



Technical Circular

No.: 026/2014

Date: 25th November 2014

To Whomsoever it may concern

Subject: Report of MSC 94

IMO's Maritime Safety Committee (MSC) met at the Organization's London headquarters for its 94th session, from 17 to 21 November 2014.

The MSC discussed number of items including approval of the draft SOLAS amendments to make mandatory International Code for Ships Operating in Polar Waters (Polar Code), and the proposed draft new SOLAS chapter XIV "Safety measures for ships operating in polar waters", the International Code of Safety for Ships using Gases or other Low flashpoint Fuels (IGF Code); further work on its action plan on passenger ship safety; and the consideration of items put forward by the sub-committees.

1. Adopted Polar Code and SOLAS amendments with entry into force on 1st January 2017.

The MSC adopted the International Code for Ships Operating in Polar Waters (Polar Code), and the new SOLAS chapter XIV "Safety measures for ships operating in polar waters", to make the Code (Preamble, Introduction and Part I-A (Safety measures)) mandatory. The Polar Code contains additional design, construction, equipment, operational, training, and search and rescue requirements for ships operating in the harsh environment of Arctic and Antarctic waters, with the aim of preventing accidents and pollution, and protecting ships, seafarers and passengers. Because it contains both safety and environment related provisions, the Polar Code will be mandatory under both SOLAS and the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL). Last month (October 2014), IMO's Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC) approved the necessary draft amendments to make the environmental provisions in the Polar Code mandatory under MARPOL. The MEPC is expected to adopt the Code and associated MARPOL amendments at its next session in May 2015, with an entry-into-force date to be aligned with the SOLAS amendments, w.e.f. of 1 January 2017. Existing ships will have to comply by the first intermediate or renewal survey after that date whichever is earlier after 01 Jan 2018

2. Adopted amendments under other Conventions with entry into force from 1st July 2016

2.1 SOLAS chapter VI – Carriage of Cargoes and oil fuels, Regulation 2 amended to require mandatory verification of the gross mass of containers.

2.2 SOLAS regulation XI-1/7 – Special Measures to Enhance Maritime Safety. A new Regulation 7 on Atmosphere testing instrument for enclosed spaces added, to require ships to carry an appropriate portable atmosphere testing instrument or instruments, capable of measuring concentrations of oxygen, flammable gases or vapours, hydrogen sulphide and carbon monoxide, prior to entry into enclosed spaces.

The MSC93 when approving the draft new SOLAS regulation XI-1/7 "Atmosphere testing instrument for enclosed spaces", noted that MSC 92 had adopted Resolution MSC.350(92), SOLAS regulation III/19 "Emergency training and drills" with an entry-into-force date of 1 January 2015, requiring that each enclosed space entry and rescue drill shall include checking and use of instruments for measuring the atmosphere in enclosed spaces. Paragraph 3.6.2.3 4 of SOLAS regulation III/19 does not introduce carriage requirements for atmosphere testing instruments for enclosed spaces. Therefore recognizing the need to implement the draft new SOLAS regulation XI-1/7 early, in order to expedite the carriage of portable atmosphere-testing instruments for enclosed spaces MSC 94 while adopting the amendments to Reg. XI-1/7 has requested SOLAS Contracting Governments to voluntarily implement SOLAS regulation XI-1/7 to ships entitled to fly their flags, as soon as practicable, taking into account that the entry-into-force date of the corresponding amendments to SOLAS is 1 July 2016.

2.3 In response to amendment of SOLAS regulation XI-1/7, Chapter 15 of the MODU Code , 1989 MODU Code and 2009 MODU Code amended accordingly to contain the requirements for atmospheric testing instruments.

2.4 Record of Equipment for Cargo Ship Safety (Form C) & Form E amended

2.5 International Code on the Enhanced Programme of Inspections during Surveys of Bulk Carriers and Oil Tankers (2011 ESP Code) updated in respect of equipments used during close up surveys (such as hydraulic arm vehicles such as conventional cherry pickers, lifts and moveable platforms) including revisions to the minimum requirements for cargo tank testing at renewal survey for accepting cargo tank testing by the crew under the guidance of the master and addition of a new paragraph on rescue and emergency response equipment in relation to breathing apparatus.

2.6 Adopted amendments to the Code for the Construction and Equipment of Mobile Offshore Drilling Units, 2009 (2009 MODU Code), to allow an alternative procedure for lifeboat launching and manoeuvring drills.

2.7 Adopted an amendment to the recommendation on conditions for the approval of servicing stations for inflatable liferafts (resolution A.761(18)), in relation to checking date-expired items in the contents of packed inflatable liferafts.

3. Approved the IGF code

MSC 94 approved, in principle, the International Code of Safety for Ships using Gases or other Low-flashpoint Fuels (IGF Code), along with proposed amendments to make the Code mandatory under SOLAS (SOLAS Chapter II-1 & II-2 revised) and Appendix ie. Forms of various Safety Certificates.

The IGF Code provides mandatory provisions for the arrangement, installation, control and monitoring of machinery, equipment and systems using low-flashpoint fuels, focusing on liquefied natural gas (LNG), to minimize the risk to the ship, its crew and the environment, having regard to the nature of the fuels involved.

The Code addresses all areas that need special consideration for the usage of low-flashpoint fuels, based on a goal-based approach, with goals and functional requirements specified for each section forming the basis for the design, construction and operation of ships using this type of fuel.

4. Amendments Approved

4.1 Approve for future adoption, draft amendments to SOLAS regulations II-2/4.5 and II-2/11.6, clarifying the provisions related to the secondary means of venting cargo tanks in order to ensure adequate safety against over- and under-pressure in the event of cargo tank isolation valve being damaged or inadvertently closed, and SOLAS regulation II-2/20, with respect to the air quality control system.

4.2 Approved the draft revised Guide to recovery techniques.

4.3 Approved the draft MSC-MEPC.5 circular on Unified interpretation on keel laying date for fibre-reinforced plastic (FRP) craft

5. Goal based ship construction standards. Draft *Interim guidelines for the application of the goal-based standards safety-level approach to IMO rule-making process were prepared with the aim of further development in this regard.* The guidelines include broad procedures to be followed for establishing safety levels for goals and functional requirements by IMO.

6. Formal Safety Assessment including General Cargo Ship Safety

Draft amendments to section 4 of the Committees' Guidelines & draft Guidelines for considering and reviewing the outcomes of FSA studies were approved subject to concurrent approval by MEPC 68. These guidelines give procedures for the committee to take further action on the outcomes of FSAs.

7. Guidance on drafting of amendments to the 1974 SOLAS Convention and related mandatory instruments were accepted thereby MSC.1/Circ.1483 on *Interim guidance on drafting of amendments to the 1974 SOLAS Convention and related mandatory instruments* issued on 11 June 2014 has been revoked.

8. Passenger Ship Safety : Issued MSC Circular regarding Interim Guidance for in service testing of automatic sprinkler systems *in view of the potential consequences should automatic sprinkler systems fail to operate as intended on a ship and until appropriate recommendations are developed by the Organization and has requested shipowners, operators and system manufactures to actively monitor and assess the effectiveness of automatic sprinkler systems on a planned periodical basis in accordance to MSC.1/Circ.1432 and to also follow the additional guidance developed by way of the MSC Circular* which reads as follows:

“.1 During annual operational testing of sprinkler heads as prescribed in the Revised guidelines for the maintenance and inspection of fire protection systems and appliances (MSC.1/Circ.1432), failures were identified by the Bahamas on a variety of makes and types of system. Additional testing revealed in some instances failure rates which significantly reduce the effectiveness of an automatic sprinkler system. These failures represented a number of manufacturers and included both high and low pressure systems, indicating that the reliability issues were independent of both the make and type of sprinkler head.

.2 All identified failures occurred on ships over five years of age and involved one or more of the following modes of failure:

.1 blockage of the internal filters of the sprinkler heads with mineral deposits;

.2 build-up of scale and mineral deposits on the internal components of the sprinklers causing seizure when the sprinkler is activated; and

.3 corrosion of the internal components of the sprinklers causing seizure when the sprinkler is activated.”

9. List of Annex attached to this report which details the Resolutions adopted/approved and Circulars issued (Abstract of MSC 94/WP.1/Add.1)

Enclosure:

1. MSC 94/WP.1/Add.1 - LIST OF ANNEXES

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