

This Brief provides highlights of IMO's Maritime Safety Committee's 99th session, which met from May 16 to 25, 2018. A more extensive report, the ABS International Regulatory News Update, on MSC 99 will be released on receipt of the formal report of the 99th session by IMO.

Adopted Amendments to Mandatory Instruments

- Safe Return-to-Port – the Committee adopted resolution MSC.436(99) which extends the provisions for safe return to port after a flooding casualty occurs on new passenger ships to existing passenger ships constructed before January 1, 2014. Specifically, the revisions of SOLAS II-1/Regulation 8-1 require an onboard stability computer or access to shore-based support for the purpose of providing operational information to the Master for facilitating the safe return to port after a flooding casualty on existing passenger ships. Compliance is required no later than the first renewal survey completed after January 1, 2025. Guidelines on this operational information are provided in MSC.1/Circ.1400 (for existing passenger ships constructed before May 13, 2016) and MSC.1/Circ.1532 (for existing passenger ships constructed on/after May 13, 2016).
- 2010 FTP Code – The *Code for Application of Fire Test Procedures, 2010*, was revised by resolution MSC.437(99) to be consistent with SOLAS Chapter II which applies the same fire protection provisions for exposed floor coverings on passenger ships carrying not more than 36 passengers with those carrying more than 36 passengers. The revisions enter into force on January 1, 2020.
- Radiocommunication Services – Amendments to SOLAS IV, regulations 7, 8, 9 and 10, and the High Speed Craft Codes (1994 and 2000) were adopted by resolution MSC.436(99). The amendments reflect the migration of maritime safety information from *Inmarsat* to an *IMO recognized mobile satellite service*.

IMDG Code Amendments

The Committee adopted resolution MSC.442(99) which amends the International Maritime Dangerous Goods (IMDG) Code. The amendments, which enter into force on January 1, 2020, include revisions pertaining to the following classification categories:

- Class 1: Explosives - hazard divisions for packages containing pyrotechnic substances are revised.
- Class 3: Flammable liquids - the marking, labelling and testing of packages containing viscous liquids are revised.
- Class 4: Flammable solids – revision of the classification of self-reactive substances.
- Class 5: Oxidizing substances and organic peroxides - packing instructions and methods are revised.
- Class 8: Corrosive substances - a completely new Chapter 2.8 is adopted
- Class 9: Miscellaneous dangerous substances and articles, and environmentally hazardous substances - the marking and packaging of lithium batteries are consolidated.

The Emergency Response Procedures for Ships Carrying Dangerous Goods (EmS Guide) has been completely revised and is to enter into force on January 1, 2020. MSC.1/Circ.1588 recommends voluntary application as of January 1, 2019.

Maritime Autonomous Surface Ships (MASS)

In order to provide for a common understanding, the Committee undertook the development of a framework to be utilized in the regulatory scoping exercise to be carried out for the use of Maritime Autonomous Surface Ships (MASS). In association with the development of this framework the Committee agreed to a high level definition of MASS, the aim and objective of the regulatory scoping exercise, the degrees of autonomy to be considered in the regulatory scoping exercise, and a plan of work for the

exercise. A preliminary methodology was developed and a correspondence group was established to test this methodology taking into consideration existing SOLAS and Load Line Regulations.

GBS Verification Guideline Revisions

Goal-based ship construction standards (GBS) for bulk carriers and oil tankers:

The Committee agreed to a draft resolution to be considered for adoption in December 2018 at MSC 100. Also agreed was a revised timetable of activities for the implementation of the GBS verification scheme.

- Part A of the GBS Verification Guidelines – Part A was revised to reflect a three-year cycle assessment of new rules or changes to rules that have already been verified as conforming to Goal Based Standards (GBS). This would allow sufficient time to conclude the verification process of a specific audit and any identified non-conformities prior to beginning the subsequent audit, thereby avoiding unnecessary overlap of two consecutive verification processes. The Committee also agreed on the categorization of new and revised rules into three levels to assist the IMO auditors in determining which rules may be subjected to audit
- Part B of the GBS Verification Guidelines – Part B was revised with respect to the details of documentation and evaluation criteria used to verify that the rules conform to GBS.

Goal-based standards safety level approach:

Draft Interim guidelines for development and application of the IMO goal-based standards safety level approach were approved in principle. These guidelines will be considered in December 2018 at MSC 100 with a view towards approval.

IGF Code Revisions

The Committee decided to instruct Carriage of Cargoes and Containers (CCC 5) to reconsider the following draft amendments and report in December 2018 to MSC 100:

- allow for increased loading limits for liquefied gas fuel tanks to be not more than 95%.
- require gaseous fuel pipes, except fully welded fuel gas vent pipes, that pass through enclosed spaces, other than fuel preparation rooms or a tank connection spaces, are to be protected by a secondary enclosure.
- require internal combustion engines of the piston type to be fitted with an explosion relief system unless designed to accommodate the worst case overpressure due to ignited gas leaks or a detailed evaluation of the potential for unburnt gas in the exhaust system is to be undertaken covering the complete system justifies otherwise.
- allow for the required 900 mm cofferdam, separating the fuel containment system from Category A machinery spaces or other rooms with high fire risk, to be a fuel storage hold space for type C tanks only. These tanks are not to be located directly above Category A machinery spaces or other rooms with high fire risk.

Miscellaneous

- Safety Measures for non-SOLAS Ships Operating in Polar Waters – the Committee instructed the Ship Design and Construction Sub-Committee (SDC) to develop recommended safety measures for fishing vessels, pleasure yachts above 300 gross tonnage not engaged in trade, and cargo ships below 500 gross tonnage down to 300 gross tonnage, operating in polar waters. Additionally, the Committee agreed to further consider outstanding issues on this topic in December 2018 at MSC 100.
- Electrical Power Supply - the Committee invited Member States and international organizations to review the methods of energy distribution for systems onboard passenger ships that are required by SOLAS regulation II-1/42 to be supplied by the emergency source of electrical power. The Committee, while endorsing the view that these systems should not to be considered as part of the safe-return-to-port requirements, will consider whether there are any additional systems that may need to remain operational in a flooding damage casualty.
- New Safety Initiatives – The Committee agreed to the following new proposals:

- Survival crafts and rescue boats - In light of the increase launching heights for certain types of cargo ships (e.g., 35m for a 20,000 TEU containership) and so as to avoid difficulties encountered to adjust the lowering speed to be within the specified narrow range of lowering speed (1.1 to 1.3 m/s), the Committee agreed to a new work item on the “Development of amendments to the lowering speed of survival craft and rescue boats for cargo ships”. Any amendments developed in this effort shall apply to survival crafts and rescue boats on all cargo ships to which SOLAS Chapter III is applied and to all lifting appliances using falls and winches. If the amendments are finalized and adopted before July 2022, then it is envisaged that the amendments should enter into force on January 1, 2024.
- Self-righting or canopied reversible liferafts: A review of the liferaft requirements in SOLAS was undertaken to improve the effectiveness of liferafts arranged on passenger and cargo ships. As a result of this review the Committee agreed to include an output on amendments to SOLAS Chapter III and Chapter IV of the LSA Code to require the carriage of self-righting or canopied reversible liferafts for new ships. Any amendments to be developed should enter into force on January 1, 2024 provided that they are finalized and adopted by IMO before July 1, 2022.
- Moisture content of solid bulk cargo: the Committee considered a proposal to amend the definition of “Group A” in the IMSBC Code to include phenomena other than “*liquefaction*” and agreed to instruct the Subcommittee on Carriage of Cargoes and Containers (CCC) to consider the proposed amendment at its next meeting.
- Lifeboat single fall and hook systems: taking into account potential risks of accidental release of lifeboats and rescue boats fitted with single fall and hook systems during recovery operations, the Committee agreed to task the Sub-Committee on Ship Systems and Equipment (SSE) to review the LSA Code with respect to single fall and hook systems which have on-load release capability. It is envisaged that any amendments resulting from this review should enter into force on 1 January 2022.
- Code of Safety for Diving Systems: the Committee tasked the SSE Sub-Committee to review the 1995 Code with respect to emergency evacuation arrangements to provide for saturation divers under a pressurized diving system a safe surface pressure decompression space taking into account recent and detailed industry guidelines and practices on hyperbaric evacuation systems.