Preliminary Report on MEPC 61

Preliminary Report on the 61st Session of IMO’s Marine Environment Protection Committee held 27 September to 1 October 2010.

Energy Efficiency Measures for Ships

The Committee agreed to new draft text for Energy Efficiency Design Index (EEDI) for new ships and for Ship Energy Efficiency Management Plans (SEEMP) to be carried onboard all ships in operation. But, the Committee did not find consensus, as a whole, to approve and circulate this text for adoption as a revision to MARPOL VI at a future session of MEPC. However, Norway reported that, as a Party of MARPOL Annex VI, they will request IMO’s Secretary General to circulate the finalized text to all IMO Member States for adoption by Parties to MARPOL VI at MEPC 62 in July 2011 as a mandatory provision of MARPOL Annex VI.

Specific required EEDI baseline values are provided for seven types of ships (bulk carriers, gas tankers, tankers, container ships, general cargo ships, refrigerated cargo carriers, and combination carriers) for a range of deadweights to be determined. The EEDI values reduce by 30% for new ships built over a period of 10 years. Ships which have diesel-electric propulsion, turbine propulsion or hybrid propulsion systems are exempt until such time as the method of calculation of attained EEDI of these categories of ships is established. Provisions for technologies which provide equivalent levels of CO2 reductions are included in the regulations.

ECA Exemption

The Committee approved the United States’ proposed revision of MARPOL Annex VI to exempt steamships, which are not designed to use distillate or natural gas fuels, from the fuel sulphur limits (1.0% on 1 August 2012 reducing to 0.10% on 1 January 2015) associated with the new 200nmi USA/Canada Emission Control Area and the proposed additional ECA (see below). The exemption recognizes the risks associated with switching from residual fuel to distillate fuel in boilers. Adoption of the revision is scheduled for MEPC 62 in July 2011. Upon entry into force, steamships will be allowed to use fuel oil with a sulphur limit of 3.50% m/m until 1 January 2020 where the limit reduces to 0.50% m/m.

Additional ECA

An additional ECA comprised of the Caribbean waters surrounding the islands of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico and the United States Virgin Islands proposed by the United States was approved and is scheduled to be adopted during MEPC 62 in July 2011. These surrounding waters vary between 20 and 40 nmi.

VOC Management Plan

The Committee agreed with the IACS interpretation concerning the carriage requirements for an approved Volatile Organic Compound (VOC) Management Plan in that it only applies to a tanker carrying crude oil. This interpretation clarifies the uncertainty by removing the need for such a plan on gas carriers. A MEPC Circular will be issued in due course.

Ballast Water Technologies

The Committee granted Basic Approvals to three systems: Techwin Eco Co., Ltd. (TWECO) BWM System (Purimar), AquaStar BWM System and Kuraray Ballast Water Management System.

Final Approvals were granted to six systems: Special Pipe Hybrid BWM System combined with Ozone treatment version (SP-Hybrid BWMS Ozone version), ARA Ballast BWM System, BalClor BWM System OceanGuard™ BWM System, Ecochlor® BWM System, and Severn Trent De Nora BalPure® BWM System. All these systems treat ballast water with active substances.
GHG Market Based Measures

An IMO Expert Group submitted to the Committee for consideration a Feasibility Study and Impact Assessment of possible Market Based Measures to reduce GHG emissions from international shipping. The Assessment analyzed ten proposals which target GHG reductions through in-sector emission reductions from shipping or out-of-sector emissions reductions through the collection of funds to be used for mitigation activities in other sectors. To a certain extent the proposed Measures lacked sufficient maturity to enable the Expert Group to carry out a more in-depth evaluation and comparison between those Measures. However, little progress was made due primarily because of the division of principles between developing Countries (who remain adamant to respect the principle of Common But Differentiated Responsibilities so as build up their capabilities and facilitate the transfer of technology) and Kyoto Protocol Annex 1 developed Countries (who embrace the No More Favorable Treatment principle that ships should be treated equally). The Committee did however agree to hold an intersessional WG on GHG which has been tasked to:

- Examine the Expert Group's views on compelling need and purpose of the Measures
- Identify strengths and weaknesses of the proposed Measures;
- Examine the principles of the Measures against relevant Conventions (e.g., UNFCCC, Kyoto Protocol) and compatibility against the World Trade Organization rules; and
- Evaluate the impact of the Measures against international trade and the maritime sector of developing and least developed countries and small island developing states.

For additional ABS Regulatory Commentary, visit the Regulatory Newsroom.

(Although every effort is made to verify that the information contained in this Preliminary Report is factually correct, ABS accepts no liability for any inaccuracies that may occur nor for the consequences of any action that may be taken by parties relying on this information and opinions contained herein.)

ABS Regulatory Affairs
Contact: Greg Shark
Tel: 1-212-292-8806
Fax: 1-212-292-8805
Email: gshark@eagle.org
Website: www.eagle.org

Copyright © 2010 by ABS