

## **Report from the recent meeting with IMO's Maritime Safety Committee**

IMO's Maritime Safety Committee (MSC 99), met in London 16 – 25 May 2018. The agenda was comprehensive and included, amongst other things, autonomous vessels and mass migration by sea. The following items may be highlighted.

### **Amendments to mandatory instruments**

MSC 99 adopted several of amendments to the following IMO regulation:

- Amendments to Part A of the International Code on Intact Stability, 2008 (2008 IS Code) under the 1974 SOLAS Convention – Part A – Mandatory Criteria.
- Amendments to SOLAS, Part B-1 on stability, regulation 8-1 on system capabilities and operation information after a flooding casualty on passenger ships.
- Amendments to the IBC, HCH, GC, IGC and EGC Codes – these amendments to the Certificate of Fitness (CoF) include a paragraph in the CoF clarifying the requirements for an approved loading and stability manual/booklet to be supplied to the ship.

### **MSC 99 also approved several circulars, among others:**

- Consolidated Revised Emergency Response Procedures for Ships Carrying Dangerous Goods (EmS Guide) and its associated MSC circular.
- Guidelines on operational information for masters in case of flooding for passenger ships constructed before 1 January 2014, with a view to providing additional guidance for the uniform implementation of stability computers (SOLAS regulation II-1/8-1.3) for passenger ships constructed before 1 January 2014.

### **Autonomous ships**

MSC 99 embarked on discussions related to the maritime autonomous ships. The use of autonomous ships – or so-called Maritime Autonomous Surface Ships (MASS) – will create the need for a new regulatory framework that takes into consideration interaction and co-existence with existing ships.

To get a better understanding, MSC agreed to initiate a scoping exercise in order to identify affected IMO regulations by MASS. An over-arching framework was developed for the scoping exercise, including aims and objectives, methodology and provisional definitions and concepts of autonomy.

The work will be divided in two: a first step for the identification of provisions in the IMO regulation in terms of applicability to MASS, and a second step for an analysis to determine the most appropriate way of addressing MASS operation, taking into account e.g. the human element, technology and operational factors.

The MSC developed a work plan for the scoping exercise, in order to finalize the work by MSC 103 in 2020.

### **Interim guidelines for the harmonized display of navigation information received via communication equipment**

The interim guidelines aim to ensure that information is displayed in an efficient, reliable and consistent format, in a manner that is easily interpreted for the seafarer to support decision-making.

### **Enhanced Survey Programme (ESP) Code**

The 2011 ESP Code contains the survey requirements for bulk carriers and oil tankers. The Code has recently been reviewed and are now ready for MSC to issue a resolution on the amendments.

### **Safety standards for life boats with single fall and hook systems**

A proposal was put forward asking for a new output to amend the International Life-Saving Appliance (LSA) Code in order to ensure adequate safety standards for boats with single fall and hook systems and propose a new output for inclusion in the agenda of the Sub-Committee on Ship Systems and Equipment (SSE). The proposal received much support and the item will thus be applied to SSE agenda in spring 2019.

### **High Risk Areas**

MSC 99 was requested to reduce the High Risk Area (HRA) away from the Oman coast. Reasoning behind this request was the fact naval patrols, the facilitation of armed guard's embarkations and disembarkations and the reduction of piracy. This fact was also highlighted by IMO Secretary-General in his opening address. MSC 99 requested Oman to consult with industry organisations to find a future solution, likely in a possible revision of the Best Management Practice (BMP).

### **Mixed mass migration by sea**

MSC had discussions focussed around the high-level meeting at IMO last year. The situation in the Mediterranean is still a concern but efforts are being made to strengthen the Libyan Coast Guard through training and the provision of additional patrol craft. IMO will meet with other UN bodies in July 2018 to discuss further improvements.

### **Requirements for practical seating arrangements in survival craft**

MSC 99 also discussed the personal mobility and practical seating capacity in survival crafts. This is the first time the unexpected application of minimum seating space was submitted to IMO. The way they are designed today leaves seafarers and passenger with very little or no space, so they cannot move around the craft e.g. for sanitary or medical reasons.

MSC 99 agreed that there is an urgent need to develop of a minimum standard for personal mobility and seating space in survival crafts by developing new regulation addressing additional space for movement after the occupants are seated.