms, together with consequential amendments to associated instruments.

- Approved amendments to the Revised performance standards for water level detectors on ships subject to SOLAS regulations II-1/25, II-1/25-1 and XII/12 (resolution MSC.188(79)/Rev.1). The amendments aim to accurately define the measurement of the installation height of sensors.
• Approved draft unified interpretations on: mooring arrangements and equipment; pressure testing after a fire test for penetrations in watertight divisions; the SOLAS chapter II-1 amendments adopted at MSC 102 and MSC 103; and the 2008 Intact Stability Code.
• Approved the IMO position on ITU’s World Radio Conference 2023 agenda items concerning matters relating to maritime services.
• Noted information on an Agreement concerning the Shipwrecked Vessel RMS Titanic, developed by the United Kingdom, the United States, France.

Resolution MSC.538(107) – Amendments to the International Code for Ships Operating in Polar Waters (POLAR CODE) and Canada which entered into force for the United Kingdom and the United States in 2019. The agreement aims to ensure a standardized, international approach to preserving the wreck and resting site of more than 1,500 people.

List of resolutions and circulars adopted /approved by MSC 107

Resolutions

• Resolution MSC.531(107) – Strengthening Measures for Ensuring the Safety of International Shipping
• Resolution MSC.532(107) – Amendments to the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea, 1974
• Resolution MSC.533(107) – Amendments to the Protocol of 1978 relating to the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea, 1974
• Resolution MSC.534(107) – Amendments To the Protocol of 1988 Relating to the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea, 1974
• Resolution MSC.535(107) – Amendments to the International Life-Saving Appliance Code (LSA CODE)
• Resolution MSC.536(107) – Amendments to the International Code of Safety for High-Speed Craft, 1994 (1994 HSC CODE)
• Resolution MSC.537(107) – Amendments to the International Code of Safety for High-Speed Craft, 2000 (2000 HSC CODE)
• Resolution MSC.539(107) – Amendments to the International Maritime Solid Bulk Cargoes (IMSBC) CODE
• Resolution MSC.540(107) – Amendments to the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (STCW), 1978
• Resolution MSC.541(107) – Amendments to Part A of the Seafarers’ Training, Certification, and Watchkeeping (STCW) CODE
• Resolution MSC.542(107) – Amendments to the Code of Safety for Special Purpose Ships, 1983 (1983 SPS CODE)
• Resolution MSC.543(107) – Amendments to the Code of Safety for Special Purpose Ships, 2008 (2008 SPS CODE)
• Resolution MSC.544(107) – Amendments to the Revised Recommendation on Testing of Life-Saving Appliances (Resolution MSC.81(70))
• Resolution MSC.545(107) – Amendments to the Code for the Construction and Equipment of
SUMMARY OF 107TH SESSION OF MARITIME SAFETY COMMITTEE (MSC)

Mobile Offshore Drilling Units, 1979 (1979 MODU CODE)

- Resolution MSC.546(107) – Amendments to the Code for the Construction and Equipment of Mobile Offshore Drilling Units, 1989 (1989 MODU CODE)

- Resolution MSC.547(107) – Amendments to the Code for the Construction and Equipment of Mobile Offshore Drilling Units, 2009 (2009 MODU CODE)

Circulars

- MSC.1/Circ.1662 Guidelines for anchor handling winches
- MSC.1/Circ.1663 Guidelines for lifting appliances
- MSC.1/Circ.1664 Revised form for cargo information for solid bulk cargoes
- MSC.1/Circ.1453/Rev.2 Guidelines for the submission of information and completion of the format for the properties of cargoes not listed in the International Maritime Solid Bulk Cargoes (IMSBC) Code and their conditions of carriage
- MSC.1/Circ.1454/Rev.2 Guidelines for developing and approving procedures for sampling, testing and controlling the moisture content for solid bulk cargoes which may liquefy or undergo dynamic separation
- MSC.1/Circ.1395/Rev.6 Lists of solid bulk cargoes for which a fixed gas fire-extinguishing system may be exempted or for which a fixed gas fire-extinguishing system is ineffective
- MSC.1/Circ.1665 Guidelines on the use of electronic certificates of seafarers
- MSC.1/Circ.1630/Rev.2 Revised standardized life-saving appliance evaluation and test report forms (survival craft)
- MSC.1/Circ.1628/Rev.1 Revised standardized life-saving appliance evaluation and test report forms (personal life-saving appliances)
- MSC.1/Circ.1667 Unified interpretation of requirements in the IGF Code for fuel preparation rooms not located on an open deck
- MSC.1/Circ.1668 Unified interpretation of bunkering manifold arrangements fitted on LNG bunkering ships in the IGC Code (as amended by resolution MSC.370(93))
- MSC.1/Circ.1669 Unified interpretation of the IGC Code (as amended by resolution MSC.370(93))
- MSC.1/Circ.1670 Unified interpretation of the IGF Code
- MSC.1/Circ.1671 Unified interpretation on implementation of regulation 2.10.3 of the 2009 MODU Code, regulation 2.8.2 of the 1989 MODU Code and regulation 2.7.2 of the 1979 MODU Code
- MSC.1/Circ.1672 Guidelines for maintenance and monitoring of materials containing asbestos on board MODUs
- MSC.1/Circ.1673 Unified interpretation of SOLAS regulation II-1/1.1.3
- MSC.1/Circ.1537/Rev.2 Unified interpretations of the 2008 IS Code
- MSC.1/Circ.1362/Rev.2 Unified interpretation of SOLAS chapter II-1
- MSC.1/Circ.1164/Rev.27 Promulgation of information related to reports of independent evaluation submitted by Parties to the 1978 STCW Convention confirmed by the Maritime Safety Committee to have communicated information which demonstrates that Parties are giving full and complete effect to the relevant provisions of the Convention
- MSC.1/Circ.797/Rev.39 List of competent persons maintained by the Secretary-General pursuant to section A-I/7 of the Seafarers’ Training, Certification and Watchkeeping (STCW) Code
- MSC.1/Circ.1430/Rev.3 Revised guidelines for the design and approval of fixed water-based fire-
fighting systems for ro-ro spaces and special category spaces

- **MSC.1/Circ.1674** Unified interpretations of the LSA Code, the 1994 and 2000 HSC Codes
- **MSC.1/Circ.1276/Rev.1** Revised unified interpretations of SOLAS chapter II-2
- **MSC.1/Circ.1557/Rev.1** Revised hazardous area classification (application of SOLAS regulation II-1/45.11)
- **MSC.1/Circ.1675** Interim guidelines on safe operation of onshore power supply (OPS) service in port for ships engaged on international voyages
- **MSC.1/Circ.1613/Rev.2** Iridium SafetyCast service manual
- **MSC.1/Circ.1676** Delays affecting the availability of new GMDSS equipment compliant with the revised performance standards set out in resolutions MSC.511(105), MSC.512(105) and MSC.513(105)
- **MSC.1/Circ.1460/Rev.4** Guidance on the validity of radiocommunications equipment installed and used on ships

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