



TECHNICAL CIRCULAR No. 457 of 05th January 2018

To: All Surveyors/Auditors

Applicable to flag: All Flags

IMO Adopts New Strategic Directions

Reference: IMO Resolutions

IMO Adopts New Strategic Directions

IMO Assembly 30th Session

The IMO Assembly adopted seven new strategic directions at its 30th session at IMO Headquarters in London last week, designed to support the implementation of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The strategic directions are:

- Improve implementation – ensuring regulations are effectively, efficiently and consistently implemented and enforced.
- Integrate new and advancing technologies in the regulatory framework - balancing the benefits derived from new and advancing technologies against safety and security concerns, the impact on the environment and on international trade facilitation, the potential costs to the industry, and their impact on personnel, both on board and ashore.
- Respond to climate change - developing appropriate, ambitious and realistic solutions to minimize shipping's contribution to air pollution and its impact on climate change.
- Engage in ocean governance – engaging in the processes and mechanisms by which the use of the oceans and their resources are regulated and controlled.
- Enhance global facilitation and security of international trade - addressing things like arrival and departure formalities, documentation and certification, and generally reducing the administrative burdens that surround ship operation.
- Ensure regulatory effectiveness - improving the actual process of developing regulations, to make them more effective; gathering more data, and being better and smarter at using it to make decisions; getting better feedback from Member States and the industry and improving the way IMO learns from experience and feeds those lessons back into the regulatory process.
- Ensure organizational effectiveness - increasing the overall effectiveness of IMO, including the Member states, non-governmental organizations, donors, the Secretariat –all the many

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stakeholders in the Organization as a whole.

Resolutions

1. Focus on marine plastic pollution

The Assembly recognized that the ongoing problem of marine plastic pollution required further consideration as part of a global solution within the framework of ocean governance. This is in line with the UN SDG 14 (Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development) which has a target to prevent and significantly reduce marine pollution of all kinds, in particular from land-based activities, including marine debris and nutrient pollution by 2025.

IMO's MARPOL treaty addresses garbage under its Annex V, which bans the discharge of plastics from ships into the oceans. The treaties which regulate the dumping of wastes at sea (London Convention and Protocol) also have role to play in addressing plastic in the oceans from land-based sources.

The Assembly encouraged Member States, Parties to MARPOL Annex V and international organizations to submit concrete proposals to the next sessions of the Marine Environment Protection Committee and the meeting of the Parties to the London Convention and Protocol which meet during 2018.

2. Polar Code second phase welcomed

The Polar Code, which entered into force on January 1, 2017 under both the SOLAS and MARPOL treaties, provides additional requirements for safe ship operation in polar waters and the protection of the polar environment. The IMO Assembly welcomed the planned work within the IMO Maritime Safety Committee (MSC) to build on the already-adopted Polar Code and move forwards with looking at how vessels not currently covered by its requirements might be regulated in future. This includes a second phase of work to included fishing vessels and smaller ships not covered by SOLAS and will be initiated at MSC 99 in May 2018.

3. IMO number scheme extended to fishing vessels and other vessels

The Assembly agreed to extend the IMO Ship Identification Number Scheme to more vessels, on a voluntary basis, to support ship safety and pollution prevention by being able to more easily identify vessels.

The number scheme applies to ships over 100gt and is mandatory for passenger ships of 100 gross tonnage and upwards and all cargo ships of 300 gross tonnage and upwards. In 2013, the Assembly agreed to voluntary extension to fishing vessels over 100gt. Further voluntary application is now extended to fishing vessels of steel and non-steel hull construction; passenger ships of less than 100 gross tonnage, high-speed passenger craft and mobile drilling units, engaged on international voyages; and to all motorized inboard fishing vessels of less than 100 gross tonnage down to a size limit of 12 meters in length overall authorized to operate outside

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waters under national jurisdiction of the flag State.

Identifying and tracking fishing vessels operating at sea and being able to establish their ownership is an important part of ongoing work to tackle illegal, unreported, unregulated (IUU) fishing. IMO is working closely with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the International Labour Organization (ILO) as well as other stakeholders, to tackle IUU fishing.

IMO is also encouraging States to ratify the Cape Town Agreement on fishing vessel safety, to bring this important treaty into force.

4. Ratification of 2010 HNS Protocol urged

The Assembly adopted a resolution calling on States to consider ratifying a key treaty which will provide a global regime for liability and compensation in the event of an incident involving the international or domestic carriage by sea of Hazardous and Noxious Substances, such as chemicals, LPG and LNG.

The resolution calls on States to consider ratifying, or acceding to, the 2010 HNS Protocol and to implement it in a timely manner. It also urges all States to work together towards the implementation and entry into force of the 2010 HNS Protocol by sharing best practices, and in resolving any practical difficulties in setting up the new regime.

5. Delegating the authority of issuing certificates of insurance

The Assembly adopted a resolution to allow for the delegation of authority to issue certificates of insurance under the International Convention on Civil Liability for Oil Pollution Damage, 1992 (the 1992 Civil Liability Convention) and the 2010 HNS Convention.

Unlike the Bunkers Convention 2001, the 2002 Athens Convention and the 2007 Nairobi Wreck Removal Convention, the 1992 Civil Liability Convention and the 2010 HNS Convention do not provide an explicit framework for the delegation of authority to issue certificates of insurance.

The resolution confirms that a State Party to the 1992 Civil Liability Convention or the 2010 HNS Convention can authorize an institution or an organization recognized by it to issue the certificates of insurance or other financial security required by these Conventions. It also reminds States Parties that the delegation of authority to issue the certificates of insurance or other financial security required by the 1992 Civil Liability Convention and the 2010 HNS Convention would not affect the potential liability the delegating State may have in relation to those certificates.

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REFERENCES:

- **IMO Resolution London**

- ATTACHMENTS: No.

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