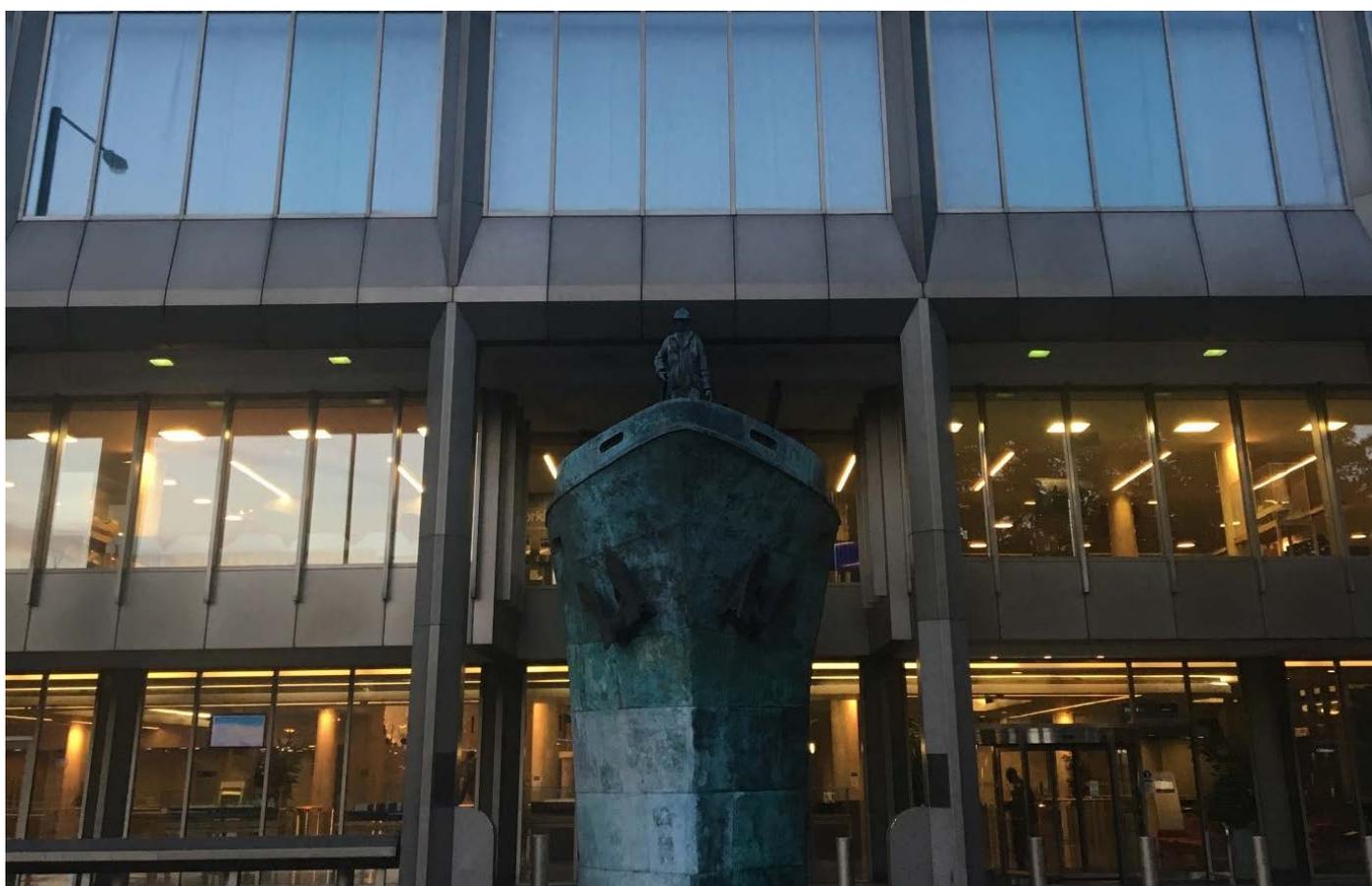


Summary of MSC 98 June 2017



Contents

Introduction	2
Other Adoptions	2
Approval	3
Discussion and Future Outputs	4

Introduction

From the 7th to the 16th June 2017, the Maritime Safety Committee (MSC) met for its 98th session at the headquarters of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) in London. Topics discussed included amendments to SOLAS and various IMO Codes, cyber-risk management, autonomous shipping, the flashpoint of low sulphur fuels, GMDSS requirements and updates to LSA.

An overview of events is given here, however, definitive information should be sought from the final report of the committee.

Amendments adopted

The following amendments to chapters in the *Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS)* were adopted, with an entry into force date of 1st January 2020:

- * II-1: Regulation 6 – Revised subdivision index R, acceptance of butterfly valves, tanks heights, double bottom arrangements, revision of definitions
- * II-2: Regulation II-2/3.56 on the definition of vehicle carrier as a pure truck/car carrier and Regulation II-2/20.2 on the protection of vehicle, special category and RoRo spaces
- * III: Regulations III/1.4, III/30 and III/37 on damage control drills for passenger ships
- * Appendix: Draft amendments to the appendix (Certificates)

The following amendments were adopted to various Codes and are mandatory under the SOLAS Convention:

- Chapter 11 (paragraph 11.3.2) of the **IGF Code**, regarding the fire rating of wheelhouse windows (to enter into force 01/01/20)
- Chapter 8, paragraph 8.10.1 of the 1994 **HSC Code**, on exempting high-speed craft of less than 20 m in length from carrying a rescue boat (to enter into force 01/01/20)
- Paragraphs 6.1.1.5 and 6.1.1.6 of the **LSA Code**, providing consistency to the static tests and their proof loads that launching appliances had to withstand (to enter into force 01/01/20)
- Amendments (04-17), including matters relating to substances harmful to the marine environment (HME) and paragraphs 4.5.1 and 4.5.2 and amendments to paragraphs 4.5.1 and 4.5.2 of the **IMSBC Code**, highlighting the responsibility of the shipper for ensuring that a test to determine the transportable moisture limit (TML) of a solid bulk cargo is conducted (to enter into force 01/01/19, but may be voluntarily applied from 01/01/18).

Other Adoptions

MSC 98 also adopted:

- The MSC resolution on *Amendments to the Revised recommendation on testing of life-saving appliances* (resolution MSC.81(70))
- an MSC resolution that cyber risks should be appropriately assessed and managed in accordance with the safety management requirements of the ISM Code. Shipowners and operators should be required to incorporate cyber risk management into their SMS no later than the first annual verification of the company's Document of Compliance, following their next renewal after 1st January 2018 (note: this is recommendatory, not mandatory)
- the MSC resolution revising the 2009 MODU Code contained within MSC.435(98)
- in accordance with resolution A.858(20), the amendments to the existing Long Sand Head two-way route and SUNK Inner precautionary area in the traffic separation scheme "In the SUNK area and in the Northern approaches to the Thames Estuary", for dissemination by means of COLREG.2/Circ.[69]
- the following new routeing measures:
 - » recommended route "Off the western coast of Izu O Shima Island"
 - » area to be avoided "Off Peninsula de Osa in the Pacific coast off Costa Rica"
 - » area to be avoided as an associated protective measure for the "Tubbataha Reefs Natural Park Particularly Sensitive Sea Area (PSSA) in the Sulu Sea".

Approval



MSC 98 approved the following circulars and amendments:

- The circular on *Guidelines on maritime cyber risk management*
- the draft MSC circular on *Revised Guidance for watertight doors on passenger ships which may be opened during navigation*
- the draft MSC circular on *Revised 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.1395/Rev.2)
- the draft Assembly resolution on the *Code for the Transport and Handling of Hazardous and Noxious Liquid Substances in Bulk on Offshore Support Vessels* (OSV Chemical Code). The new Code supersedes the previous *Guidelines for the transport and handling of limited amounts of hazardous and NLS in bulk on offshore support vessels*. The quantity of cargo is no longer limited, but is instead based on conditions of carriage and subdivision requirements. The Code contains types of products that may be carried, as well as provisions for their carriage
- the amendments to MSC.1/Circ.1503 on *ECDIS-Guidance for good practice*
- the draft *Guidelines for port State control officers on certification of seafarers, hours of rest and manning*. The Guidelines will be referred to the III 4 sub-committee for inclusion in the ongoing work on the revision of resolution A.1052(27) on *Procedures for port State control, 2011* (these are scheduled to be adopted at Assembly in December 2017)
- the amendments to the *Guidelines for Dynamic Positioning system (DP) operator training*, to be issued as MSC.1/Circ.738/Rev.2
- approved the amendments to part B of the STCW Code, relating to section B-V/f on guidance on Dynamic Positioning system (DP) operator training
- approved MSC/Circ.686/Rev.1 on *Guidelines on the means of access to structures for inspection and maintenance of oil tankers and bulk carriers* (SOLAS regulation XI-1/2)
- approved the unified interpretations on:
 - » Sidelights and placement in accordance with the COLREGs (MSC.1/Circ.1577)
 - » means on drainage from enclosed cargo spaces (MSC.1/Circ.1571)
 - » means of access and vertical ladder arrangements (MSC.1/Circ. 1572)
 - » clarification of provisions for Inert Gas Systems (MSC.1/Circ.1582)
 - » interim guidelines on arrangements and designs of Fibre Reinforce Plastic (FRP) for use in ship structures (MSC.1/Circ/1574)
- approved the circular on *Amendments to the guidelines for developing operation and maintenance manuals for lifeboat systems* (MSC.1/Circ.1205)
- approved *Amendments to the guidelines for evaluation and replacement of lifeboat release and retrieval systems* (MSC.1/Circ.1392).

Discussion and Future Outputs



Autonomous shipping generated a lot of discussion in committee, particularly around the need to find a balance between responding to technological change and considering safeguards and the protection of the 'human factor'. The subject of unsafe mixed migration was also brought before the committee, following several interventions speaking out against acts of terrorism and piracy.

MSC also considered at length issues relating to the safety of low-sulphur fuels, in particular in response to reports where fuel has been supplied with flash points below the minimum SOLAS threshold of 60°C. Submissions may be received on the issue for MSC 99, within the remit of the IGF Code, but otherwise no further action is to be taken at this time. It is expected that this issue will reappear at MEPC 71.

The future work programme outputs of MSC were discussed and agreed in the following areas:

- A regulatory scoping exercise for Maritime Autonomous Surface Ships (MASS). This will be placed on the provisional agenda for MSC 99 and is anticipated to take several years to complete
- a new output on amendments to the *Cargo Stowage and Securing (CSS) Code* regarding weather-dependent lashing
- a new output on amendments to the IMDG Code related to portable tanks with shells made of Fibre Reinforced Plastics (FRP) for multimodal transportation of dangerous goods, following work completed by the UN Recommendations on the Transport of DG Group
- a revision of SOLAS chapters III and IV for the modernisation of the GMDSS, including related amendments to other existing instruments
- a new output on the application of the second phase of the Polar Code, specifically to non-SOLAS ships operating in polar waters (to be delayed and placed on the agenda for 2018/2019)
- the need to amend the *Guidelines for the approval of fixed dry chemical powder fire-extinguishing systems for the protection of ships carrying liquefied gases in bulk*
- the need for amendments to chapter 9 of the FSS Code for fault isolation requirements for cargo ships and passenger ship cabin balconies fitted with individually identifiable fire detector systems
- a new output to develop safety standards for cold ironing of vessels and guidance on safe operation of On-shore Power Supply (OPS) service in port
- a need for a thorough revision of the content and requirements of SOLAS chapter III and the LSA Code, considering the *Guidelines for development and application of IMO goal-based standards* safety level approach. It is expected that these amendments will remove gaps, inconsistencies and ambiguities contained in the current regulations. It is also expected that they will enter into force on 1st January 2024, subject to adoption before 1st July 2022.

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Marine Compliance & Regulations

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