

International Regulations Briefing for Marine Environment Protection Committee 70th Session

24 to 28 October 2016

1 Adoption of the agenda

The seventieth session of the Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC) was held at IMO Headquarters from 24 to 28 October 2016, chaired by Mr. A. Domínguez (Panama). The Vice-Chair of the Committee, Mr. H. Saito (Japan), was also present.

The Secretary-General welcomed participants and delivered his opening address, the full text of which is available at the IMO website at the following link:

<http://www.imo.org/en/MediaCentre/SecretaryGeneral/Secretary-GeneralsSpeechesToMeetings>

The Committee adopted the agenda MEPC 70/1 for the session.

2 Decisions of other bodies

MEPC noted the decisions of FAL 40 (MEPC 70/2), MSC 96 (MEPC 70/2/1), C 116 (MEPC 70/2/2) and LEG 103 (MEPC 70/2/3) with regard to its work, agreed to take action as appropriate under the relevant agenda items.

3 Consideration and adoption of amendments to mandatory instruments

The Committee was invited to consider and adopt proposed amendments to:

- MARPOL Annex I, appendix II, related to Form B of the Supplement to the International Oil Pollution Prevention (IOPP) Certificate;
- MARPOL Annex V, related to HME substances and the Form of the Garbage Record Book; and
- MARPOL Annex VI, related to the data collection system for fuel consumption.

4 Harmful aquatic organisms in ballast water

MEPC noted that the entry-into-force conditions of the BWM Convention had been met on 8 September 2016 with the accession of Finland, and that the Convention will therefore enter into force on 8 September 2017. The Committee further noted that the number of Contracting Governments was 53 on the date of this report, representing 53.28% of the world's merchant fleet tonnage.

It is worth noting that MEPC agreed that the revised Guidelines (G8) should be made mandatory and renamed as "Code for approval of ballast water management systems", taking into account resolution A.911(22) on *uniform wording for referencing IMO instruments*, after the entry into force of the BWM Convention. Consequently, the Committee instructed the Secretariat to prepare, for consideration by MEPC 71, any consequential amendments to Guidelines (G8) and draft amendments to regulation D-3 of the Convention to reflect the mandatory status, for circulation upon entry into force of the Convention.

The remainder of this item concerned type approved convention shipping ballast water management systems and proposed amendments to the BWM Convention; as such there was little of concern for World Sailing.

5 Air pollution and energy efficiency

This item dealt with Impact on the Arctic of Black Carbon emissions from international shipping; Supply of fuel oil not in compliance with regulation 14 of MARPOL Annex VI; Guidelines for onboard sampling and verification of the sulphur content of the fuel oil used on board ships; Unified interpretations to the NOX Technical Code 2008 related to the approval of SCR systems and Energy Efficiency of ships among other things. There is little of interest to World Sailing.

6 Further technical and operational measures for enhancing the energy efficiency of international shipping

This item is little of interest for World Sailing.

7 Reduction of GHG emissions from ships

MEPC recalled that MEPC 69 had agreed to establish at this session a working group for an in-depth debate on how to progress the matter of reducing GHG emissions from ships, taking into account the documents submitted to this session and the related documents referred to this session by MEPC 69 as well as comments made at MEPC 69 and at this session.

The Committee noted the outcome of the United Nations Climate Change Conference and requested the Secretariat to continue its well-established cooperation with the UNFCCC Secretariat and its attendance at relevant UNFCCC meetings, and to continue to bring the outcome of IMO's work to the attention of appropriate UNFCCC bodies and meetings. The Committee also welcomed the forthcoming entry into force of the Paris Agreement on 4 November 2016.

In conclusion, the Committee approved the Roadmap for developing a comprehensive IMO strategy on the reduction of GHG emissions from ships, as set out in annex 11 of the report of MEPC 69.

8 Identification and protection of Special Areas and PSSAs

MEPC noted a proposal to designate the region surrounding the Jomard Entrance, part of the Louisiade Archipelago at the south eastern extent of Milne Bay Province, Papua New Guinea, as a Particularly Sensitive Sea Area (PSSA). This was approved by MEPC.

MEPC considered document MEPC 70/8/1 (Russian Federation) proposing to introduce requirements to regularly evaluate the status and effectiveness of Special Areas and PSSAs. The Committee noted that the document discussed the range of environmental, social or economic criteria used to justify the designation of Special Areas under MARPOL and/or PSSAs and the need to evaluate how the designated areas have contributed to reducing the impact on such criteria. After some discussion, MEPC invited interested Member Governments wishing to amend the 2013 Guidelines for the Designation of Special Areas under MARPOL, which currently do not contain an evaluation of the effectiveness of Special Areas under MARPOL, to submit proposals for a new output to a future session, in accordance with the Committees' Guidelines.

9 Pollution prevention and response

Nothing of interest in this work item for World Sailing.

10 Reports of other sub-committees

Under this item MEPC took action on a wide range of issues that are of little interest to World Sailing.

11 Technical Cooperation Activities for the Protection of the Marine Environment

Under this item, the Chair recalled that the constituent programmes of the Integrated Technical Cooperation Programme (ITCP) could only be delivered if the required funding was secured from internal resources and/or external donor contributions. He expressed appreciation for all the financial and in-kind contributions to the ITCP and major projects; and invited Member States and international organizations to continue and, if possible, increase their support for the Organization's technical cooperation activities so that successful delivery of the programme could be achieved.

12 Capacity building for the implementation of new measures

Generally, amendments to mandatory instruments and to outputs related to mandatory instruments had been found to have no capacity-building implications. However, there was an identified need for technical assistance related to updates to domestic legislation that could be undertaken through the Organization's technical cooperation and assistance to Member States.

MEPC 70 asked the Vice-Chairman, in consultation with the Chairman and with the assistance of the Secretariat, to submit to MEPC 71 a preliminary assessment of capacity-building implications or technical assistance needs related to the amendments to mandatory instruments and the new outputs related to proposed new measures approved at the current session.

13 Analysis and consideration of recommendations to reduce administrative burdens in IMO instruments as identified by the SG-RAR

The item is of no interest to World Sailing.

14 Application of the Committees' Guidelines

The Committee considered the draft revised Committees' Guidelines approved by MSC 96 and agreed that, in line with the agreement to use gender-neutral terms in the revised Rules of Procedure, the same should be applied to the Committees' Guidelines, i.e. the terms "Chairman" and "Vice-Chairman" are replaced with the terms "Chair" and "Vice-Chair".

In conclusion, the Committee approved the draft MSC-MEPC.1 circular on Organization and method of work of the Maritime Safety Committee and the Marine Environment Protection Committee and their subsidiary bodies (MSC 96/25/Add.1, annex 24), subject to the changes described in The paragraph for approval by MSC 97.

15 Work programme of the Committee and subsidiary bodies

The Committee noted that the normal action for accepted outputs should be their placement on the post-biennial agenda of the Committee determined under this agenda item. No items have been added that are of interest to World Sailing.

The Committee noted that MEPC 71 and MEPC 72 have been scheduled to take place from 3 to 7 July 2017 and in spring 2018, respectively.

16 Election of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman for 2017

The Committee, in accordance with Rule 18 of its Rules of Procedure, unanimously re-elected Mr. A. Domínguez (Panama) as Chair and Mr. H. Saito (Japan) as Vice-Chair, both for 2017.

17 Any other business

There were no items of additional business of interest to World sailing.

18 Action requested of other IMO bodies

The actions in this item were addressed to the Council, the Technical Cooperation Committee and to MSC; nothing under this item affects World Sailing.