

## Bulk carrier safety - SOLAS amendments

The Committee adopted amendments to chapter XII (Additional Safety Measures for Bulk Carriers) of the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS), 1974, as amended to require the fitting of high level alarms and level monitoring systems on all bulk carriers, in order to detect water ingress.

The recommendation for the fitting of such alarms was first highlighted during the meeting of the Working Group on Bulk Carrier Safety held during the MSC's 74th session in December 2001, following on from recommendations of the United Kingdom Report of the re-opened formal investigation into the loss of the mv Derbyshire.

The new regulation XII/12 on Hold, ballast and dry space water level detectors will require the fitting of such alarms on all bulk carriers regardless of their date of construction. The requirement is expected to enter into force on 1 July 2004, under the tacit acceptance procedure.

In addition, a new regulation XII/13 on Availability of pumping systems would require the means for draining and pumping dry space bilges and ballast tanks any part of which is located forward of the collision bulkhead to be capable of being brought into operation from a readily accessible enclosed space.

A further regulation affecting bulk carriers was also adopted: Access to spaces in cargo areas of oil tankers and bulk carriers. The new regulation II-1/3-6 in SOLAS chapter II-1 (Construction - structure, subdivision and stability, machinery and electrical installations), Part B (Subdivision and stability), is intended to ensure that vessels can be properly inspected throughout their lifespan, by designing and building the ship to provide suitable means for access. Associated Technical provisions for means of access for inspections, also adopted, are mandatory under the new regulation.

## Bulk carrier safety - recommendations for further work agreed

The Committee agreed to a number of recommendations to improve bulk carrier safety. The recommendations, developed following comprehensive Formal Safety Assessment (FSA) studies carried out by Member States, including an international collaborative FSA study. At this session, the Working Group on Bulk Carrier Safety reviewed a preliminary list of recommendations for decision-making and, based on the Group's work, the Committee took action as follows:

Double hull

The MSC agreed to the recommendation to require double side skin construction for all new bulk carriers of 150m in length and upwards. The Committee also agreed that when developing the relevant requirements, consideration should be given to the impact of other related issues, such as the role of the double hull spaces and their treatment, strength of the inner skin and others. The MSC requested the Ship Design and Equipment (DE) Sub-Committee to develop the necessary draft amendments to the SOLAS Convention.

#### Improved coating

The MSC noted that SOLAS regulation II-1/3-2 made the coating of dedicated seawater ballast tanks mandatory for oil tankers and bulk carriers and extending that requirement to cargo holds could introduce serious problems, bearing in mind that cargoes can react distinctly to different coatings. Therefore, the Committee agreed that new ships, which would be of double side skin construction, should be required to have their dedicated seawater ballast tanks and void spaces within double hull spaces coated according to current SOLAS requirements for ballast spaces. Class and the shipowner would address the coating of cargo holds. The MSC instructed the DE Sub-Committee to develop international performance standards for coatings. With respect to existing ships, the Committee acknowledged that at present there was sufficient control over the condition of coatings through the enhanced survey programme (resolution A.744(18), as amended) and agreed that this risk control option should also be addressed by class and the shipowner.

#### Steel repair standards

The Committee agreed to request the DE Sub-Committee to prepare a draft MSC circular to remind ship owners and operators of their obligations and responsibilities under SOLAS regulation II-1/3-1, concerning, inter alia, the provision that ships shall be maintained in accordance with the structural requirements of recognized classification societies, and other related management obligations under the ISM Code.

#### Forecastle: Superstructure at fore end

The Committee noted information provided by IACS on the on-going development of Unified Requirement S28, requiring the fitting of a forecastle on bulk carriers contracted for construction on or after 1 January 2004 with the purpose of protecting foredeck fittings against green sea loads and minimizing the impact of such loads on fore hatch covers. The Committee also noted that, while the fitting of a forecastle as such was not an IMO requirement, draft Load Lines Protocol regulation 39 - "Minimum bow height and reserve buoyancy" would require additional reserve buoyancy forward consistent with the provision of some sheer and/or a forecastle.

Ballast system capacity: Redesign of ballast systems to incorporate pumping capacities that enable the ship to maintain hull stress at permissible levels taking account of the loading rates possible in terminals

The Committee agreed that potential problems relating to hull stresses during loading should be addressed by improving ship/shore communications in advance. New bulk carriers, with their double hulls, would be more tolerant in keeping any stresses induced by loading operations at permissible levels, while in the case of existing ships, it was important to take into account the compatibility of loading rates in modern terminals with the ship's de-ballasting capability.

#### Protection of foredeck fittings

The MSC agreed to recommend the application of IACS Unified Requirement (UR) S31 containing renewal criteria for side shell frames in single side skin bulk carriers not built in accordance with UR S12 as revised. Governments should be urged to ensure that UR S31 is applied to ships flying their flags, whether or not they are classed with a classification society which is a member of IACS. The MSC also agreed to recommend the application of IACS Unified Requirements S26 and S27 relating to foredeck fittings, in particular in relation to fittings being able to withstand green sea loading.

#### Redesign/reinforcement of hatch cover

The MSC recognized that replacing hatch covers in existing ships would not be cost-effective, but agreed that more attention should be paid to hatch cover securing mechanisms and the issue of horizontal loads only, especially with regard to maintenance and frequency of inspection. The Committee agreed that ship owners and operators should be made aware of the need to implement regular maintenance and inspection procedures for closing mechanisms in existing bulk carriers in order to ensure proper operation and efficiency at all times, and instructed the DE Sub-Committee to develop standards for hatch cover securing arrangements for existing ships.

#### Water ingress alarm

The Committee, noting the new SOLAS regulation XII/12 - "Hold, ballast and dry space water level detectors", which would apply to bulk carriers from 1 July 2004 regardless of their date of construction, agreed there was a need for performance standards against which the operation and efficiency of the water ingress alarms could be measured and instructed the DE Sub-Committee to develop the performance standards.

#### Immersion suits

The MSC agreed to the recommendation for personal immersion suits for all personnel on board and instructed the DE Sub-Committee to develop relevant draft amendments to SOLAS chapter III and/or the Life-Saving Appliances (LSA) Code accordingly.

#### Free-fall lifeboats

The MSC agreed to the recommendation for a single free-fall survival craft with float-free capability, to enable rapid evacuation of crew, to be a requirement for new ships only, and instructed the DE Sub-Committee to develop relevant draft amendments to SOLAS chapter III and/or the LSA Code accordingly.

Terminal interface improvement (Improvement of ship/shore communications, training of stevedores and terminal operators and better control of loading capabilities)

The Committee noted that making the Code of practice for the safe loading and unloading of bulk carriers (BLU Code) mandatory would address some concerns, such as ship/shore communications and the control of loading capabilities. The proposed Manual on loading and unloading of solid bulk cargoes for terminal representatives, which the Dangerous Goods, Solid Cargoes and Containers (DSC) Sub-Committee was requested to develop would also address these issues. The Committee requested the DSC Sub-Committee to prepare an MSC circular urging Governments, ship owners and operators and terminal operators to apply the BLU Code and to address these concerns when developing the Manual for terminal representatives.

#### Port State control

The MSC instructed the Flag State Implementation (FSI) Sub-Committee to develop an MSC circular which would strongly recommend that port States and the various PSC Memoranda of Understanding established world-wide develop specialized training for port State control officers in bulk carrier design and operation, pinpointing the vulnerable areas within the structure, in particular of older ships.

#### Weather routing

The Committee approved an MSC circular on Participation by ships in weather routing services and weather observation programmes. The Circular is aimed at establishing minimum standards for weather routing services that are consistent with voyage planning requirements (SOLAS Chapter V, regulation V/34) and load line zone restrictions.

#### Improved loading/stability information

The Committee instructed the Stability, Load Lines and Fishing Vessel Safety (SLF) and DE Sub-Committees to develop guidelines for the provision of detailed, comprehensive and user-friendly information covering stability and longitudinal stress characteristics of the ship's hull during loading and unloading, with the SLF Sub-Committee as co-ordinator.

#### Mandatory BC Code

The MSC requested the DSC Sub-Committee to consider the feasibility of making mandatory the Code of Safe Practice for Solid Bulk Cargoes (BC Code). The BC Code is recommended to Administrations, shipowners, shippers and masters as a guide on the standards to be applied in the safe stowage and shipment of solid bulk cargoes. The DSC Sub-Committee is currently working on the revision of the BC Code.

#### Alternate hold loading

The Committee considered the possible benefits deriving from banning alternate hold loading of heavy cargoes in the full load condition, in particular the resulting reduction in shear forces and bending moments when loading homogeneously in all holds. The Working Group agreed that it would be worth implementing this for existing bulk carriers from a certain age onwards, perhaps subject to successful completion of a condition assessment. The MSC therefore requested the DE and DSC Sub-Committees, with the former as co-ordinator, to consider the possible options and provide advice thereon, prior to undertaking any relevant regulatory action.

#### Application of bulkhead structural standards in SOLAS chapter XII (B3)

The Committee agreed that new ships of 150 m in length and upwards, which would be of double side skin construction, should also comply with all the structural strength provisions of regulation XII/5 requiring that the ship shall have sufficient strength to withstand flooding of any one cargo hold, and proposed to amend this regulation by removing the words "of single side skin construction", thus making it applicable to double side skin ships also. The MSC requested the DE Sub-Committee to incorporate the proposed amendment in its work on development of amendments to SOLAS chapter XII. The MSC also requested the DE Sub-Committee to consider the issue with relation to existing ships, possibly with regard to the restricting of heavy cargoes.

#### Shipbuilding practices

The MSC agreed to address structural detail design and shipbuilding practice when preparing the MSC circular addressing the obligations of ship owners and operators when their ships undergo steel repairs. (DE Sub-Committee to address this).

#### Early abandonment

The Committee instructed the DE and NAV Sub-Committees to develop an MSC circular urging shipowners to issue guidance to ship's personnel on the possible need for early abandonment of a bulk carrier that has any single hold flooded, and agreed that a circular should be prepared addressing bulk carriers which may not withstand flooding of any one cargo hold and containing information on the action to be taken in case of flooding of such holds, making sure that the professional judgement of the master is not undermined, for possible posting in the bridge.

#### Definition of "bulk carrier"

The Committee agreed that the definition of bulk carrier as it stands at present in SOLAS needed to be revised and instructed the DE Sub-Committee to develop a new definition.

#### AMENDMENTS TO SOLAS AND INF CODE ADOPTED

The expanded Committee adopted the following amendments to the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS), 1974, as amended, and to the INF Code, with an expected entry into force date of 1 July 2004, under the tacit acceptance procedure:

Access to spaces in cargo areas of oil tankers and bulk carriers - the new regulation 3-6 in SOLAS chapter II-1 (Construction - structure, subdivision and stability, machinery and electrical installations), Part A-1 (Structure of ships), is intended to ensure that vessels can be properly inspected throughout their lifespan, by designing and building the ship to provide suitable means for access. Without adequate access, the structural condition of the vessel can deteriorate undetected and major structural failure can arise. The regulation requires each space within the cargo area to be provided with an appropriate means of access to enable, throughout the life of a ship, overall and close-up inspections and thickness measurements of the ship's structures to be carried out by the Administration, the Company, and the ship's personnel and others as necessary. Associated Technical provisions for means of access for inspections, also adopted, are mandatory under the new regulation.

Machinery control - automation systems - The amendment to SOLAS chapter II-1 (Construction - structure, subdivision and stability, machinery and electrical installations), add a new paragraph to Regulation 31 - Machinery control to require automation systems to be designed in a manner which ensures that threshold warning of impending or imminent slowdown or shutdown of the propulsion system is given to the officer in charge of the navigational watch in time to assess navigational circumstances in an emergency.

Chapter II-2 (Fire protection, fire detection and fire extinction) - The amendments concern references to the IMDG Code and reflect amendments to SOLAS chapter VII (Carriage of Dangerous Goods) adopted in May 2002 which make the International Maritime Dangerous Goods Code (IMDG Code) mandatory.

Chapter III - Life-saving appliances and arrangements - The amendments to Regulation 26 - Additional requirements for ro-ro passenger ships, requires liferafts carried on ro-ro passenger ships to be fitted with a radar transponder in the ratio of one transponder for every four liferafts. The regulation is made applicable to existing ships as well as new ships.

Water ingress alarms for bulk carriers - the new regulations in SOLAS chapter XII - (Additional Safety Measures for Bulk Carriers) are regulation 12 on Hold, ballast and dry space water level detectors and a new regulation 13 on Availability of pumping systems (see above).

Amendments to the International Code for the Safe Carriage of Packaged Irradiated Nuclear Fuel, Plutonium and High-Level Radioactive Wastes on board Ships (INF Code) - The amendments in the sections on definitions and application reflect amendments to SOLAS chapter VII (Carriage of Dangerous Goods) adopted in May 2002 which make the IMDG Code mandatory.

## PLACES OF REFUGE

The Committee noted progress made in developing draft Guidelines on places of refuge for ships in need of assistance and agreed to forward two draft resolutions on the issue, prepared by the Sub-Committee on Safety of Navigation (NAV), to the Sub-Committee on Radiocommunications, Search and Rescue (COMSAR), which meets in January 2003, with a view to establishing whether there is any conflict with existing SAR procedures.

The draft resolutions will also undergo consideration by the Legal Committee (which meets for its 86th session in April-May 2002), the MSC at its 77th session (May-June 2003) before the NAV Sub-Committee at its 49th session in June-July 2003 finalizes the drafts for submission to the 23rd IMO Assembly scheduled to be held in November 2003. The Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC) will also have a chance to review the draft resolutions at its 49th session in July 2003.

The MSC also invited the Legal Committee to consider the work in progress from the point of view of issues within its competence and, in particular, with respect to the provision of financial security to cover either expenses which the coastal State may have incurred or to provide adequate compensation to meet any liabilities of the shipowner which may arise.

The draft Assembly resolutions include a set of Guidelines which state clearly what actions should be taken by ships' Masters, coastal States and flag States in cases where ships are in need of assistance. They also recommend the establishment by coastal States of Maritime Assistance Services (MAS) to be mobilized in relevant cases. They have been designed to provide a framework by which Governments will be able to assess each case on its merits and make the most appropriate decisions.

IMO's work on places of refuge followed the aftermath of the incident involving the fully laden tanker Castor which, in December 2000, developed a structural problem in the Mediterranean Sea. Following the incident, IMO Secretary-General Mr. William O'Neil suggested that the time had come for the Organization to undertake, as a matter of priority, a global consideration of the problem of places of refuge for disabled vessels and adopt any measures required to ensure that, in the interests of safety of life at sea and environmental protection, coastal States reviewed their contingency arrangements so that such ships are provided with assistance and facilities as might be required in the circumstances.

The recent sinking of the Prestige has further highlighted the issue.

The MSC agreed to include "Places of refuge" as a separate agenda item for its 77th session in May-June 2003.

#### "PRESTIGE" INCIDENT

A number of delegations made statements with regard to the Prestige incident. IMO Secretary-General Mr. William A. O'Neil informed the Committee that, as soon as the Organization was made aware of the

Prestige accident, contacts were immediately established with the authorities of Spain, the coastal State, and the Bahamas, the flag State. He repeated his praise of the Spanish search and rescue authorities which had been able, once again, to evacuate safely all the crew of the stricken vessel amidst severe weather conditions. Spain, as a Party to the International Convention on Oil Pollution Preparedness, Response and Co-operation, 1990, had established a national system for dealing with pollution incidents, either nationally or in co-operation with other countries, a system which is regularly tested through full scale periodic exercises. Mr. O'Neil stated that he was sympathetic to the victims of the accident and he regretted the reported damage to the marine environment, fishing and other industries affected by the oil which had escaped from the Prestige. He urged all parties involved to finalize their reports on the investigation into the casualty as soon as possible and submit their findings to IMO without delay so that the Organization could respond promptly to any recommendation for remedial action which might come to light in the context of such reports.

#### PIRACY AND ARMED ROBBERY AGAINST SHIPS

The MSC noted with concern the latest statistics on incidents of piracy and armed robbery at sea, in particular the identified 20% increase in the reported acts of piracy and armed robbery against ships. This worrying development was a cause for concern and much needed to be done to reduce this menace.

The number of acts of piracy and armed robbery against ships during the first eight months of 2002, as reported to the Organization, was 228, a marginal decrease of 1% over the figure for the corresponding period of 2001. However, comparing the figures for the first ten months of 2001 (263) with the corresponding period of 2002 (315) there was an increase of approximately 20%. The total number of incidents of piracy and armed robbery against ships, reported to have occurred from 1984 (when the organization began recording reports of piracy and armed robbery incidents) to the end of October 2002, had risen to 2,880.

Between 1 January and 31 October 2002, twelve ships had been hijacked and eight ships had gone missing. From the reports received it had also emerged that the areas most affected (i.e. five incidents reported or more) were the Far East, in particular the South China Sea and the Malacca Strait, the Indian Ocean, the Caribbean, South America (Pacific and Atlantic) and West and East Africa. Most of the attacks worldwide were reported to have taken place in territorial waters while the ships were at anchor or berthed. In many of the reports received, the crews had been violently attacked by groups of five to ten people carrying knives or guns. During the same period, four passengers and one crew member of the ships involved had been killed, two crew members and four entire crew had been reported missing and seventy-one crew members and twelve passengers of the ships involved had been wounded.

Although after the 11 September attacks emphasis had been placed on security, the issue of piracy and armed robbery against ships continued to cast a black spot on the image of the shipping industry as a whole. The maritime community could no longer tolerate this situation and the serious repercussions it had on the security of passengers and crews and the safety of ships, not to mention the impact on the marine environment if a piracy/armed robbery incident resulted in oil or other hazardous and noxious cargoes escaping into it. The MSC urged, once again, all Governments and the industry to intensify their efforts to eradicate these unlawful acts.

The Committee was updated on the implementation of the IMO anti-piracy project. Phase one, a number of regional seminars and workshops attended by Governmental representatives from countries in piracy-infected areas of the world, had been completed. In phase two, a number of evaluation and assessment missions had been made, to: Jakarta, Indonesia (13 and 14 March 2001); Singapore (15 and 16 March 2001) for countries in the South China Sea, the Malacca and Singapore Straits and the Eastern Indian Ocean; Guayaquil, Ecuador (25 and 26 September 2001) for South America and the Caribbean Sea countries; and Accra, Ghana (25 and 26 March 2002) for Western and Central African countries. Regional meetings had been held alongside these missions.

Currently, the IMO Secretariat was consulting with Governments interested in receiving technical assistance in relation to implementation of measures to prevent and suppress acts of piracy and armed robbery against ships, and was also co-ordinating missions to countries which were expected to request such assistance.

#### IMPLEMENTATION OF THE REVISED STCW CONVENTION

The MSC agreed to add two new Parties to the list of Parties deemed to be giving full and complete effect to the provisions of the revised Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (STCW) 1978, as amended, following the report of IMO Secretary-General William O'Neil to the MSC on those countries whose evaluations have been completed since the previous MSC meeting.

The list of confirmed Parties now stands at a total 108 Parties, out of a total of 144 current STCW Parties. (The List of Confirmed Parties can be downloaded from the IMO website at [http://www.imo.org/home.asp?topic\\_id=291](http://www.imo.org/home.asp?topic_id=291).)

The MSC also approved additional competent persons nominated by the Governments of Turkey and Singapore.

#### PROPOSED IMO MODEL AUDIT SCHEME

The MSC agreed a list of safety and security critical areas for the proposed IMO Model Audit Scheme. These would include Member States duties with respect to the following instruments: the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS) 1974, as amended; the International Convention on Load Lines, 1966 (LL 66), as amended; the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping (STCW) for Seafarers, 1978, as amended; the Convention on the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea, 1972, (COLREG 72), as amended; the International Convention on Tonnage Measurement of Ships, 1969 (Tonnage 69) and the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, 1982 (UNCLOS).

Consideration should be given to the inclusion in the Scheme of responsibilities of Member States with respect to maritime security based on measures adopted by the Diplomatic Conference on Maritime Security. In addition, development of the proposed Scheme should also take account of ongoing work within the FSI Sub-Committee relating to the Self Assessment Forms and proposed amendments to resolution A.847(20) on Guidelines to assist flag States in the implementation of IMO instruments.

The proposed IMO Model Audit Scheme would be designed to help promote maritime safety and environmental protection by assessing how effectively Member States implement and enforce relevant IMO Convention standards, and by providing them with feedback and advice on their current performance.

The MSC agreed to a joint MSC/Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC)/Technical Co-operation Committee (TCC) Working Group on the voluntary IMO Model Audit Scheme, to meet during the MSC's 77th session in mid-2003.

#### CASUALTY INVESTIGATIONS - NEW GUIDELINES APPROVED

The Committee approved new guidelines to help improve co-operation between flag States and other substantially interested States in marine casualty investigation. The guidelines were drafted by the Sub-Committee on Flag State Implementation (FSI) during its 10th session.

Accident investigation reports, which are analysed by the experts of a Correspondence Group established by the FSI Sub-Committee, are a crucial element in any legislative action to enhance safety and environmental protection and in identifying a "compelling need" for new legislation as established in resolution A.500(XII).

The Interim Guidelines to assist flag States and other substantially interested States to establish and maintain an effective framework for consultation and co-operation in marine casualty investigations stress the responsibility of States to co-operate in carrying out casualty investigations and take into account specific provisions of the Code for the Investigation of Marine Casualties and Incidents (Assembly resolution A.849(20) as amended by resolution A.884(21)) as a basis for a global framework of consultation and effective co-operation.

The guidelines include basic recommendations for a functioning authority for casualty investigation which is prepared to co-operate with authorities of other substantially interested States and stress the responsibility of flag States to conduct casualty investigations as required by International Law (references: UNCLOS article 94; SOLAS 74 regulation I/21; MARPOL 73/78 articles 4, 8 and 12; Load Line Convention article 23).

#### LARGE PASSENGER SHIP SAFETY

The Committee reviewed ongoing work in a number of Sub-Committees relating to the safety of large passenger ships and agreed that the MSC was likely to convene a Working Group on large passenger ship safety at its 78th session in 2004, when most of the work in Sub-Committees would be completed. The Committee is undertaking a global consideration of safety issues pertaining to these ships.

Issues under the current work plan are underway in the COMSAR, DE, FP, NAV, SLF and STW Sub-Committees.

#### NEW AND AMENDED SHIPS ROUTING MEASURES AND MANDATORY SHIP REPORTING SYSTEMS

The MSC adopted the following new and amended ships routing measures which were agreed by the Sub-Committee on Safety of Navigation (NAV) at its 48th session in July 2002 (with entry into force implemented at 0000 hours UTC on 1 July 2003, except as mentioned below):

New Traffic Separation Schemes (TSSs)

New traffic separation schemes (TSSs) in the southern Red Sea, Off Cape La Nao and Off Cape Palos.

Amendments to existing Traffic Separation Schemes (TSSs)

Amendments to the existing TSSs "In the Gulf of Finland", "In the Bay of Fundy and Approaches" and "In the Strait of Bab-el Mandeb".

Routeing measures other than TSSs

Recommended routes Off the Mediterranean coast of Egypt, including recommended tracks and a precautionary area for the Southern Red Sea.

Amendments to the Recommendation on navigation through the entrances to the Baltic Sea (to be implemented on 1 December 2003), including the proposed new recommendation on navigation through the Gulf of Finland traffic.

Mandatory ship reporting systems

Two mandatory ship-reporting systems in the Baltic Sea (Gulf of Finland) and in the Adriatic Sea. The new mandatory ship reporting in the Gulf of Finland will be implemented on 1 July 2004.

#### DRAFT AMENDMENTS TO LOAD LINES PROTOCOL APPROVED

The MSC approved draft amendments to Annex B to the 1988 Load Line Protocol, and requested the Secretary-General to circulate them in accordance with article VI of the Protocol, for consideration with a view to adoption at MSC 77. The MSC concurred, in principle, with the recommendation that the amendments in question should enter into force on 1 January 2005.

The MSC acknowledged that the approved amendments did not affect the 1966 LL Convention and would only apply to approximately 60% of the world's fleet, i.e., to those ships flying the flags of States Party to the 1988 LL Protocol. The MSC agreed to the drafting of a draft Assembly resolution in order to encourage all Contracting Governments to the 1966 Load Line Convention to become Parties to the 1988 LL Protocol, as the most practical way of achieving widespread application of the new provisions.

The proposed draft amendments to Annex B to the 1988 Load Line Protocol replace the current text and include a number of important revisions, in particular to regulations concerning: strength and intact stability of ships; definitions; superstructure end bulkheads; doors; position of hatchways, doorways and ventilators; hatchway coamings; hatch covers; machinery space openings; miscellaneous openings in freeboard and superstructure decks; cargo ports and other similar openings; spurling pipes and cable lockers; side scuttles; windows and skylights; calculation of freeing ports; protection of the crew and means of safe passage for crew; calculation of freeboard; sheer; minimum bow height and reserve buoyancy; and others.

#### THE "JOOLA" ACCIDENT

The Ambassador of Senegal referred the MSC to the sinking of the passenger ferry Joola off the coast of Senegal on the night of 26/27 September 2002 with the loss of more than 1,600 people. He stated that contributions to a relief fund for the victims of the ferry tragedy would be welcome. The Committee observed one minute's silence for the victims.

#### MSC RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED

The MSC adopted the following resolutions:

Resolution MSC.133(76) - Adoption of the technical provisions for means of access for inspections

Resolution MSC.134(76) - Adoption of amendments to the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea, 1974, as amended

Resolution MSC.135(76) - Adoption of amendments to the International Code for the Safe Carriage of Packaged Irradiated Nuclear Fuel, Plutonium and High-Level Radioactive Wastes on Board Ships (INF code)

Resolution MSC.136(76) - Performance standards for a ship security alert system

Resolution MSC.137(76) - Standards for ship manoeuvrability

Resolution MSC.138(76) - Amendments to the recommendation on navigation through the entrances to the Baltic sea

Resolution MSC.139(76) - Mandatory ship reporting systems

Resolution MSC.140(76) - Recommendation for the protection of the AIS VHF data link

Resolution MSC.141(76) - Revised model test method under Resolution 14 of the 1995 SOLAS conference

## PROPOSED AMENDMENTS APPROVED

The MSC approved the following proposed amendments for consideration with a view to adoption at the next session:

Proposed amendments to SOLAS regulations V/2 Definitions and V/22.1 Navigation Bridge Visibility with a view to adoption at MSC 77. The draft proposed amendments add the definition of "length" to regulation V/2 and a consequential editorial change is made to regulation V/22.1. The draft proposed definition states that "length of a vessel means her length overall".

Proposed draft amendments to SOLAS V/28 on Records of navigational activities in order to add a new paragraph on daily reporting. The proposed draft amendments would require all ships of 500 gross tonnage and above, employed on international voyages exceeding 48 hours to submit a daily report to their company, to include ship's position; ship's course and speed; and details of any external or internal conditions that are affecting the ship's voyage or the normal safe operation of the ship. The aim of the proposed draft amendments are to address the responsibilities of ship operators to provide information of benefit to those responsible for mounting rescue operations. The draft amendments will be circulated with a view to adoption at the next MSC session in 2003.

Draft proposed amendments to the Guidelines on the enhanced programme of inspections during surveys of bulk carriers and oil tankers (resolution A.744(18)), to include a new appendix 3 to Annex B of the Guidelines relating to the sampling method of thickness measurements for longitudinal strength evaluation and repair methods.