

**IMO MEETING REPORT**

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| DATE: 23 January 2025 | COMMITTEE: MSC |
| ATTENDEE: Andy Williams | SUB GROUP: SDC |

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| This was the 11th session of the Sub-Committee on Ship Design and Construction, held from the 13th to 17th January 2025. ICOMIA attended remotely on 15th and 17th January.  ITEMS OF INTEREST TO THE LEISURE/SUPERYACHT INDUSTRY  **FRPs in ships’ structures –** The correspondence group established at the previous session (see SDC 10 report), chaired by Sweden, submitted its report in attached document SDC 11/11 “Report of the Correspondence Group”. A number of commenting documents (all attached) were submitted to the Sub-Committee as follows:   * SDC 11/11/1 “Comments on the fire-integrity test method of FRP elements in the report of the Correspondence Group (SDC 11/11)” submitted by China * SDC 11/11/2 “Comments on SDC 11/11” submitted by IACS * SDC 11/11/3 “Comments on the report of the Correspondence Group” submitted by United States * SDC 11/11/4 “Comments on SDC 11/11” submitted by CESA and SYBAss.   In the plenary discussion on this topic a range of views were expressed. A number of delegations were keen to expand the scope of the use of FRPs as well as those who are more cautious about the use of these materials on the grounds that, although FRPs were high-strength materials compared to their weight and not subject to corrosion, the high risks related to fire safety and toxic fumes endangering the health of the persons on board, as well as the lack of recyclability, posed challenges for their use.  The work was initially expected to be concluded at this session but, due to the above noted concerns and questions about the work exceeding the original scope of the output, the Sub-Committee agreed to re-establish the correspondence group with a remit to report back to SDC 12 and to invite MSC 110 to confirm whether or not load-bearing divisions and elements contributing to global strength are considered as part of the scope of the existing output, i.e. clarification on whether the scope of the output is limited to SOLAS chapter II-2 only, or wider, with a view to advising the Correspondence Group on FRP established at SDC 11, and instructing SDC 12. The Correspondence Group on FRP was instructed to take into account intersessionally, in its deliberations, the Committee’s decision, as appropriate. |
| **Experience building phase (EBP) for the reduction of underwater radiated noise from shipping -** As previously reported (SDC 8, 9 and10), the international community agrees that a significant amount of underwater noise generated by human activity is related to commercial shipping and this may have short and long-term negative consequences for marine life, especially marine mammals.  MEPC 82 approved MEPC.1/Circ.906/Rev.1 “Revised Guidelines for the reduction of underwater radiated noise from shipping to address adverse impacts on marine life” (see SDC 9 report for text of the guidelines).  We are currently in the experience building phase of implementing the guidelines and MEPC 82 agreed to include the EBP in the agendas of SDC 11 and SDC 12 and encouraged member states and interested parties to submit technical information. As part of the deliberations on this agenda item, a presentation of the Global Partnership for Mitigation of Underwater Noise from Shipping (GloNoise Partnership) project was given to the Sub-Committee. This project is a collaboration between the IMO, the United Nations Development Programme and the Global Environment Facility. Further information on this project can be found at the following link:  [Glonoise IMO | Home -> GloNoise Partnership Project](https://glonoise.imo.org/)  The Sub-Committee was made aware of a recent workshop co-hosted by the World Maritime University and GloNoise which featured a presentation of a URN predictive modelling study being conducted in European waters called NAVISON. This study aims to link URN baselines under various air emission reduction scenarios. Details of the NAVISON project can be found at the following link:  <https://www.emsa.europa.eu/protecting-the-marine-environment/underwater-noise.html>  The outcomes of the EBP are expected to be reviewed at MEPC 85 (2026) at which point the IMO will decide what further actions may be required. In the meantime, the Sub-Committee established a correspondence group with the following main objectives:   * Develop a framework to assess the progress made on the application and uptake of the revised guidelines. * Review technical objectives of the action plan and development of next steps. * Select studies, discuss knowledge gaps and integrate results in the EBP.   The full terms of reference of the group are set out in paragraph 15.21 of the report of the Sub-Committee in attached document SDC 11/WP.1.  **Passegner Ships Safe Return to Port (SRtP) –** These regulations apply to passenger ships constructed on or after 1 July 2010 with a length overall of 120m or over and having three or more main vertical zones. Passenger yachts complying with Part B of the REG Yacht Code would come under these regulations.  A working group was established to continue work on the revision of The interim explanatory notes for the assessment of passenger ship systems' capabilities after a fire or flooding casualty (MSC.1/Circ.1369) and related circulars. The group made significant progress with the revision which included:   * Broader scope, addressing entire life-cycle of the vessel. * New definitions such as SRtP design range, casualty thresholds, operational conditions * Comprehensive design guide emphasising redundancy, system segregation, orderly evacuation and abandonment systems etc. * Verification and conformity   This output is expected to be concluded at SDC 12 and the work will continue intersessionally via correspondence group. The terms of reference of the group and the draft revision of the guidelines can be found at paragraph 20 and the annex respectively of the attached report of the working group in document SDC 11/WP.4.  **Draft amendments to MSC.1/Circ.1175/Rev.1 - Guidance on Shipboard Towing and Mooring Equipment -** It is expected that MSC 110 will approve the amendments as MSC.1/Circ.1175/Rev.2 - Guidance on Shipboard Towing and Mooring Equipment. The circular will be applicable to ships constructed on or after 1 January 2028 and will be applicable to both "tankers of less than 20,000 tonnes deadweight" and "ships other than tankers of less than 20,000 gross tonnage". The draft revision of the guidelines can be found at annex 2 of the attached report of the drafting group in document SDC 11/WP.8.  **Draft amendments to MSC.1/Circ.1255 - Guidelines for owners/operators on preparing emergency towing procedures -**  Necessary consequential amendments to MSC.1/Circ.1255 were agreed. The Equipment Number will be added to the list of “Ship-specific data” that should be recorded in the Emergency Towing Booklet (required by SOLAS regulation II-1/3-4.2.2). The aim is to ensure that the EN value is recorded for traceability and records. The draft amendments are expected to be submitted to MSC 110 for approval. The draft revised guidelines can be found at annex 3 of SDC 11/WP.8.  **Draft revision of SOLAS chapters II-1 (part C) and V on steering and propulsion requirements -** Modern steering systems, which often combine propulsion and steering e.g. azipods, are not adequately addressed by current SOLAS regulations. While unified interpretations (MSC.1/Circ.1416/Rev.1) have been used, a comprehensive review is needed to update the IMO's regulatory framework. This work is expected to be completed by 2028, following a high-level roadmap. The draft SOLAS regulations and road map can be found in annexes 1,2,3 and 5 of the report of the experts’ group in attached document SDC 11/WP.7. Provided that the roadmap is adhered to, entry into force of the amendments is expected to be 1 January 2032.  **Draft report of the Sub-Committee –** The draft report of the Sub-Committee can be found in attached document SDC 11/WP.1.  PRINCIPAL ISSUES:  The meeting agenda was as follows:   1. Adoption of the agenda 2. Decisions of other IMO bodies 3. Development of guidelines for emergency towing arrangements for ships other than tankers 4. Further development of the IP Code and associated guidance 5. Revision of the interim explanatory notes for the assessment of passenger ship systems’ capabilities after a fire or flooding casualty (MSC.1/Circ.1369) and related circulars 6. Amendments to the 2011 ESP Code 7. Amendments of the Guidelines for construction, installation, maintenance and inspection/survey of means of embarkation and disembarkation (MSC.1/Circ.1331) concerning the rigging of safety netting on accommodation ladders and gangways 8. Revision of SOLAS chapters II-1 (part C) and V, and related instruments regarding steering and propulsion requirements, to address both traditional and non-traditional propulsion and steering systems 9. Amendment to regulation 25 of the of the 1988 Load Line Protocol regarding the requirement for setting of guard rails on the deck structure 10. Unified interpretation to provisions of IMO safety, security and environment-related Conventions 11. Guidelines for the use of fibre-reinforced plastics (FRP) within ship structures 12. Review of the 2009 Code on Alerts and Indicators 13. Biennial status report and provisional agenda for SDC 12 14. Election of Chair and Vice-Chair for 2026 15. Experience-building phase for the reduction of underwater radiated noise from shipping 16. Any other business   Three working groups, one experts’ group and one drafting group were established as follows:  1. Working Group on Revision of the interim explanatory notes for the assessment of passenger ship systems’ capabilities after a fire or flooding casualty. The terms of reference of this group included:     1. Further consider the draft revision of MSC.1/Circ.1369, with a view to finalization, based on the annex to document SDC 11/5, and taking into account documents SDC 11/5/1 and SDC 11/5/2. 2. Subject to the finalization of the draft revision of MSC.1/Circ.1369, consider consequential draft amendments to the related circulars, e.g. MSC.1/Circ.1400, MSC.1/Circ.1437, MSC.1/Circ.1532/Rev.1 and MSC.1/Circ.1539/Rev.1; and to identify other circulars for harmonization (e.g. MSC.1/Circ.1422 and MSC.1/Circ.1589), as appropriate. 3. Consider whether a correspondence group should be established and, if so, prepare draft terms of reference.   2. Working Group on Amendments to the 2011 ESP Code. The agenda items of the group were:   1. Further develop, with a view to finalizing at this session, draft amendments to the 2011 ESP Code to permit the use of remote inspection techniques (RIT), based on annex 1 of document SDC 11/6, and taking into consideration document SDC 11/6/2, including provisions for approval and certification of a firm engaged in close-up survey of hull structures using a RIT. 2. Further develop draft guidelines for the use of RIT for surveys. 3. Finalize consequential draft amendments to MSC.1/Circ.1502, following the 2011 ESP Code amendments adopted through resolution MSC.525(106) regarding pressure testing, based on the annex of document SDC 11/6/1. 4. Prepare associated draft part III of the check/monitoring sheet for the process of amending the 1974 SOLAS Convention and related mandatory instruments. 5. Consider whether a correspondence group should be established and, if so, prepare draft terms of reference.   3. Working Group on Review of the 2009 Code on Alerts and Indicators. The terms of reference for this group were:     1. Further develop the draft amendments to the 2009 Code on Alerts and Indicators, based on the annex to document SSE 10/17 and taking into account document SDC 11/12, with a view to finalization, together with the associated draft Assembly resolution.   4. Experts Group on Revision of SOLAS chapters II-1 (Part C) and V, and related instruments regarding steering and propulsion requirements, to address both traditional and non-traditional propulsion and steering systems. The terms of reference of this group were:   1. Further develop draft amendments to SOLAS regulations II-1/3, and 28 to 30, and V/25 and 26, together with draft new SOLAS regulations II-1/28-1 and 29-1, including application provisions, based on annexes 1 to 3 of document SDC 11/8/1, and taking into account documents SDC 11/8/2; SDC 11/8/3, SDC 11/8/4, SDC 11/8/5 and SDC 11/INF.2. 2. Develop draft amendments to resolutions A.467(XII), A.601(15), MSC.64(67) and MSC.137(76); and MSC.1/Circ.1053 and MSC.1/Circ.1536, taking into account annex 2 of documents MSC 105/18/1 and SDC 11/8/2. 3. Develop a road map for establishing mandatory amendments with a view to entry into force in 2032. 4. Consider whether the Correspondence Group should be re-established and, if so, prepare draft terms of reference.   5. Drafting Group on Development of Guidelines for emergency towing arrangements for ships other than tankers/further development of the IP Code and associated guidance. The terms of reference for this group were:  With respect to agenda item 3:   1. Finalize the draft interim guidelines for emergency towing arrangements on ships other than tankers, together with the associated draft MSC circular, based on the annex to document SDC 10/WP.6 and taking into account documents SDC 11/3 and SDC 11/3/1. 2. Finalize the draft revision of MSC.1/Circ.1175/Rev.1, based on the annex to document SDC 11/3/2, together with the associated draft MSC circular, if time permits. 3. Prepare the draft text related to "rapid deployment" of emergency towing arrangements for ships subject to new SOLAS regulation II-1/3-4.2 for incorporation into the ETA guidelines as referred to in paragraph .1. 4. Prepare the draft consequential amendments to MSC.1/Circ.1255 on ship-specific data, based on annex 3 to document SDC 11/3/1, including an associated MSC circular, with a view to circulation as MSC.1/Circ.1255/Rev.1, if time permits: 5. In case of need to establish a correspondence group, to continue the work intersessionally on the tasks that have not been completed at this session, prepare relevant draft terms of reference.   With respect to agenda item 4:   1. Finalize the draft amendments to part IV of the IP Code, based on document SDC 11/4/2; and to prepare associated draft part III of the check/monitoring sheet for the process of amending the 1974 SOLAS Convention and related mandatory instruments. |
| ATTACHMENTS/SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION: |
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