

Subject:

IMO the 47th session of the Maritime Environment Protection Committee
(Agendas concerning technical issues affecting ship's structure)

ClassNK

Technical Information

No. TEC-0457

Date 25 May 2002

To whom it may concern

IMO held the 47th session of the Maritime Environment Protection Committee (MEPC) from 4 to 8 March 2002. Technical matters which are relevant to this society discussed at the session are briefly given hereunder. For your information, no mandatory resolution was adopted at this session.

1. Agenda item 2-Harmful aquatic organisms in ballast water

(Draft instrument)

(1) The Committee discussed the draft instrument on the issue of ballast water management standards, for the draft "International Convention for the Control and Management of Ship's Ballast Water and Sediments".

(2) The Committee, considering the ballast water exchange was currently the only management option available to the shipping sector and the necessity to make substantial progress on this issue to hold the planned Diplomatic Conference in 2003, agreed that the ballast water exchange standard should be one of the tools within the draft legal instrument, alongside one or more treatment standards. The Committee also agreed that a 95% reduction of harmful aquatic organisms and pathogens would achieve a worthwhile reduction of risk and would be a practicable and achievable solution in the medium term.

However specific plans such as what equipment to be onboard the ship, how the ballast tanks to be arranged and strength of the ballast tanks have not been discussed. And even if the International Convention is adopted at the Diplomatic Conference in 2003, it is hard, at this moment, to predict when the Convention entries into force.

(3) (MSC/MEPC Circular)

The Committee considered and approved the MSC/MEPC Circular on "design suggestions for ballast water and sediment management options in new ships". This circular, which is of recommendatory nature only, is directed to informing and stimulating the shipbuilding community about the future directions on the ballast water issue. The following matters are stated briefly as consideration at the design phase of new ships;

- (i) Sea chest
- (ii) Ballast water suction piping
- (iii) Sea suction strainers
- (iv) Ballast pumps
- (v) Ballast tanks

(To be continued)

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2. Agenda item 4-Prevention of air pollution from ships

MARPOL Annex VI, when it comes into force, will set limits on sulphur oxide and nitrogen oxide emissions from ship exhausts. And the Committee agreed to establish a Correspondence Group to collate information received, to prepare an IMO Strategy/Policy on greenhouse gas emission from ships and to develop a draft Assembly resolution on this matter. And the Committee adopted the "Guidelines for the Sampling of Fuel Oil for Determination of Compliance with Annex VI of MARPOL 73/78".

3. Agenda item 6-Interpretation and amendments of MARPOL 73/78 and related Codes

The Committee noted that no objections had been received by 1 March 2002 to the amendments to MARPOL Annex I concerning the revised regulation 13G and the amendments will enter into force on 1 September 2002.

(1) (Condition Assessment Scheme - Model Survey Plan)

MEPC 46 adopted by resolution MEPC.94(46) the Condition Assessment Scheme (CAS) as a mandatory instrument under revised resolution 13G, with the understanding that the Model Survey Plan would be developed at MEPC 47. The Committee approved a Model Survey Plan and agreed that the Model Survey Plan should be issued as soon as possible for Member Government to start implementing it given the fact that certain tankers will have to undergo their first CAS survey in September 2002. So the Committee decided to issue the Model Survey Plan as an MEPC circular which also includes;

- (i) A Guidance Note for the Safe Conduct of CAS surveys which has been developed for the safe conduct of CAS Surveys, including protection of individuals involved; and
- (ii) CAS Schedule giving a flow chart diagram and time scales for the CAS.

(2) (Interpretation of revised resolution 13G)

The Committee discussed on some ambiguous points in the revised resolution 13G as set out MEPC.95(46) in April 2001 as follows;

(i) Category of product tankers of 20,000 dwt and 30,000 dwt

Regulation 13G as currently drafted may be interpreted to allow new product tankers, as defined in regulation 1(26), of 20,000 dwt and above but less than 30,000 dwt carrying fuel oil, heavy oil or lubricating oil as cargo, to fall under Category 2 without being provided with SBT/PL arrangement. Although the informal group confirmed that any Category 2 tanker must be provided with SBT/PL, the Committee agreed that the view of the group should be regarded in the interim as a tentative interpretation and invited delegation to provide further comments to MEPC 48 for consideration.

(ii) Major conversion

The Committee agreed that the conversion of a Category 1 tanker cargo tanks to meet the SBT requirements needs not be considered to be a "major conversion". A Category 1 tanker may be converted into a Category 2 tanker only if it fully complies with the requirements of the regulations referred to in regulation 1(26), i.e. regulation 13, 13B, 13E and 18(4).

(To be continued)

(iii) Phase-out scheme

The phase-out scheme indicates anomalies in that certain tankers delivered later have to be phased-out earlier than tankers delivered earlier. The Committee, when drafting, recognized the above anomalies, but accepted them as logical and unavoidable consequences of reaching a compromise phase-out scheme.

(iv) Phase-out scheme under current regulation 13G

According to the phase-out schedule, tankers delivered earlier than 1973 may continue operate beyond the age of 30 years. The Committee, bearing in mind that the intent and purpose of the amendments are to accelerate the phase-out of single hull tankers, agreed that a tanker which has already reached its phase-out date under the current regulation 13G should not be allowed to operate beyond that date.

4. Agenda item 7-Harmful effects of the use of anti-fouling paints for ships

The Committee considered follow-up actions to the adoption in October 2001 of the International Convention on the control of harmful anti-fouling systems on ships. Under the new Convention, Parties to the Convention are required to prohibit and/or restrict the use of harmful anti-fouling systems on ships (prohibition on the application by 1 January 2003 and a complete prohibition by 1 January 2008) flying their flag, as well as ships not entitled to fly their flag but which operate under their authority and all ships that enter a port, shipyard or offshore terminal of a Party.

The Committee requested the Flag State Implementation (FSI) Sub-Committee to urgently develop the following guidelines as a matter of urgency, as required by the Convention:

- (i) Guidelines for brief sampling of ships anti-fouling systems;
- (ii) Guidelines for inspection of ships anti-fouling systems; and
- (iii) Guidelines for survey.

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