

INTERNATIONAL MARITIME ORGANISATION**Maritime Safety Committee (MSC 105), 20-29 April 2022**

Action Required: IR Commission members are invited to note the relevant outcomes of MSC 105.

Safety and security in the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov

Following up on the ongoing actions undertaken by the Secretary-General to address the situation of shipping and seafarers in the Black Sea/Sea of Azov conflict area, the MSC urged him and the Secretariat to continue their efforts regarding the establishment of safe maritime corridors and the safe evacuation of seafarers from the affected area as a priority; and adopted resolution MSC.495(105) - Actions to facilitate the urgent evacuation of seafarers from the war zone area in and around the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov as a result of the Russian Federation aggression against Ukraine.

In addition, the MSC invited the Council to consider a number of issues raised at MSC 105, including consideration and analysis of reports on State's armed interference in shipping; and the development of guidance relating to the prevention of such interference.

Modernized GMDSS adopted

Following a comprehensive review of the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS), the MSC adopted a set of amendments to complete the work on modernization of the GMDSS and to enable the future use of modern communication systems in the GMDSS whilst removing obsolete requirements. The MSC also adopted a substantial number of amendments or revisions to existing related resolutions and guidelines, including performance standards for relevant equipment.

Maritime autonomous surface ships (MASS)

The MSC commenced work on the development of a goal-based instrument regulating the operation of maritime autonomous surface ships (MASS).

The MSC approved a road map containing a work plan for the development of IMO instruments for Maritime Autonomous Surface Ships (MASS). The road map envisages the development of a goal-based instrument in the form of a non-mandatory Code, with a view to adoption in the second half of 2024 as the first stage. Based on the experience gained in the application of the non-mandatory MASS Code, a mandatory MASS Code will be developed which is envisaged to enter into force on 1 January 2028.

The MASS Correspondence Group was re-established and instructed, among other things, to:

- consider key principles and common understanding of the purpose and objectives for the new instrument;
- commence the development of a non-mandatory goal-based MASS Code;
- submit a written report to MSC 107 (spring 2023), with a verbal status report at MSC 106.

(Note that World Sailing is represented on the MASS Correspondence Group by David Brunskill, given WS' interest in the safe interaction of future MASS vessels with recreational and sailing craft).

Dissemination of MSI and SAR-related information over multiple GMDSS recognized mobile satellite services

The MSC considered the report of the Correspondence Group on Dissemination of Maritime Safety Information (MSI) and Search and Rescue (SAR)-related information, established at MSC 103 to consider the mandatory use of all recognized mobile satellite services that provide services within the service area for dissemination of information by MSI and SAR information providers, as well as options to address cost implications for information providers concerning the dissemination of information over multiple GMDSS mobile satellite services.

The MSC agreed that dissemination of MSI and SAR related information was an integral service of the GMDSS and critical to preserving the safety of life at sea and, therefore, once a mobile satellite service was recognized by the Organization, it must then be used by all information providers covering its service area. The MSC urged MSI and SAR information providers to take the necessary actions to expedite the use of all mobile satellite services recognized by the Organization providing services within their service areas for the dissemination of information to ships navigating in those areas.

The Sub-Committee on Navigation, Communications and Search and Rescue (NCSR) was instructed to continue considering technical solutions for the dissemination and reception of MSI and SAR related information over multiple services, including interoperability issues and broadcast monitoring, with a view to addressing the operational and financial burden of disseminating the information to ships. The NCSR Sub-Committee was also instructed, inter alia, to further consider options to address cost implications for information providers concerning the dissemination of information over multiple recognized mobile satellite services, identify advantages and disadvantages, and advise the Committee, as appropriate.

Comprehensive review of the 1978 STCW Convention and Code

The MSC instructed the Sub-Committee on Human Element, Training and Watchkeeping (HTW) to start a comprehensive review of the STCW Convention and Code, with a target completion year of 2026.

The Sub-Committee was instructed to first make a preliminary assessment of the scope of the work to be conducted, identify specific areas to be reviewed and prepare a roadmap for approval by the Committee before initiating the preparation of draft amendments.

The aim is to adapt the Convention and the Code to new technical developments in shipping, environmental protection and climate change. This output will also provide an opportunity to address the effective implementation of this instrument in all circumstances, thus ensuring that it continues to provide a set of globally recognized standards for training and certification of seafarers.

Sexual assault and harassment in the maritime sector

The MSC considered ways to address bullying and harassment in the maritime sector, including sexual assault and sexual harassment, as well as the development of relevant provisions to establish appropriate maritime workplace behavioural norms and essential human elements of psychological safety.

Recognizing that coordinated action by various UN agencies is required to address these issues, the MSC agreed to instruct the Joint ILO/IMO Tripartite Working Group (JTWG) on seafarers' issues and the human element to work on these matters. Specifically, the JTWG was instructed to "consider bullying and harassment in the maritime sector, including sexual assault and sexual harassment, taking into account information submitted by interested parties, with a view to providing recommendations for future steps, including the development of legislation, mechanisms and policies by relevant stakeholders, aimed at reporting and addressing these matters" (the instructions to the JTWG are subject to endorsement by the IMO Council).

Furthermore, the MSC instructed the HTW Sub-Committee, in the context of its comprehensive review of the STCW Convention and Code, to develop and finalize, as a matter of priority, STCW training provisions addressing bullying and harassment in the maritime sector, including sexual assault and sexual harassment. Such draft provisions will be considered in advance of the completed comprehensive review.

The MSC encouraged Member States to implement mechanisms for the notification and control of cases of bullying and harassment and adopt relevant policies and legislation to protect seafarers. In addition, shipping companies were encouraged to implement internal monitoring, reporting and prevention policies, as well as procedures aimed at eliminating all forms of bullying and harassment on board ships and to take corrective action against persons engaging in unacceptable behaviour and practices of this nature.

Other outputs

Other new outputs approved at this session include:

- Development of guidelines for the use of Electronic Nautical Publications (ENPs);

- Amendments to the revised ECDIS performance standards (resolution MSC.232(82)) to facilitate a standardized digital exchange of ships' route plans

Resolutions adopted:

RESOLUTION MSC.508(105) – PERFORMANCE STANDARDS FOR THE RECEPTION OF MARITIME SAFETY INFORMATION AND SEARCH AND RESCUE RELATED INFORMATION BY MF (NAVTEX) AND HF

RESOLUTION MSC.509(105) – PROVISION OF RADIO SERVICES FOR THE GLOBAL MARITIME DISTRESS AND SAFETY SYSTEM (GMDSS)

RESOLUTION MSC.510(105) – PERFORMANCE STANDARDS FOR SEARCH AND RESCUE RADAR TRANSPONDERS

RESOLUTION MSC.511(105) – PERFORMANCE STANDARDS FOR SHIPBORNE VHF RADIO INSTALLATIONS CAPABLE OF VOICE COMMUNICATION AND DIGITAL SELECTIVE CALLING

RESOLUTION MSC.512(105) – PERFORMANCE STANDARDS FOR 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

RESOLUTION MSC.513(105) – PERFORMANCE STANDARDS FOR INMARSAT-C SHIP EARTH STATIONS CAPABLE OF TRANSMITTING AND RECEIVING DIRECT-PRINTING COMMUNICATIONS

RESOLUTION MSC.514(105) – GUIDELINES FOR THE AVOIDANCE OF FALSE DISTRESS ALERTS

RESOLUTION MSC.515(105) – PERFORMANCE STANDARDS FOR SURVIVAL CRAFT PORTABLE TWO-WAY VHF RADIOTELEPHONE APPARATUS

RESOLUTION MSC.516(105) – AMENDMENTS TO THE PERFORMANCE STANDARDS FOR RADIOCOMMUNICATION EQUIPMENT (RESOLUTION MSC.80(70))

RESOLUTION MSC.517(105) – PERFORMANCE STANDARDS FOR A SHIPBORNE INTEGRATED COMMUNICATION SYSTEM (ICS) WHEN USED IN THE GLOBAL MARITIME DISTRESS AND SAFETY SYSTEM (GMDSS)

There were no other issues of note for World Sailing arising from this session.