

A watershed moment for ship recycling?

The Indian Register of Shipping (IRClass) gives its response to India's historic accession to IMO's Hong Kong International Convention for Ship Recycling, announced in November



Around a quarter of the world's ships are recycled at Indian facilities, such as this shipbreaking yard in Darukhan

The International Maritime Organization (IMO) adopted the Hong Kong International Convention for the Safe and Environmentally Sound Recycling of Ships (HKC) in 2009, which is aimed at ensuring that ships being recycled after reaching the end of their operational lives do not pose any unnecessary risks to human health, safety and to the environment.

In November 2019, the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) approved India's accession to the HKC, which will help provide a boost to the ship recycling industry in India.

The accession to the Convention will bring in global best practices. The aim is not that India becomes a backyard of all rejected ships but, on the contrary, plans to scientifically deal with ship recycling. The accession will bring in environment protection and will provide safety to workers, which are of greater importance.

As per data available for 2018, India handles around five million gross tonnage

(MnGT) annually, which is around 25% share of the world's ship recycling industry. The government plans to nearly double this by 2024, at around nine MnGT. The industry being largely concentrated in South Asia, India remains the leading market for ship recycling globally, with the Alang-Sosiya ship breaking yard in Gujarat handling around 450 ships every year.

Investment opportunity

The accession to the convention will allow global funds to come and invest in ship-recycling centers in India and a lot of international agencies are also looking at India's high-class recycling centres. It is considered that this accession, will help India get better assistance from these international agencies which are seeking to fund ship recycling centres.

IRClass has been instrumental in ensuring compliance of the ship recycling facilities with the Hong Kong Convention (HKC). Our services include:

- Certification as per Ship Recycling

Management System (SRMS) and HKC

- Imparting training
- Evaluation on behalf of Gujarat Maritime Board.

Under its integrated certification scheme, IRCLASS has certified 32 ship recycling yards in India for "QMS, EMS, OHSAS & SRMS". Of these yards, 11 have also been certified for HKC.

Training is an important area where IRClass is playing a lead role in bridging the gap between the practices of recycling yards and the HKC. IRClass has been authorised by Gujarat Maritime Board for evaluation of training of workers. Based on our individual contracts with the yard, IRClass imparts High Risk Safety Training for their inhouse employees. IRClass also conducts public trainings to increase awareness.

Facility improvements

Subsequent to the involvement of IRClass, there has been a tremendous improvement in facility operations specially in primary

cutting area and handling of oily block in intertidal zone. There is increased awareness with respect to the Ship Recycling Facility Plan (SRFP), safety procedures, segregation, handling and storage of materials, emergency preparedness. Emphasis is on environmental compliance through soil testing, sea water testing, noise testing, periodic health monitoring of the workers. Due to the practical based training evaluation pattern, there is a definite drop in the accident/incident rates.

Though the HKC has not yet entered into force, the European Union Ship Recycling Regulation (EU-SRR) which is mostly aligned with the IMO instrument, will come into force from 31 December 2020 for non-EU flagged ships. Accordingly once the regulation (EU-SRR) comes into force, all non-EU flagged ships, including Liberian ships calling at an EU port or anchorage will be required to comply with EU-SRR.



IRClass is heavily engaged in training to help yards bridge the gap between current practices and HKC requirements

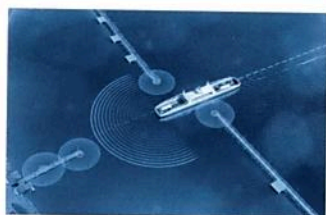
For non-EU ships, compliance to EU-SRR can be achieved by having Statement of Compliance (SOC) in accordance with HKC which should also be supplemented by holding a verified Inventory of Hazardous Materials (IHM) onboard.

IRClass is providing these services to interested shipowners. Currently various flag Administrations including Bahamas, Marshall Islands, Malta and Netherland have already authorised IRS to undertake above survey and certification service on their behalf. *NA*

The Royal Institution of Naval Architects International Conference: Autonomous Shipping 1-2 April 2020, London, UK



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