**IMO**

**MARITIME SAFETY COMMITTEE**

**107th SESSION**

**31 May – 9 June 2023**

The IMO Maritime Safety Committee held its 107th session (MSC 107) in hybrid format from 31 May through 9 June 2023 under the Chairmanship of Mrs Mayte Medinah (United States) and her Vice-Chair, Commander Theofilos Mozas (Greece). The session was attended by Members and Associate Members of IMO; representatives from the United Nations Programmes and specialised agencies; observers from intergovernmental organisations with agreements of cooperation; and observers from non-governmental organisations in consultative status. The meeting was well attended, indeed 1,300 delegates enrolled.

Three Working Groups (WG) and one Drafting Group (DG) were formed and chaired as follows:

WG 1. MASS, Mr. Ch McHardy (Marshall Islands).

WG 2. Fuel oil safety, Mr C. Allgeier (Germany).

WG 3. GBS, Mr J. Sirkar (United States).

DG 1. Amendments, Mr M. Tsuchiya (Liberia).

The Agenda for the meeting was as follows, noting that items in red type only, are described in a fair amount of detail:

1 Adoption of the agenda; report on credentials

2 Decisions of other IMO bodies (pages 4 – 7)

3 Consideration and adoption of amendments to mandatory instruments (pages 7 - 9)

4 Goal-based new ship construction standards (pages 9/10)

5 Development of a goal-based instrument for Maritime Autonomous Surface Ships (MASS) (pages 10 – 13)

6 Development of further measures to enhance the safety of ships relating to the use of fuel oil 9 (pages 13 – 15)

7 Measures to enhance maritime security (pages 15/16)

8 Piracy and armed robbery against ships (page 16)

9 Unsafe mixed migration by sea (pages 16/17)

10 Formal safety assessment (page 17)

11 Carriage of cargoes and containers (Report of the eighth session of the Sub-Committee) (pages 17/18)

12 Ship design and construction (Report of the ninth session of the Sub-Committee) (pages 18/19)

13 Human element, training and watchkeeping (Report of the ninth session of the Sub-Committee) (pages 19/20)

14 Ship systems and equipment (Report of the ninth session of the Sub-Committee) (pages 20/21)

15 Navigation, communications and search and rescue (Urgent matters emanating from the tenth session of the Sub-Committee) (pages 21 – 23)

16 Application of the Committee's method of work (page 23)

17 Work programme (pages 23/24)

18 Election of Chair and Vice-Chair for 2024

19 Any other business

20 Consideration of the report of the Committee on its 107th session

**ADDRESS BY THE IMO SECRETARY-GENERAL.** Mr Kitack Lim, Secretary-General of IMO welcomed delegates to the meeting. He spoke of the importance in developing regulations for Maritime Autonomous Surface Ships (MASS), and noted major progress made by the MASS Correspondence Group in submitting a first draft of the Code. He declared his awareness that the envisaged timeline to complete the non-mandatory MASS code is ambitious but with close cooperation provided through the Joint MSC/LEG/FAL Working Group on MASS, a good result will be achievable.

Mr Lim mentioned another important agenda item concerning fuel oil safety, encouraging progress in concert with MEPC, on measures related to oil fuel parameters other than flashpoint, to enhance the safety of ships. This led him on to IMO’s strategy on the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions from ships which he felt must be implemented in a sustainable manner.

Regarding global trends relating to piracy and armed robbery against ships, he reported that global incidents has generally continued to fall, with 131 incidents reported in 2022, compared to 172 incidents in 2021. Notwithstanding, Mr Lim expressed deep concern over recent incidents in the Gulf of Guinea.

Referring to the 2012 Cape Town Agreement, there are 21 Member State signatories with an aggregated number of 2,686 fishing vessels, thus requiring a further 22 States and 3,600 fishing vessels before the Convention enters into force.

With regard to items emanating from the Sub-Committees, these included: safety provisions for ships using LPG fuels; reduction of underwater noise; finalising a package of requirements for ventilation of totally enclosed lifeboats; minimising the incidence and consequences of fires on ro-ro passenger ships; revision of the 2023 Diving Code; and, consideration of items relevant to the ITU World Radiocommunication Conference 2023 concerning Maritime Services.

Draft STCW training provisions to prevent, and respond to, bullying and harassment, including sexual assault, with a view to approval will also be considered. He felt that elements such as attractive working conditions, including contracts and wages, characterise a modern work environment, which can largely be achieved by bringing ILO’s Maritime Labour Convention to the level of ratification and implementation of IMO instruments and he therefore encouraged Member States that have not yet done so, to consider ratifying this important ILO convention.

Finally, the Secretary-General wished the meeting good progress with the heavy workload.

**SUMMARY OF MEETING ACHIEVEMENTS.**

Adoption of the amendments to the 1974 SOLAS Convention and 5 associated mandatory instruments;

Adoption of the amendments to the 1978 STCW Convention and approval of a draft amendment to the STCW Code;

Adoption of an MSC Resolution on measures ensuring the safety of International shipping;

Approval of a draft MSC/MEPC Circular on Guidelines for the sampling of oil fuel for conditions of compliance with revised MARPOL Annex VI and SOLAS Chapter 22;

Approval of an MSC Circular on Interim Guidelines for the safety of ships using LPG fuels;

Approval of a new Output on the development of a safety regulatory framework to support the reduction of GHG emissions from ships using new technologies and alternative fuels;

Approval of the new STCW (F) Convention and new Code;

Significant progress in a new Code for MASS;

Adoption of the International Code of Safety for diving operations;

Approval of the IMO position on ITU’s world radio conference 2023 agenda items concerning methods relating to maritime services and the approval of interim guidelines on safe operation of onshore power supply services in ports for ships engaged on international voyages; and,

It is worth recording that, in the authors recollection, the meeting broke a whole series of records for an IMO meeting. There was a total of 1330 registrations whilst 122 documents were submitted and duly considered. The formal report of the Committee runs to 152 pages (roughly 50% more than average), plus 49 Annexes and 29 approved MSC Circulars. A truly prodigious output from a well organised, well-led and hard working Committee.

**1. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA.** The agenda was duly adopted.

**2. DECISIONS OF OTHER IMO BODIES.**

**Outcome of C 128. Review of parts of the Strategic Plan of the Organization under MSC's purview.** The Committee noted an oral update by the ISWG-SP Chair, Mr. Darrick Leow (Singapore), on the outcome of the first session of the Group in May 2023, in particular that the Group commenced work on preparing a first draft of the Organisation's Strategic Plan for the six-year period 2024 to 2029, taking into consideration key themes, trends and developments; considerable progress was made and consensus achieved on the mission and vision statements, overarching principles, and strategic directions (SDs) 1,

2,4,5 and 6, with the agreed text for these sections presented in document C 129/4(a). When discussing SD 6 (Address the human element), the Group agreed to expand on the various aspects relevant to training, certification and watchkeeping as well as fair treatment, to address current trends and developments such as new technologies, future fuels, bullying and harassment, including SASH.

**Possible measures to prevent acts of endangering the safety of navigation.** The delegation of Japan stated that the repeated launches of ballistic missiles by the DPRK were in violation of relevant UN Security Council resolutions and constituted a threat to the peace and security of the region and to the international community, posing grave threats to the safety of international shipping due to lack of proper prior notification as required by IMO Assembly resolution A.706 (17). In response, the delegation of the DPRK stated that the Korean peninsula was still under ceasefire and the Korean War had not ended yet; that it was not in a position to be able to provide prior notification of missile launches in the special security environment on the Korean peninsula which was technically still at war, as was the case in other regions in conflict or at war; that the United States had conducted thousands of rounds of aggressive joint military exercises against the DPRK together with the Republic of Korea since 1953 and openly threatened to intercept the satellites for peaceful purposes. During a long discussion, the overwhelming majority of delegations that spoke supported the adoption of the proposed MSC resolution (MSC 107/2/2, annex) to show the Committee's determination to ensure the safety of shipping through a number of actions described in the resolution. In addition, the Committee was informed by the Secretariat that, in October 2022, ICAO had adopted Assembly resolution A41-3 on *Unannounced missile launches by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.* Following a feisty exchange of views between the DPRK and an opposing overwhelming majority of delegations that spoke, the Committee adopted the MSC resolution on *Strengthening measures for ensuring the safety of international shipping.*

**Issuance of certificates of competency and seafarers' identity documents in certain parts of Ukraine temporarily occupied by the Russian Federation.** Having noted that HTW 9 underscored the importance of preserving the integrity and functions of the maritime education and training system in Ukraine, including the delivery of training and the issuance of lawful seafarers' certificates and documents, and invited relevant proposals to MSC 107, the Committee considered documents MSC 107/2/3 (Ukraine), proposing guidance for flag and port State control officers to address the issuance of certificates of competency and seafarers' identity documents in certain parts of Ukraine temporarily occupied by the Russian Federation; and MSC 107/2/5 (Russian Federation), commenting on document MSC 107/2/3.

The delegation of Ukraine stated that it had given forewarning of the Russian Federation's aggression against Ukraine and the safety and security of navigation in the Black Sea, the Sea of Azov and the Kerch Strait and beyond, including the seizure of maritime rescue coordination centres, the misuse of NAVTEX transmissions, interference with SAR services and attempts to destroy Ukraine's infrastructure including ports participating in the Black Sea Grain Initiative. They pointed out that since the attempted annexation of Ukraine's Crimea in 2014, the Russian Federation had started issuing certificates of competency and seafarers identity documents despite their lack of legal authority to do so; that these fake certificates undermined the training and certification system and caused danger to human safety at sea. Indeed, the UN General Assembly had adopted relevant resolutions calling upon all States, international organisations and UN specialised agencies to refrain from recognizing any documents issued by the Russian occupation authorities in the above areas.

The delegation of the Russian Federation stated that document MSC 107/2/3 presented an erroneous interpretation of the STCW Convention, misleading Member States. It was added that in the mentioned document, under the disguise of discussing legitimacy of issued certificates, the question of recognition/non-recognition of territories had been brought to the attention of the Committee. It was stressed that neither the Committee nor the Organisation had competence over such matters and introduction of such topics served the only goal of politicising the work of the Organisation.

In the ensuing discussion, the delegation of Sweden, on behalf of the EU, condemned in the strongest possible terms the unprovoked and unjustified act of aggression by the Russian Federation against Ukraine, which grossly violated international law and the UN Charter and undermined international security and stability. They stated that the Russian Federation must immediately withdraw its troops from the entire territory of Ukraine and abide by UN General Assembly resolution "Aggression against Ukraine" supported by 141 States at the eleventh emergency special session of the UN General Assembly.

Thirty IMO member States aligned themselves with the views expressed by the delegation of Sweden, whereas the delegation of China, supported by the DPRK, stated that there were no specific requirements for the nationality of the recipient of certificates or for the place of issuance in the STCW Convention and that it was the Contracting Party to the Convention that was responsible for the authenticity of the certificates issued and for providing assistance in the verification of these certificates and that, therefore, certificates issued by the competent authority of a Contracting Party in accordance with the STCW Convention did not fall under the category of "fraudulent certificates".

Following consideration, based on the support of the overwhelming majority of delegations that spoke, the Committee took the following actions:

.1 condemned the illegal and unprovoked invasion of Ukraine by the Russian Federation and called on the Russian Federation to immediately cease its war on Ukraine and withdraw its forces from Ukrainian territory extending to its territorial waters;

.2 acknowledged the call from Ukraine that Member States should take resolute efforts in denouncing the Russian Federation's illegal unilateral actions in temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine, including its unauthorised practices associated with seafarers' certificates and documents issued by Russian occupation authorities;

.3 expressed general support for the concerns raised in document MSC 107/2/3 and the proposals therein, aimed at identifying seafarers' certificates and documents fraudulently issued by entities and/or from locations in the territory of Ukraine, temporarily occupied by the Russian Federation, and taking appropriate action in line with relevant international instruments;

.4 encouraged Member States to fulfil their obligations under the STCW Convention as flag and port States, to prevent unlawful practices by the Russian Federation with respect to seafarers' certificates and documents; and,

.5 further encouraged flag and port States to consider the issues raised in document MSC 107/2/3 and take appropriate action when examining seafarers' certificates and documents issued from locations in the territory of Ukraine temporarily occupied by the Russian Federation.

Fighting a rearguard action, the delegation of the Russian Federation stated that none of the interventions made had provided any counterargument to the fact of contravention of the STCW and IMO Conventions by the proposed actions of the Committee as was previously detailed by the Russian Federation. This conscious step by the Committee, to which the Russian delegation refused to join, clearly set a precedent when the Committee had violated the STCW and IMO Convention.

**Attack against the Kakhovka Hydroelectric Power Plant.** The delegation of Ukraine stated that in the early morning of 6 June 2023 the forces of the Russian Federation had detonated explosives in the dam of the Kakhovka hydroelectric power plant, located in the temporarily occupied territories in Kherson region. This had resulted in massive flooding of the territories downstream of the Dnipro River, and the facilities were beyond repair. This was a man-made disaster; the Russian Federation had previously threatened to blow up the dam and in autumn 2022 had damaged part of it, which led to a decrease in the water level in the Kakhovka reservoir. Most importantly, the world was once again on the brink of a nuclear catastrophe, as water from the Kakhovka Reservoir is necessary for the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant turbine condensers and safety systems.

In response, the delegation of the Russian Federation pointed out that this act was directed against the Russian towns and territories downstream that were most affected and that it is was part and parcel of the Ukrainian counteroffensive to give its forces a military advantage, adding that that the information provided had been unfounded and the facts had been blatantly manipulated. Further it was stressed that Ukraine had been shelling the Kakhovka hydroelectric power plant for months, which had been confirmed by the Ukrainian Authorities themselves. [editorial comment: why would the Ukrainians do such a thing with their own people living in the same region?]

**3.** **CONSIDERATION AND ADOPTION OF AMENDMENTS TO MANDATORY INSTRUMENTS.**

**General.** Contracting Governments to the 1974 SOLAS Convention were invited to consider and adopt a variety of proposed amendments to SOLAS, LSA Code, HSC Code, Polar Code and IMSBC Code, including draft resolutions, draft MSC circulars, also, the 1978 and 1988 SOLAS Protocols. Following lengthy discussion, the Drafting Group was established and issued with appropriate terms of reference. Having considered the subsequent report, the Committee approved it in general and took action as follows:

.1 noted the Group's discussion on unintended consequences emanating from the use of the term "length" and, in particular, regarding possible application ambiguities linked with the lack of a relevant definition, for which the Group could not present rectification, for such identified unintended consequences;

.2 considered the Group's observation that the adoption of the draft amendments to SOLAS chapter XIV and the Polar Code at the next session would not change their entry into force date, i.e. 1 January 2026;

.3 subject to the action taken in sub-paragraph .2 above, adopted the draft MSC resolution on amendments to the 1974 SOLAS Convention;

.4 adopted the draft MSC resolution on amendments to the 1978 SOLAS Protocol; the 1988 Protocol; amendments to the LSA Code; the 1994 HSC Code; the 2000 HSC Code; the draft MSC resolution on amendments to the Polar Code (subject to action taken in .2); the IMSBC Code; the 1978 STCW Convention and Code; the 1983 SPS Code;

the 2008 SPS Code; the MSC resolution on amendments to Revised recommendation on testing of life-saving appliances (resolution MSC.81(70)); and, the MSC resolution on amendments to Revised recommendation on testing of life-saving appliances (resolution MSC.81(70));

.5 approved the MSC circular on Guidelines for anchor handling winches;

.6 approved the MSC circular on Guidelines for lifting appliances;

.7 approved the MSC circular on Revised form for cargo information for solid bulk cargoes;

.8 approved the MSC circular 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;

.9 approved the MSC circular on 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;

.10 approved the MSC circular on 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;

.11 approved the MSC circular on Guidelines on the use of electronic certificates of seafarers;

.12 approved the MSC circular on Revised standardised life-saving appliance evaluation and test report forms (survival craft);

.13 approved the MSC circular on Revised standardised life-saving appliance evaluation and test report forms (personal life-saving appliances);

.14 agreed to the modified text of the footnote corresponding to SOLAS regulation

II-2/4.2.1.6 adopted by resolution MSC.520(106) and instructed the Secretariat to effect the modification, as appropriate;

.15 approved draft amendments to the IP Code adopted by resolution MSC.527(106) for training arrangements of industrial personnel, as a minor correction, and requested the Secretariat to take the necessary action;

.16 agreed to the Group's assessment that there may be capacity-building implications and a need for technical cooperation or assistance in relation to the draft amendments to SOLAS chapter V, the LSA Code, the 1994 and 2000 HSC Code and the Polar Code;

.17 in relation to the above, advised the Technical Cooperation Committee accordingly and encouraged Member States in need of capacity-building assistance in relation to the aforementioned amendments to contact the Organisation;

.18 noted that the Group could not identify definitive capacity-building implications or a need for technical cooperation and assistance at this stage for the remainder of the amendments to the instruments submitted for adoption;

.19 noted the views expressed on the challenges faced by the Group concerning the assessment of capacity-building implications and technical cooperation and assistance needs related to the draft amendments to mandatory instruments;

.20 considered urging Member States and international organisations to propose an alternative mechanism at a future meeting concerning the assessment of capacity-building implications; and,

.21 authorised the Secretariat to effect any minor editorial corrections that may be identified.

**4.** **GOAL-BASED NEW SHIP CONSTRUCTION STANDARDS.**

**General.** With respect to future audits, the Committee recalled that, in accordance with paragraph 27.2 of the Revised GBS Verification Guidelines, each RO (Recognised Organisation) already verified against the Standards should make available, at least annually, any new rules or rule changes, including any errata, corrigenda or clarifications, to the Secretary-General and to all Administrations that have been recognised by them. In addition, the Committee also noted that, in accordance with paragraph 27.4 of the aforementioned Guidelines, audits of rule changes submitted annually as part of a continuous improvement process, are subject to a maintenance audit every three years; and since the last maintenance audit was conducted in 2022, the next one will take place in 2025.

**Status report addressing GBS audit observations.** The Committee noted the status reports addressing audit observations common to IACS members provided in document MSC 107/INF.10 (IACS). With respect to the status report relating to IACS's review of the North Atlantic wave data, the Committee also noted concerns and comments provided by the observer from ICS, supported by INTERCARGO, with respect to less onerous sea conditions than was previously used for the Common Structural Rules in the new data provided. Relative to the previous IACS data, a reduction in the mean wave height of about 0.8 metres, and a reduction in the number of extreme waves was noted. The observer's opinion was that this potential change to IACS' wave data would be contrary to the expectation of the auditors, and could have far-reaching implications for the design of ship structures and their reliability. Therefore, it was suggested that the auditors pay close attention to the methodology and data utilised when reporting IACS's review to the Organisation.

**Establishment of the GBS Working Group.** MSC 106 agreed to re-establish the GBS Working Group at this session to consider the example for the development of functional requirements for the IMO MASS Code (MSC 106/WP.8, annex 2) and, if considered appropriate, to amend the *Generic guidelines for developing IMO goal-based standards*.

Subsequently, the Committee established the GBS Working Group and instructed it, taking into account comments and decisions made in plenary, to consider annex 2 of document MSC 106/WP.8 from a goal-based perspective with a view to determining whether the example functional requirements for the MASS Code (part A and part B) follow, in general, the principles of drafting goal-based provisions in IMO instruments as set out in the Generic GBS Guidelines. Also, if considered appropriate, identify which provisions of the Generic GBS Guidelines would require amendments to facilitate their use in the future.

**Report of the GBS Working Group.** Having considered the report of the Working Group, the Committee approved it in general and took action as described hereunder:

.1 noted the discussion of the Group on the Example for the development of functional requirements for the MASS Code;

.2 endorsed the Group's view that the Example (MSC 106/WP.8, annex 2) followed the principles of drafting goal-based provisions in IMO instruments in the Generic GBS Guidelines, in general;

.3 endorsed the Group's specific observations and recommendations for improving the Example to be utilised when developing FRs for the draft MASS Code;

.4 noted the Group's discussion on revising the Generic GBS Guidelines;

.5 endorsed the Group's view that the Generic GBS Guidelines provide sufficient guidance for the development of FRs; however, the Guidelines might need to be revised in the future for certain types of new instruments, including the MASS Code, as it would be premature to amend the Guidelines at that stage only by taking into account the experience gained when developing the FRs for the draft MASS Code; and other relevant experiences should also be considered;

.6 invited interested Member States and international organisations to submit relevant proposals for revising the Generic GBS Guidelines to future sessions of the Committee, including possible consideration of the experience gained in the development of other goal-based instruments, such as the IGF and Polar Codes, etc; and,

.7 noted that the Chair of the Group provided an oral report to the MASS Working Group on the outcome of the Group's deliberations on the example functional requirements, as instructed.

**5. DEVELOPMENT OF A GOAL-BASED INSTRUMENT FOR MARITIME AUTONOMOUS SURFACE SHIPS (MASS).**

**Background.** The Committee recalled that MSC 105 had established an intersessional MASS Correspondence Group to commence the development of a non-mandatory goal-based MASS Code and requested it to provide a verbal status report at MSC 106 and submit a written report to MSC 107. It was also recalled that MSC 106 had agreed on basic principles for the development of the goal-based MASS Code and to establish a GBS working group at MSC 107 to consider the Example for the development of functional requirements for the IMO MASS Code in document MSC 106/WP.8, annex 2, and, if considered appropriate, to amend the *Generic guidelines for developing IMO goal-based standards* (Generic GBS Guidelines) (MSC.1/Circ.1394/Rev.2) to facilitate their use in the future. With respect to the Joint MSC-LEG-FAL Working Group on MASS (MASS-JWG), the Committee further recalled that MSC 106, LEG 110 and FAL 47 had approved, and

C 128 endorsed, the holding of a hybrid five-day meeting of the MASS-JWG from 17 to 21 April 2023. MSC 106 also approved a Revised road map for developing the MASS Code.

**Report of the Correspondence Group.** Following consideration, the Committee took action as follows:1

.1 agreed, in principle, to the approach taken and the structure of the draft non-mandatory MASS Code;

.2 noted the proposed positions on matters that may be considered by the MASS-JWG and agreed to forward them, as appropriate, to the Group for its consideration; and,

.3 agreed to the establishment of an intersessional MASS Working Group, scheduled to convene from 30 October to 3 November 2023, in order to meet the tight time schedule for the completion of the work on the MASS Code, subject to endorsement by C 129.

**Further work on the draft MASS Code.** Ten documents were considered in addition to five Information papers. Views on the following topics were expressed:

National projects on MASS; Search and rescue provisions for MASS; Risk assessment methodologies to be used for MASS operations in the draft MASS Code; Terminology to be used for the development of functional requirements; Consideration by the Working Group; Development of competencies relating to MASS operations; Outcome of MASS-JWG 2; and, MASS trials with officer of navigational watch acting as sole lookout in periods of darkness.

**Establishment of the MASS Working Group.** In order to advance the work on the MASS Code, the Committee established the MASS Working Group, which would also take into account the outcome of the work of the GBS Working Group. The Group was instructed to further develop the draft non-mandatory MASS Code, based on annex 1 to document MSC 107/5, consider the outcome of the second session of the Joint MSC-LEG-FAL Working Group on MASS (MASS-JWG 2), update the road map for developing a goal-based MASS Code; and to prepare draft terms of reference for the intersessional Correspondence Group and intersessional Working Group on Development of a Goal-Based Instrument for Maritime Autonomous Surface Ships (MASS).

**Report of the MASS Working Group.** Having considered the report of the Working Group (MSC 107/WP.9), the Committee approved it in general and took action as follows:

.1 noted that the Group took into account the outcome of MASS-JWG 2;

.2 noted the progress made in developing a draft goal-based non-mandatory MASS Code;

.3 noted that the Group agreed in principle to the application provision in draft section 2 of part 1 (General) which clarified that the Code would apply to cargo ships to which the SOLAS Convention applied;

.4 regarding the earlier debate as to whether the application of the MASS Code to cargo ships would include high-speed craft, consideration was postponed to MSC 108;

.5 noted the Group's conclusion that the MASS Code should not repeat provisions or regulations of existing IMO instruments, and to use the goal and the chapeau of the associated FR for the fire safety section of part 3 as an example to follow in principle, in connection with the Guidance for reviewing part 3 sections of the MASS Code;

6 noted that the Group agreed to Operational Envelope (OE) and Concept of Operation (ConOps) as critical working terms to be used in the Code;

.7 agreed, in principle, to the definition of ''modes of operation'';

.8 noted that the Group incorporated draft text for risk assessment methodologies and its agreement that no specific risk assessment methodology should be recommended to be used in the MASS Code, in order to allow flexibility;

.9 noted that the Group agreed to review and harmonise the different draft sections for part 3 of the draft MASS Code, which had been developed by different volunteering member States and international organisations;

.10 noted that the Chair of the GBS Working Group provided the analysis and recommendations of the GBS Working Group orally to the Group, which included the recommendation of the GBS experts;

.11 noted that the Group agreed to use the Guidance for Reviewing part 3 sections of the MASS Code, taking into account the GBS experts' advice, as well as the challenges highlighted with respect to the lack of explicitly stated safety objectives in some SOLAS chapters;

.12 noted the discussion on the application of the ISM Code oversight mechanism for flag States in relation to a Remote Operations Centre;

.13 endorsed the common position of the Group on the training, certification and competency requirements, and the applicability of STCW in this context, and, if considered necessary, refer it to the HTW Sub-Committee:

.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 being considered as a basis; and,

.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.

.14 agreed that the MASS-JWG be invited to note the common positions agreed, subject to the Committee's approval, as well as the draft MASS Code developed so far by the Group;

.15 noted the discussion of the Group related to the possible involvement of the HTW Sub-Committee;

.16 agreed with the Group that there is no need to amend the COLREGs as they can be applied in full to any MASS;

.17 noted that, due to time constraints, the Group was not able to consider document MSC 107/5/5 (Germany et al.), related to permitting MASS trials where the officer of the navigational watch acts as the sole lookout in periods of darkness;

.18 agreed that document MSC 107/5/5 (Germany et al.) be discussed by the intersessional Working Group;

.19 noted that, in conjunction with updating the road map, the Group agreed to keep the date of entry into force of the mandatory MASS Code (1 January 2028) but to change the planned adoption of the mandatory Code from MSC 110 (2025) to MSC 111 (2026), taking into account current work progress;

.20 agreed that document LEG 110/11/3 (paragraph 25.3) be taken into account at the finalisation stage of the non-mandatory MASS Code, planned for MSC 108;

.21 approved the updated road map for developing a goal-based code for Maritime Autonomous Surface Ships (MASS);

.22 agreed to re-establish the Correspondence Group with associated terms of reference;

.23 authorised flexibility for the Correspondence Group to convene remote meetings using a suitable platform in order to consider any of the terms of reference, as necessary, for the further development of the MASS Code; and,

.24 agreed to the terms of reference for the intersessional Working Group.

**Human element factors for MASS.** The Committee noted a statement by the observer of ITF, supported by France, Spain and Argentina, highlighting that the work carried out so far had unreasonably focused on defining requirements of the human element factor for MASS and that, because there was no clarity and a common understanding on the social, legal and technical implications of MASS and its functions and operations, it was premature to reach a common position, such as the one stated in the WG’s report.

**6. DEVELOPMENT OF FURTHER MEASURES TO ENHANCE THE SAFETY OF SHIPS RELATING TO THE USE OF FUEL OIL.**

**Background.** The Committee recalled that MSC 105 had re-established the Correspondence Group on Oil Fuel Safety and requested it to submit a report to this session. It was also noted that MEPC 79 had adopted amendments to MARPOL Annex VI concerning information on flashpoint in the bunker delivery note and encouraged Member States to make use of the *revised Guidance for best practice for Member State/coastal State* with regard to licensing schemes for bunker suppliers.

**Report of the Correspondence Group and commenting documents.** The Committee had for its consideration document MSC 107/6 (Germany), containing the report of the Correspondence Group on Oil Fuel Safety and in addition, four other submissions on this topic. A variety of views were expressed, following which the Committee endorsed the Group's proposal to develop a joint MSC-MEPC circular to establish a single sampling regime under both the SOLAS and MARPOL Conventions, and to limit the scope of such a regime to oil fuels only, subject to concurrent decision by MEPC.

**Possible measures related to oil fuel parameters other than flashpoint.** In considering the discussion during, and progress made, by the Correspondence Group on information sources to support the development of possible measures related to oil fuel parameters other than flashpoint, the Committee instructed the Working Group to give it further consideration.

**Report of the Working Group.** Having considered the report of the Working Group, the Committee approved it in general and took action as follows:

.1 approved the draft MSC-MEPC circular on Guidelines for the sampling of oil fuel for determination of compliance with the revised MARPOL Annex VI and SOLAS chapter II-2, subject to concurrent approval by MEPC, and requested the Secretariat to issue the circular in due course;

.2 noted the list of references to documents and information sources relevant for the development of measures to enhance the safety of ships relating to the use of fuel oil;

.3 approved the draft amendments to SOLAS regulation II-2/4 related to oil fuel parameters other than flashpoint, with a view for subsequent adoption;

.4 endorsed the Group's view that it is not necessary to re-establish the Correspondence Group on Oil Fuel Safety and noted that work under the output on "development of further measures to enhance the safety of ships relating to the use of fuel oil" is completed; and,

.5 endorsed the mutual understanding of flashpoint, subject to the entry into force of SOLAS regulation II-2/4.2.1.6, and invited the MEPC to note the decision of MSC in this regard, taking action as appropriate.

**Mutual understanding on flashpoint documentation**. With regard to .5 above, the Committee endorsed the following mutual understanding concerning flashpoint documentation, subject to the entry into force of SOLAS regulation II-2/4.2.1.6:

"The test method will provide a specified temperature when an ignition source produces a "flash" in the sample. If this flash occurs when the sample has been heated to a temperature below 70°C, this temperature should be reported on the bunker delivery note. If, however, the sample is heated to 70°C and then tested without producing a flash, there will not be an actual measured flashpoint temperature to report, but this is sufficient to establish that the flashpoint is above the 60°C minimum and thus allow for a statement to be made that the flashpoint has been measured at or above 70°C. If heating and testing of the sample has been carried out beyond 70°C and produced a flash, there will be a specific temperature that can be reported."

**7. MEASURES TO ENHANCE MARITIME SECURITY.**

**Updates on developments related to maritime security.** The Committee considered document MSC 107/7 (Secretariat), reporting on developments related to maritime security since MSC 106, and noted, in particular, the following:

.1 information on the delivery of maritime security-related activities as part of IMO's Integrated Technical Cooperation Programme (ITCP), including regarding two EU-funded port security projects currently being implemented by the Secretariat;

.2 consideration by FAL 47 of the implications of the additional data elements required by the Advanced Passenger Information (API) data set, including for the existing crew list declaration (FAL Form 5) and the passenger list declaration (FAL Form 6) and the impact of the proposed Passenger Name Record (PNR) data set on ship reporting, noting the progress made and change of PNR to "Passenger booking information"; and,

.3 ongoing Secretariat support to the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact, including delivery of the maritime and port security elements of the comprehensive visits of the UN Counter-Terrorism Committee.

Following discussion, the Committee encouraged SOLAS Contracting Governments to review and update the information contained in the Maritime Security Module of GISIS, in particular that related to port facility security plans, also to consider using the new option for electronic transfer of information into and from the Maritime Security Module so as to reduce the administrative burden on behalf of the nominated national point(s) of contact.

**Access to ports and ships by ship suppliers.** The Committee considered document MSC 107/7/1 (ISSA), informing it of continued delays, obstruction and unfair charges experienced by ship suppliers when seeking to enter ports globally and highlighting the availability of ISSA guidance related to ship supply and compliance with the ISPS Code. Following discussion, Member States were encouraged to remind relevant departments and/or agencies that, under the ISPS Code, security measures and procedures shall be applied in such a way as to cause a minimum of interference with, or delay to, passengers, ships, ships' personnel and visitors, goods and services.

**Difficulties in receiving maritime security alerts through the security alert system.** The Committee considered document MSC 107/7/2 (Colombia), providing their experience regarding the effectiveness of the ship security alert system (SSAS), specifically in cases of armed robbery incidents in Colombian ports. Following discussion, the Committee thanked Columbia for the information provided on their experience of the activation of the SSAS and noted the overwhelming support for the proposal in paragraph 14 of the document, i.e. that the Secretariat urge SOLAS Contracting Governments to ensure that the SSAS functions properly, which requires a designated point of contact to be available at all times (24 hours a day, 7 days a week), and an ability to manage information with the highest level of priority.

**8. PIRACY AND ARMED ROBBERY AGAINST SHIPS.**

**Developments since MSC 106.** Of note, 131 incidents of piracy and armed robbery against ships were reported to the Organisation as having occurred or been attempted in 2022, constituting a decrease of approximately 24% at the global level compared to 2021. The areas most affected in 2022 were the Straits of Malacca and Singapore (72), West Africa (21) and South America (Pacific) (14). The number of incidents in the Gulf of Guinea (West Africa) decreased in 2022 by 17 compared to the same period in 2021, constituting a decrease of 45%. In the ensuing discussion, most noteworthy was that:

.1 there has been a welcome reduction in piracy and armed robbery incidents off East Africa, with the DCoC having made successful efforts towards the adoption of a Whole of Government Approach to Maritime Security and an effective Information-Sharing Network;

.2 despite the overall decrease in the number of piracy and armed robbery incidents globally in 2022, recent incidents in the GoG involving the kidnap of crew were of significant concern; and,

.3 the YCoC, G7++ Friends of the Gulf of Guinea (G7++FoGG) and the Gulf of Guinea Maritime Collaboration Forum/Gulf of Guinea – Shared Awareness and Deconfliction (SHADE-GoG) provide useful collaboration forums, but they require sustained input from the region to be successful.

**9. UNSAFE MIXED MIGRATION BY SEA.** The Committee recalled that MSC 106, having considered a relevant proposal by Denmark and Italy (MSC 105/10/1), had adopted resolution MSC.528(106) on Recommended cooperation to ensure the safety of life at sea, the rescue of persons in distress at sea and the safe disembarkation of survivors.

**Inter-Agency Group on protection of refugees and migrants moving by sea**. The Committee considered document MSC 107/9 (Secretariat), reporting on the activities of the UNHCR-led Inter-Agency Group on protection of refugees and migrants moving by sea since MSC 106, in particular that the Group had held two meetings, on 14 December 2022 on "Challenges and opportunities in the Caribbean" and on 22 February 2023 on "Multipurpose aerial surveillance and the role of Frontex in the central Mediterranean Sea".

**Proposal to develop guidelines concerning non-survivors in migrant boats.** The Committee considered document MSC 107/9/1 (Liberia), proposing the development of guidelines to assist shipmasters and Regional Coordination Centres (RCCs) in handling cases of deceased persons found in migrant boats and of death after recovery, to complement the guidance provided in resolution MSC.528(106). After discussion, the Committee agreed with the proposal to develop guidance for handling cases of deceased persons found in migrant boats and of death after recovery, either as an amendment to resolution MSC.528(106) or as a separate set of guidelines, and invited Member States and international organisations to submit relevant proposals to MSC 108.

**10. FORMAL SAFETY ASSESSMENT.** The Committee recalled that SSE 8, when considering the agenda item on "Development of amendments to SOLAS chapter II-2 and the FSS Code concerning detection and control of fires in cargo holds and on the cargo deck of containerships", had agreed to a road map in order to identify regulatory gaps, with a view to developing relevant draft amendments to SOLAS and the FSS Code addressing fire safety on containerships; and, having noted the information on the EMSA CARGOSAFE FSA Study (SSE 8/10/3), had invited the Committee to establish an FSA Experts Group to review the outcome of any relevant studies on the matter. Following this, MSC 106 established an FSA Experts Group to review the outcome of any relevant FSA studies concerning detection and control of fires in cargo holds and on the cargo deck of containerships. It also agreed that such studies should be submitted to a future session and be forwarded to the Group by the Secretariat; and that the report of the FSA Experts Group would be submitted directly to the SSE Sub-Committee for consideration, with a view to developing relevant amendments.

Following consideration, the Committee requested the Secretariat to arrange the next meeting of the FSA Experts Group, to take place from 23 to 26 October 2023 at IMO Headquarters, and to circulate further details in due course. It also instructed the FSA Experts Group to review the report of the EMSA CARGOSAFE study and submit a report to SSE 10, so that it could be considered together with other documents deferred from SSE 8 and SSE 9.

**11. CARRIAGE OF CARGOES AND CONTAINERS**.

**Report of CCC 8.** The Committee approved, in general, the report of the eighth session of the Sub-Committee on Carriage of Cargoes and Containers (CCC) and took action as follows:

.1 approved draft Interim guidelines for the safety of ships using LPG fuels;

.2 approved draft amendments to the IGF Code and associated circular; the IMSBC Code and associated circular; the Grain Code; SOLAS chapter V with regard to the loss of containers; and, carriage conditions for VOC Condensate; also,

.3 unified interpretations of the IGF and IGC Codes for fuel preparation rooms not located on the open deck; bunkering manifold arrangements fitted on LNG bunkering ships in the IGC Code; specific guidance for the application of specified paragraphs within the IGC Code; and, piping systems for fuel supply to consumers.

**12. SHIP DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION.** The Committee approved, in general, the report of the ninth session of the Sub-Committee on Ship Design and Construction (SDC) (SDC 9/16) and took action as indicated hereunder.

**Draft amendments to the 2011 ESP Code.** The Committee approved draft amendments to the 2011 ESP Code.

**Amendments to the Revised guidelines on alternative design and arrangements for SOLAS chapters II-1 and III (MSC.1/Circ.1212/Rev.1).** The Committee endorsed the proposal by the Sub-Committee to consider the development of functional requirements and expected performances of SOLAS regulations II-1/28, II-1/29 and II-1/30 under the output on "Revision of SOLAS chapters II-1 (part C) and V and related instruments regarding steering and propulsion requirements to address both traditional and non-traditional propulsion and steering system. In this regard, the Committee recalled its earlier decision to transfer the aforementioned output, for which the SSE Sub-Committee had been initially assigned as the coordinating organ, from its post-biennial agenda to SDC 10's provisional agenda, in order to balance the workload between the two Sub-Committees. In addition, the Committee agreed with the Sub-Committee to take annex 4 to document SDC 9/7 (Japan) into account when commencing the work on the above new output, as it contained draft functional requirements for steering and propulsion under SOLAS regulations II-1/28 to 30 derived from the STEERSAFE project.

**Incorporating gender-neutral terms in IMO instruments.** The Committee considered whether to use the gender-neutral term ''continuously attended'' instead of the term ''manned'' in the goals for part E of SOLAS chapter II-1, considering that the current regulations in SOLAS chapter II-1 use the term "manned". Following discussion, the Committee acknowledged that the work to be undertaken to address gender-neutral language was a major effort and required a holistic approach beyond the instruments of the Committee and, therefore agreed to bring the matter to the attention of the Council and the Assembly for their consideration. The Committee also:

.1 adopted resolutions on amendments to all the MODU Codes prohibiting materials containing asbestos;

.2 approved draft amendments to SOLAS regulation II-1/3-4 relating to new requirements for all new ships other than tankers of not less than 20,000 GT to be fitted with emergency towing arrangements;

.3 agreed to a revised output title to read "Development of guidelines for emergency towing arrangements for ships other than tankers", having noted that, as a consequence, the Revised guidance on shipboard towing and mooring equipment would also need to be amended and therefore included under the revised output;

.4 approved unified interpretations on SOLAS regulation II-1/1.1.3 relating to keel-laying date; the 2008 IS Code expanding application in Part A of the Code relating to down-flooding points; and, clarifying the documentation which is necessary to support an Administration or RO in verifying compliance with SOLAS regulation II-1/3-8 (Towing and mooring equipment); and,

.5 adopted resolution MSC.188(79)/Rev.2 on Revised performance standards for water level detectors on ships subject to SOLAS regulations II-1/25, II-1/25-1 and XII/12, also incorporating the changes proposed in document MSC 107/12/2.

**13. HUMAN ELEMENT, TRAINING AND WATCHKEEPING.**

**Report of HTW 9**. The Committee approved, in general, the report of the ninth session of the Sub-Committee on Human Element, Training and Watchkeeping (HTW) (HTW 9/15) and took action as indicated below.

**E-learning courses.** The Committee agreed with the Sub-Committee's advice that model courses should not generally be converted into e-learning training material.

**Comprehensive review of the STCW Convention and Code.** The Committee approved draft amendments to table A-VI/1-4 of the STCW Code, to prevent and respond to bullying and harassment, including sexual assault and sexual harassment (SASH), and requested the Secretary-General to circulate them in accordance with article XII of the STCW Convention, with a view to adoption at MSC 108. In this connection, the Committee noted the Sub-Committee's agreement to also refer the above-mentioned draft amendments to the second meeting of the Joint ILO/IMO Tripartite Working Group to identify and address seafarers' issues and the human element (JTWG), for consideration and advice to MSC 108, before their adoption at that session.

**Comprehensive review of the STCW-F Convention.** The Committee approved the establishment of an intersessional Joint ILO/IMO Working Group (JWG) on Guidelines on the medical examination of fishing vessel personnel, tentatively scheduled to meet in the first quarter of 2024, subject to endorsement by C 129.

**Guidelines on the use of electronic certificates of seafarers.** the Committee approved Guidelines on the use of electronic certificates of seafarers, in conjunction with the adoption of the related amendments to the STCW Convention and Code.

**Joint MSC-FAL circular on Guidelines for the use of electronic certificates.** Following approval of the above Guidelines and having noted that FAL 47 had proposed the development of a joint MSC-FAL circular on guidelines for the use of electronic certificates, the Committee:

.1 agreed that any guidelines to be developed should address electronic certificates and documents comprehensively; and,

.2 invited MEPC and the LEG Committee to consider what certificates and documents provided in the instruments under their respective purviews could be addressed in future joint guidelines and toadvise MSC and the FAL Committee accordingly.

**14. SHIP SYSTEMS AND EQUIPMENT**. The Committee approved, in general, the report of the ninth session of the Sub-Committee on Ship Systems and Equipment (SSE) and took action as outlined below.

**Ventilation requirements for liferafts and partially enclosed lifeboats.** The Committee noted SSE 9's discussion on the compelling need for ventilation requirements for liferafts and partially enclosed lifeboats, in particular that the Sub-Committee had deferred consideration of specific proposals suggesting such amendments to the LSA Code to

SSE 10, having agreed that further discussion on the need for ventilation requirements for such types of survival craft was required.

**Draft amendments to resolution MSC.402(96).** Having approved draft amendments to paragraph 6.2.3 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)), emanating from new ventilation requirements for survival craft, the Committee requested the Secretary-General to circulate them in accordance with SOLAS article VIII, with a view to adoption by MSC 108.

**Lowering speed of survival craft and rescue boats.** The Committee recalled that the output on "Development of amendments to the LSA Code to revise the lowering speed of survival craft and rescue boats for cargo ships" had been completed by SSE 9. The original scope of the output was limited to all cargo ships to which SOLAS chapter III applied; however the Committee endorsed the expansion of the output to include addressing the maximum lowering speed for passenger ships.

**Revision of SOLAS chapter III and the LSA Code.** The Committee noted that, owing to time constraints, the Sub-Committee had been unable to progress the work on hazard identification for the revision of SOLAS chapter III and the LSA Code, and therefore authorised the re-establishment of an Intersessional Working Group.

**Fire safety of ro-ro passenger ships.** Following discussion, the Sub-Committee approved the modified proposed draft amendments to SOLAS chapter *II*-2 on fire safety of ro-ro passenger ships and requested the Secretary-General to circulate them in accordance with SOLAS article VIII, with a view to adoption at MSC 108.

**In-water performance of lifejackets.** The Committee approved, in principle, the draft MSC resolution on amendments to the Revised Recommendation, containing draft consequential amendments on the in-water performance of lifejackets, with a view to adoption at MSC 108, in conjunction with the adoption of the associated draft amendments to the LSA Code. The Committee also approved, in principle, the draft MSC circular on revised standardised life-saving appliance evaluation and test report forms (personal life-saving appliances), emanating from the draft amendments with respect to the in-water performance of lifejackets, with a view to final approval at MSC 108.

**Fire detection within control stations and cargo control rooms.** Having approved draft amendments to SOLAS regulation II-2/7.5.5 concerning fire detection within control stations and cargo control rooms, with a view to adoption at MSC 108, the Committee requested the Secretary-General to circulate them in accordance with SOLAS article VIII. The Committee also considered draft amendments to the Revised unified interpretations of SOLAS chapter II-2 and the FSS and FTP Codes (MSC.1/Circ.1456), together with document MSC 107/14/3 (IACS), proposing to modify the draft amendments to the UI to bring them in line with the corresponding draft amendments to SOLAS regulation II-2/7.5.5. Following this, the Committee approved, in principle, the draft MSC circular on revised unified interpretations of SOLAS chapter II-2 and the FSS and FTP Codes.

**Revision of the 1995 Code of Safety for Diving Systems.** The Committee adopted a resolution on International Code of Safety for Diving Operations, 2023 (2023 Diving Code), applicable to ships of not less than 500 gross tonnage that have a diving system installed on or after 1 January 2024. In this regard, the Committee invited A 33 to take appropriate action to reinstate the revoked resolutions A.536(13) and A.583.(14) on Code of Safety for Diving Systems on Amendments to the Code of Safety for Diving Systems. Note was taken of the Sub-Committee’s action to develop a new instrument in parallel to the existing 1995 Diving Code, given the need to address both diving safety and the specifications for hyperbaric evacuation systems in a single instrument and to expand on the industry's specific needs.

**Model courses.** It was noted that the Sub-Committee had validated revised Model Course 3.03 on Survey of Machinery Installations and its associated compendium, with a view to publication; also that it had established a Review Group to work between sessions by correspondence to review the draft revision of Model Course 3.04 on Survey of Electrical Installations to be prepared by a course developer, reporting to SSE 10.

**Revision of resolution MSC.402(96).** The Committee noted SSE 9's discussion on ISO Standard 23678 and a revision of resolution MSC.402(96) on *Requirements for maintenance, thorough examination, operational testing, overhaul and repair of lifeboats* *and rescue boats, launching appliances and release gear*, and considered the justification for a relevant new output prepared by SSE 9. Consequently, the Committee agreed to a new output on "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)) to address challenges with implementation of the requirements", for inclusion in the biennial agenda of the Sub-Committee for 2024-2025 and the provisional agenda for SSE 10.

**15. NAVIGATION, COMMUNICATIONS AND SEARCH AND RESCUE (URGENT MATTERS EMANATING FROM THE TENTH SESSION OF THE SUB-COMMITTEE).**

**Draft recommended APMs within a PSSA in the North-Western Mediterranean Sea.** The Committee noted that NCSR 10 had agreed to draft recommended associated protective measures (APMs), with a view to being included in the final MEPC resolution on the designation of a particularly sensitive sea area (PSSA) in the North-Western Mediterranean Sea to be considered by MEPC. In this respect, having noted that the Sub-Committee is an associated organ of output 4.1 (Identification and protection of Special Areas, Emission Control Areas and PSSAs and associated protective measures), the Committee agreed that these APMs could be referred by the NCSR Sub-Committee directly to MEPC 80, taking into account the general nature of the APMs, aiming at information-sharing primarily for contributing to the protection of the marine environment.

**Iridium SafetyCast service manual.** Having considered the draft revision of MSC.1/Circ.1613/Rev.1 on Interim Iridium SafetyCast service manual, the Committee approved MSC.1/Circ.1613/Rev.2 on Iridium SafetyCast service manual and agreed to the recommended implementation date of 1 July 2023, noting that the interim manual had been in operational use since it became effective on 1 January 2022 and, thus, there had been adequate time for circulation within the maritime community.

**IMO position on WRC-23 agenda items.**  The Committee approved the IMO position on ITU World Radio Conference 2023 (WRC-23) agenda items concerning matters relating to maritime services.

**Revision of COMSAR.1/Circ.32/Rev.1.** The Committee endorsed the approval of COMSAR.1/Circ.32/Rev.2 on Harmonization of GMDSS requirements for radio installations on board SOLAS ships.

**Delays affecting the availability of new GMDSS radio equipment.**

The Committee considered document MSC 107/15 (IEC and CIRM) advising expected delays in the availability of new GMDSS radio equipment recommended for installation on or after 1 January 2024, in compliance with the revised performance standards, for:

.1 shipborne VHF radio installations capable of voice communication and digital selective calling; and,

.2 shipborne MF and MF/HF radio installations capable of voice communication, digital selective calling and reception of maritime safety information and search and rescue related information.

The Committee considered document MSC 107/15/3 (Japan), commenting on document MSC 107/15 and proposing additional time in order to conform to the performance standards. It was noted that NCSR 10 had already considered the above proposals and revised the draft MSC circular proposed in document MSC 107/15 recommending, in particular, also including GMDSS equipment affected by resolution MSC.513(105), as proposed in document MSC 107/15/3, and extending the deadline for the continued installation of the aforementioned shipborne radio installations and Inmarsat-C ship earth stations to 1 January 2028. Following consideration, the Committee approved the MSC circular on *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).*

**Revision of MSC.1/Circ.1460/Rev.3.** Following consideration, the Committee agreed to the proposed draft revision of MSC.1/Circ.1460/Rev.3, with a modification to extend the deadline for updating VHF radiocommunication equipment to the first radio survey after 1 January 2028, as recommended by NCSR 10, and approved MSC.1/Circ.1460/Rev.4 on *Guidance on the validity of radiocommunications equipment installed and used on ships.*

**Information concerning the announcement by the United Kingdom Hydrographic Office (UKHO)to discontinue the paper charts portfolio.** The Committee considered document MSC 107/15/2 (Germany and ICS) expressing concern regarding the official announcement by UKHO to discontinue paper charts production at an undefined time after 2030. During discussion the majority of delegations that spoke supported the recommendations contained in document MSC 107/15/2. Views were also expressed indicating that ECDIS is not a mandatory carriage requirement for all ships and, therefore, paper charts will continue to be used, at least for the foreseeable future, by certain ships, including those not regulated by SOLAS. Following consideration, the Committee concurred with the recommendations in document MSC 107/15/2 in general and invited the HTW Sub-Committee to note the considerations on this matter, taking them into account when undertaking the comprehensive review of the STCW Convention in relation to training of seafarers, whilst also requesting the Secretariat to liaise with IHO and keep the Committee informed of any relevant developments related to this matter.

**16. APPLICATION OF THE COMMITTEE'S METHOD OF WORK**. Following consideration, based on the support of the overwhelming majority of delegations that spoke, the Committee agreed to discontinue the practice of taking decisions by correspondence.

**New Meeting Document Submission Portal.** The Committee, having been advised that the new Meeting Document Submission Portal on IMODOCS was now fully operational, approved the inclusion of a new paragraph 6.2 in the section "Preparation of documents" of the Committee's Guidelines, subject to concurrent approval by MEPC.

**17. WORK PROGRAMME.** The Committee spent an inordinate time on this item given the disruption caused by the COVID pandemic and a plethora of proposed outputs that have since been put forward. Following is a slimmed down version of the item.

**Proposals for new outputs**

**Regulatory framework for the safe reduction of GHG emissions from ships.** Following a protracted discussion, this item was passed to WG2 who recommended that:

.1 the title of the new output should read as "Development of a safety regulatory framework to support the reduction of GHG emissions from ships using new technologies and alternative fuels", with a target completion year as "continuous"; and,

.2 the draft terms of reference for a correspondence group on development of a safety regulatory framework to support the reduction of GHG emissions from ships using new technologies and alternative fuels.

Both recommendations were approved by the Committee following which new outputs were approved for the following items:

,1 The safe use if pesticides;

.2 Solid bulk cargoes not listed in the IMSBC Code;

.3 Shipboard towing and mooring equipment;

.4 FSS Code amendments on construction requirements for gaskets;

.5 **Addressing time pressure and related organisational factors;**

.6 Lashing software as a supplement to container stowage and securing plan;

.7 Revision of the Guidelines on Maritime Cyber Risk Management;

.8 Software maintenance of shipboard navigation and communication equipment;

.9 TWC demonstration for Cospas-Sarsat distress beacons using SAR/Galileo link;

,10 Prevention of loss of containers at sea;

.11 Fire prevention by detecting hazardous levels of airborne fuels/oil-based vapours;

.12 Guidelines harmonising the date format for certificates issued under IMO instruments;

.13 Revision of requirements for gyro-compasses on ships operating in polar waters;

.14 Requirement for setting of guard rails on the deck structure;

.15 Revision of the IMO Standard Marine Communication Phrases;

.16 Performance Standards for BeiDou Satellite Navigation System (BDS);

.17 Performance standards for DFMC SBAS and ARAIM in shipborne radionav receivers;

.18 Revision of MSC.1/Circ.1318/Rev.1 to clarify testing and inspection of CO2 cylinders;

.19 **Review of resolution MSC.402(96) to address implementation challenges.**

**(**Relating to maintenance, examination, testing, overhaul/repair of life/rescue boats).

**Workload of the Committee and its subsidiary bodies.** Given the ongoing and prospective high workload of the Committee and taking into account the 31 documents concerning 22 proposals for new outputs submitted to this session, it was decided that a relevant working group should be established at MSC 108 to conduct a holistic review of the workload of the Committee and sub-committees.

**18**. **ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR.**

**19. ANY OTHER BUSINESS.**

**Thematic priorities for the ITCP of the Organization for the 2024-2025 biennium. T**he Committee agreed to the following eight themes as the main subject areas for the IMO’s

Integrated Technical Cooperation Programme (ITCP):

.1 Safety of fishing vessels, domestic ferries and other non-SOLAS vessels.

.2 **Maritime security and anti-piracy measures.**

.3 Implementation of IMO instruments.

.4 Safety of navigation.

.5 **Search and rescue.**

.6 Implementation of the IMDG and IMSBC Codes.

.7 Implementation of the Polar Code.

.8 **Seafarers training and the human element**.

**Ongoing global shortage of electronic and hardware components**. The Committee noted information provided by CIRM concerning the ongoing global shortage of electronic and hardware components that was adversely affecting the manufacture, delivery and servicing of electronic marine equipment.

**Titanic Agreement.** The delegation of the United Kingdom informed the Committee of an Agreement concerning the Shipwrecked Vessel RMS Titanic, developed by the United Kingdom, the United States, France and Canada which entered into force for the United Kingdom and the United States in 2019; that, since then, both countries had worked together to encourage other nations to sign the Agreement to ensure a standardised, international approach to preserving the wreck site, with the purpose of ensuring the continued preservation of and respect for the resting site of more than 1,500 people aboard when the Titanic sank; and that the Titanic was inextricably linked to IMO as the tragedy of its sinking led to the creation of the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS), which is still the fundamental basis for ship safety today.

**DATE OF NEXT MEETING.**

The next meeting, MSC 108, has been tentatively scheduled for 13 – 24 May 2024.

End

Captain Paddy McKnight