



# About the IMO

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# 1 Introduction

IMO – the International Maritime Organization – is the United Nations specialized agency with responsibility for the safety and security of shipping and the prevention of marine pollution by ships.

## Historical background

An international conference convened by the United Nations in Geneva, Switzerland adopted on 6 March 1948 the Convention on the Inter-Governmental Maritime Consultative Organization (IMCO) which – for the first time in history – established an international organ dedicated to deal with maritime affairs as a specialized agency under the UN. The Convention entered into force 10 years later on 17 March 1958.

By means of an amendment to the Convention adopted by the Assembly in November 1975 (Resolution A.358(IX)) the name was changed to the International Maritime Organization (IMO) with effect from 22 May 1982.

IMCO (later IMO) consisted of the Assembly, the Council and the Maritime Safety Committee (MSC). In the beginning the MSC consisted of 8 (later 18) members elected by the Assembly. In October 1974 the Assembly decided that all IMO Members could be members of the MSC (Resolution A.345(ES.V)).

In November 1975 two new Committees were established: The Legal Committee (LEG) and the Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC). In November 1977 the Technical Co-operation Committee (TCC) was established. All IMO Members can be members of these Committees.

In 1991 another amendment to the Convention was adopted to establish one more Committee: The Facilitation Committee (FAL). This amendment came into force 10 May 2001.

The membership of the Council has been increased over the years to reflect the increase in IMO Members and now stands at 40.

## IMO's mission objectives and strategic planning process

The *mission of IMO* is to promote safe, secure, environmentally sound, efficient and sustainable shipping through co-operation. The *challenges* for IMO emanate from the general *trends and developments* in the shipping industry.

The *strategic directions* of IMO set out the general responses of the Organization to the challenges it faces and are designed to achieve its mission objectives.

The tools for supporting the IMO's strategic planning process are adopted by the Assembly on a biennial basis, by way of three documents: the *Strategic Plan (SP)*, the *High-Level Action Plan (HLAP)* and the *Results-Based Budget (RBB)*.

- A. The *Strategic Plan (SP)* covers a six-year period and establishes:
1. the outcome of the analysis of shipping trends and developments, and the consequential challenges;
  2. the strategic directions for enabling IMO to achieve its mission objectives; and
  3. the performance indicators related to the strategic directions.
- B. The *High-level Action Plan (HLAP)* covers a given biennium and sets out:
1. the high-level actions necessary to achieve the strategic directions included in the SP; and
  2. the expected products – the so-called “planned outputs” (POs) – to be delivered over the biennium.

### Planned Outputs (POs)

The planned outputs (POs) set out in the biennial High-level Action Plan should be delivered by the Organization during the biennium concerned. They are prepared by the Council, the Committees and the Secretariat before being submitted to the Assembly for its adoption.

### Unplanned Outputs (UOs)

Unplanned outputs (UOs) may be accepted for delivery during a biennium after the adoption of the High-level Action Plan for that biennium.

Submitting proposals for UOs: Submissions of proposals for the inclusion of UOs in the biennial HLAP must be made by a Government or IGO - or where the proposal originates from a NGO be co-sponsored by a Government, and they should be submitted to the relevant Committee(s). They should never be submitted to a Sub-Committee.

In order to enable the relevant IMO organ to make an informed decision on the inclusion of a proposed UO, the submission should cover all the information specified in the Guidelines on the Application of the Strategic Plan and the High-Level Action Plan (GAP).

### Physical location and general contact information

IMO has, since its inception, had its headquarters in London and in 1983 moved to its present location.

Address: 4 Albert Embankment  
London SE1 7SR, United Kingdom

Telephone: +44 207 735 7611

Telefax: +44 207 587 3210

E-mail: [info@imo.org](mailto:info@imo.org)

Internet website: [www.imo.org](http://www.imo.org)

Documents website: [www.imodocs.imo.org](http://www.imodocs.imo.org) (requires password)

## 2 Political Structure

### General

Under the IMO Convention membership is open, in principle, to all States.

A Member of the United Nations may become a Member of IMO by becoming party to the IMO Convention. The same applies to States which were not Members of the United Nations but which were invited to send representatives to the conference convened in 1948 in Geneva.

Any other State may apply through the Secretary-General of IMO to become a Member and shall be admitted as a Member upon becoming a party to the IMO Convention provided that its application is approved by two thirds of the Members.

Any Territory or group of Territories to which the Convention has been made applicable by the Member having responsibility for its international relations, or by the United Nations, may become an Associate Member. Associate Members are not allowed to vote and are not eligible for election to the Council.

At the end of 2012, IMO had 170 Members and three Associate Members.

In accordance with the IMO Convention IMO shall co-operate with any other Specialized Agency of the UN, may co-operate with other intergovernmental organizations and may also enter into agreements with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) on consultative status.

Updated lists of the IMO membership and agreements with international organizations (IGOs) and NGOs can be found on the website of IMO.

### Political fora

According to the Convention the following political fora have been established:

- the Assembly;
- the Council;
- Maritime Safety Committee (MSC);
- Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC);
- Legal Committee (LEG);
- Technical Co-operation Committee (TCC);
- Facilitation Committee (FAL).

### Assembly

The Assembly is the highest decision-making organ of the IMO and consists of all Members.

The Assembly meets every second year (odd years), usually in November, and deals, *inter alia*, with the following issues:

- election of Members of the Council;
- matters submitted by the Council;
- approval of the work programme of IMO;
- approval of the budget and accounts;
- decisions to convene international conferences;
- adoption of resolutions (except for those of a technical nature, i.e. performance standards and technical specifications, which are to be adopted by the MSC or MEPC).

Three Committees are normally established during sessions of the Assembly:

- Credentials Committee;
- Legal/Administrative Committee (Committee I);
- Technical Committee (Committee II).

Delegations to the Assembly shall be fully accredited.

## Council

The Council consists of 40 Members elected by the Assembly. As per December 2013 the Members of the Council are:

Category (a): 10 States with the largest interest in providing international shipping services: China, Greece, Italy, Japan, Norway, Panama, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, United Kingdom, United States.

Category (b): 10 other States with the largest interest in international seaborne trade: Argentina, Bangladesh, Brazil, Canada, France, Germany, India, Netherlands, Spain, Sweden.

Category (c): 20 States not elected under (a) or (b) above which have special interests in maritime transport or navigation, and whose election to the Council will ensure the representation of all major geographic areas of the world: Australia, Bahamas, Belgium, Chile, Cyprus, Denmark, Indonesia, Jamaica, Kenya, Liberia, Malaysia, Malta, Mexico, Morocco, Peru, Philippines, Singapore, South Africa, Thailand, Turkey.

Other IMO Members can participate in sessions of the Council as observers without voting rights.

The Council, which meets twice every year, deals primarily with the draft work programme and budget of the IMO developed by the Secretary-General and submits it – with its comments – to the Assembly. The Council also deals with a number of more political issues, e.g. strategy and planning.



### **Maritime Safety Committee (MSC)**

The MSC consists of all IMO Members and meets once (usually in May/June) during years where the Assembly meets (odd years) and twice (usually in May/June and in November/December) in even years.

The MSC deals with all questions related to safety at sea, adopt its own Resolutions and Circulars and approves relevant draft Assembly resolutions. MSC also deals with maritime security in co-operation with the other Committees.

Delegations to sessions of the MSC shall be fully accredited.

### **Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC)**

The MEPC consists of all IMO Members and usually meets three times during a two-year period.

The MEPC deals with all questions relating to prevention and control of pollution from ships and adopts its own Resolutions and Circulars and approves relevant draft Assembly Resolutions.

### **Legal Committee (LEG)**

The Legal Committee consists of all IMO Members and usually meets three times during a two-year period.

The Legal Committee deals with all legal questions including Conventions and Protocols of a general nature (non-technical).

### **Technical Co-operation Committee (TCC)**

The TCC consists of all IMO Members and usually meets three times during a two-year period.

The TCC deals with all questions related to the implementation of technical co-operation projects, in particular technical assistance to developing countries.

### **Facilitation Committee (FAL)**

FAL consists of all IMO Members and usually meets once a year.

FAL is responsible for IMO's activities in relation to facilitation of international shipping. Such facilitation aims at reducing and simplifying documentation required from ships in connection with arrival in and departure from ports. Issues such as stowaways, transport of illegal migrants and drug smuggling by ships are also dealt with by FAL.

Reporting to FAL is a working group (more or less permanent) on Ship/Port Interface (SPI). This Group reports – through FAL – to the MSC and the MEPC on issues within those Committees' competence.

## Committees and subsidiary bodies (sub-committees)

The MSC and the MEPC have established a number of Sub-committees:

- Sub-Committee on Human Element, Training and Watchkeeping (HTW);
- Sub-Committee on Implementation of IMO Instruments (III);
- Sub-Committee on Navigation, Communications and Search and Rescue (NCSR);
- Sub-Committee on Pollution Prevention and Response (PPR);
- Sub-Committee on Ship Design and Construction (SDC);
- Sub-Committee on Ship Systems and Equipment (SSE); and
- Sub-Committee on Carriage of Cargoes and Containers (CCC).

In 2013 the existing nine Sub-Committees were restructured to seven as follows:

DE, FP and SLF merged and become:

- Ship Systems and Equipment (SSE)
- Ship Design and Construction (SDC)

COMSAR and NAV merge and become:

- Navigation, Communications, Search and Rescue (NCSR)

BLG and DSC are renamed and broadened:

- Pollution Prevention and Response (PPR)
- Carriage of Cargoes and Containers (CCC)

FSI and STW are renamed:

- Implementation of IMO Instruments (III)
- Human Element, Training and Watchkeeping (HTW)

Sub-committees usually meet once a year. For budgetary or other reasons it may happen that one or more Sub-committees will only be given two sessions during a three-year period.

The MSC and the MEPC can decide to abolish or to merge existing Sub-committees as well as to change their names and/or areas of work.

The sub-committees operate under the instructions of both the MSC and the MEPC. Reporting should be made to the committee that has sought the advice of the sub-committee(s).

Sub-committees should not amend the scope of planned outputs and not develop amendments or interpretations to any relevant IMO instruments without permission from the committee.

Consideration should be given to urgent issues when deciding on outputs, taking into account the number of working days in each session and the number of WGs and DGs to be established.

The outputs should be selected from the biennial agenda.

A diagram illustrating the political structure of IMO is given in the attached Figure 1 .

## 3 The Secretariat

The IMO Secretariat is headed by the Secretary-General. The Secretariat employs about 300 staff at its headquarters in London. The present Secretary-General is Mr. Koji Sekimizu (Japan).

The Secretariat is organized into six Divisions, each headed by a Director:

- Maritime Safety Division (MSD);
- Marine Environment Division (MED);
- Technical Co-operation Division (TCD);
- Legal Affairs and External Relations Division (LED);
- Administrative Division (AD);
- Conference Division (CD).

In addition to the Divisions there is the Office of the Secretary-General.

A diagram illustrating the organizational structure of the Secretariat is provided in Figure 2.

### Maritime Safety Division (MSD)

This Division, which consists of four Sub-divisions, provides secretarial services to the MSC and the Sub-committees as well as for relevant international conferences.

#### Operational Safety, and Human Element Sub-Division

The sub-division is headed by a Senior Deputy Director and consists of two Sections:

*Operational Safety Section* deals with questions relating to:

- Safety of Navigation;
- Radio communications;
- Search and Rescue.

This Section provides secretarial services to the NCSR Sub-Committee, the Joint IMO/ICAO Working Group on Harmonization of Aeronautical and Maritime SAR Procedures and the IMO/IHO Harmonization Group on ECDIS (HGE).

The Section also works in close co-operation with a number of other international organizations, in particular CEPT, CIRM, COSPAS-SARSAT, IALA, ICAO, IEC, IHO, IMSO, ITU and WMO.

*Maritime Training and Human Element Section* deals with questions relating to:

- The STCW Convention and Code;
- The STCW-F Convention;
- Education and Training;
- IMO Model Courses;

- The Human Element;
- The ISM Code.

This Section provides secretarial services to the HTW Sub-Committee, the Joint ILO/IMO Committee on Training (JCT), the Joint MSC/MEPC Working Group on the Human Element, and the Joint FAO/ILO/IMO Working Groups on fisheries related matters

The Section also works in close co-operation with a number of other international organizations, in particular FAO, ILO and WHO.

### Marine Technology and Cargoes Sub-division

It is headed by a Senior Deputy Director and consists of two sections:

*Technology Section* deals with questions relating to:

- Ship construction, including stability and fire protection;
- Life-saving appliances and arrangements;
- IBC, IGC, BCH and GC Codes;
- Survey and certification in general;
- Maintenance in general;
- Safety of fishing vessels;
- Research and development in the area of maritime safety.

The Section provides secretarial services for the SDC, PPR and SSE Sub-Committees.

*Cargoes Section* deals with questions related to:

- Cargoes, including Dangerous Goods.; and
- IBC, IGC, BCH and GC Codes;

The Section provides secretarial services to the CCC and PPR Sub-Committees as well as the E&T Working Group.

### Department of Member States Audit Implementation Support

Headed by a Deputy Director and consists of two Sections:

*Implementation and PSC Co-ordination Section* deals with questions related to:

- Flag State Implementation;
- Port State control;
- Databases (casualties, deficiencies, piracy, ship identification).

The Section provides secretarial services for the III Sub-committee.

*TC Implementation Co-ordination Section* deals with questions related to:

- Technical co-operation projects (MSD).

### Maritime Security and Facilitation Sub-division

Headed by a Senior Deputy Director, consists of two sections:

*Maritime Security Section* deals with questions relating to:

- Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships;

- **Maritime Security.**

The Section provides secretarial services to Working Groups on maritime security and works in close co-operation with other international organizations, in particular ILO and WCO.

*Facilitation Section* deals with questions relating to the Facilitation Convention.

The Section also provides secretarial services to the FAL Committee.

### **Marine Environment Division (MED)**

The Division consists of two Sub-divisions and provides secretarial services for the MEPC and PPR, meetings on the London Convention and for relevant conferences.

*Sub-division for Protective Measures*, deals with questions related to MARPOL, AFS, etc. The Office for Ballast Water Management also falls under this Sub-division.

*Sub-division for Implementation*, headed by a Senior Deputy Director, deals with questions relating to the OPRC and OPRC/HNS Conventions as well as technical co-operation projects (MED). The Office for the London Convention also falls under this Sub-division.

The Division has regional programme offices in certain areas of the world (in co-operation with UNDP and other international organizations).

### **Legal Affairs and External Relations Division (LED)**

The Division consists of two entities:

- The *Legal Office*, headed by a Senior Deputy Director, deals with all legal questions.
- The *External Relations Office*, headed by a Senior Deputy Director, deals with questions on relations with the UN system and other international organizations. It also deals with public information and library services.

### **Administrative Division (AD)**

The Division consists of sections for: Finance, Personnel, General Services, Information Technology, and Publishing (including printing).

### **Conference Division (CD)**

The Division consists of three entities:

- *Translation Services* cover translation and word processing in Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish.
- The *Conference Section* deals with practical aspects of meetings (meeting rooms, technical issues, registration, messages and phone calls to delegates, etc).
- The *Documents Section* deals with the production and distribution of IMO documents. The Section is also responsible for the IMO document website on the Internet.

## Technical Co-operation Division (TCD)

This Division deals with technical co-operation, in particular with developing countries, and also seeks to provide donors for relevant projects.

Four *Regional Presences* have been established:

- Eastern and Southern Sub-Region of Africa (Anglophone) in Kenya.
- West and Central Sub-Region of Africa (Anglophone) in Ghana.
- West and Central Sub-Region of Africa (Francophone) in Cote d'Ivoire.
- Asia Region in the Philippines.

## Office of the Secretary-General

This Office consists of three entities:

- *Executive Office*;
- *Policy and Planning Unit* which deals with IMO's external and internal policies and planning, including the organization's strategic plan; and
- *Member State Audit and Internal Oversight Unit*.

## 4 IMO Instruments

### Conventions and Protocols

One of the tasks of IMO is to adopt mandatory international instruments, e.g. Conventions and Protocols, as well as amendments thereto.

Information on such instruments, including their current status, can be found on the IMO website on the Internet.

Conventions or Protocols can only be adopted by a diplomatic conference.

The amendment procedures for a number of IMO instruments are described in chapter 5.

Some examples of Conventions and Protocols adopted by IMO are:

- Conventions: ■ SOLAS 74  
 ■ MARPOL 73/78  
 ■ COLREG 72  
 ■ LL 66

- Protocols: ■ SOLAS PROT 88  
 ■ LL PROT 88  
 ■ MARPOL PROT 97

### Guidelines, recommendations etc.

A large number of non-binding instruments have been adopted in IMO in the form of guidelines, recommendations etc. Such instruments primarily serve to supplement the mandatory instruments and to assist administrations in the national implementation of IMO instruments.

Guidance on how to reference IMO and other instruments in IMO mandatory instruments is provided in chapter 6.

Non-binding instruments are issued as Resolutions or Circulars. Some examples of IMO non-binding instruments are:

- Resolutions: ■ A.866(20) on Guidance to ships' crews and terminal personnel for bulk carrier inspections;  
 ■ A.864(20) on Recommendations for entering enclosed spaces aboard ships;  
 ■ A.856(20) on Standards for on-board helicopter facilities;  
 ■ A.854(20) on Guidelines for developing shipboard emergency plans for ships carrying materials subject to the INF Code;  
 ■ A.830(19) on the Code on alarms and indicators;  
 ■ A.816(19) on Performance standards for shipborne DECCA receivers;  
 ■ MSC.62(67) on Guidelines for safe access to tanker bows.

- Circulars:
- MSC/Circ.854 on Guidelines for shipboard loading and stability computer programme;
  - MSC/Circ.853 on Guidance on shipboard assessment of proficiency;
  - MSC/Circ.847 on Interpretation of vague expressions and other vague wording in SOLAS chapter II-2;
  - MSC/Circ.810 on Recommendations on means of rescue on ro-ro passenger ships;
  - SN/Circ.189 on Marking of seismic streamers;
  - COMSAR/Circ.17 on Recommendations on use of GMDSS equipment for non-safety communications;
  - LL.3/Circ.55 on Revalidation of certificates;
  - LL.3/Circ.77 on Unified interpretations of the provisions of the 1966 LL Conventions.

## Codes

Codes are generally adopted as Resolutions – in most cases as Assembly resolutions – and as such are not by their nature mandatory instruments.

The word ‘Code’ is often used to indicate that the instrument has been formulated in such a way that it could be made mandatory at a later stage.

Examples of mandatory codes are:

- High-speed Craft (HSC) Code  
(mandatory through SOLAS chapter X);
- International Safety Management (ISM) Code  
(mandatory through SOLAS chapter IX);
- Life-Saving Appliances (LSA) Code  
(mandatory through SOLAS chapter III).

Some Codes, e.g. the STCW Code and the ISPS Code, have been directly developed and adopted as partly mandatory instruments. The aforementioned Codes each consists of two parts: Part A which is mandatory, and Part B which is recommendatory.



## 5 Amendment Procedures for Certain Conventions, etc.

Proposals for amendments are usually circulated as an annex to a Circular letter. Such annexes are printed on pink paper for ease of identification and to underline their importance.

### SOLAS 1974 and the Protocol of 1988 to SOLAS 74

The amendment procedure is described in Article VIII. In general, amendments can be adopted by:

- an expanded session of the MSC (Article VIII(b)), i.e. the MSC expanded to include Contracting Governments to SOLAS which are not members of IMO; or
- a diplomatic conference of Contracting Governments to SOLAS (Article VIII(c)).

Amendments to an article of the Convention or to chapter I of the annex shall be accepted and enter into force by explicit acceptance (ratification, accession, signature, etc).

Amendments to other chapters of the annex can be accepted and enter into force if they have not been objected to either by more than one third of the Contracting Governments or the combined merchant fleets which constitute not less than fifty per cent of the gross tonnage of the world's merchant fleet ('tacit agreement').

Amendments to be adopted by an expanded MSC shall be circulated to all IMO Members and all Contracting Governments at least six months prior to their consideration.

Following adoption of an amendment to the annex, other than to chapter I, the amendment will be deemed to have been accepted either two years after the date of adoption ('normal' procedure – Article VIII(b)(vi)(2)(aa)), or not less than one year after adoption, if this is decided by the expanded MSC ('accelerated' procedure – Article VIII(b)(vi)(2)(bb)).

If an amendment is adopted by a Diplomatic Conference, the period can – in exceptional circumstances – be reduced to not less than six months after adoption, if the Conference so decides (Resolution 4 of the 1994 SOLAS Conference).

Amendments will enter into force six months after they are deemed to have been accepted.

### Codes made mandatory through SOLAS 74

A number of Codes have been made mandatory through direct reference in SOLAS. Such Codes can only be amended following the procedures prescribed in Article VIII.

Examples of such Codes are the FSS, FTP, LSA, Grain, HSC, IBC, IGC, IMDG, INF, ISM and ISPS Codes.

### **MARPOL 73/78**

The amendment procedures are found in Article 16 of MARPOL 73. The procedures are very similar to the amendment procedures applicable to SOLAS.

The expression 'an appropriate body' is used in MARPOL instead of the 'expanded committee' used in SOLAS.

Explicit acceptance is required for amendments to the Articles themselves and to Protocol II on Arbitration (Article 16(2)(f)(i) and 16(2)(f)(v)).

As a general rule the 'tacit agreement' procedure can be used for amendments to an annex and to Protocol I on Reporting (Article 16(2)(f)(ii) and 16(2)(f)(iii)). That procedure is also used for amendments to an appendix to an annex.

An amendment adopted under the 'tacit agreement' procedure is deemed to have been accepted not less than ten months after the date of adoption and will enter into force six months after acceptance.

The Technical Code on Control of Emission of Nitrogen Oxides from Marine Diesel Engines (the NO<sub>x</sub> Code) became mandatory (with effect from 1 January 2000) under regulation 13 of Annex VI (the 1997 Protocol), when the Protocol entered into force on 19 May 2005.

### **Load Lines 1966 and Protocol of 1988 to LL 66**

The amendment procedures are found in Article 29. They are similar to the procedures for amending SOLAS, except that the 'tacit agreement' procedure can be used for all parts of the annexes to the LL Convention.

### **FAL 1965**

The amendment procedures are found in Articles VII and IX.

Amendments to the Convention itself must be adopted by a Diplomatic conference and need explicit acceptance. Such amendments will enter into force one year after acceptance by two thirds of the Contracting Governments (Article IX).

The 'tacit agreement' procedure is used for amendments to the annex. Such amendments will enter into force 15 months after adoption and communication to all Contracting Governments unless within 12 months after the communication at least one third of Contracting Governments have notified that they do not accept the amendments (Article VII).

### **STCW 1978**

The amendment procedures are found in Article XII. They are similar to those used

for amending SOLAS, except that the 'tacit agreement' procedure can be used for the entire annex. The 'tacit agreement' procedure can also be used for Part A of the STCW Code.

### **COLREG 1972**

The amendment procedures are found in Articles V and VI. The procedure for amending the Articles themselves just states that a diplomatic conference can be established for this purpose (Article V).

Amendments to the annex (the Rules) must be circulated at least six months prior to adoption by the Assembly. Contracting parties who are not Members of IMO have the right to participate in the adoption process. The 'tacit agreement' procedure is used for such amendments. Dates for acceptance and entering into force are decided by the Assembly.

### **SAR 1979**

The amendment procedures are found in Article III. They are very similar to those used for amending SOLAS.

Explicit acceptance is necessary for amendments to the Articles themselves and to paragraphs 2.1.4, 2.1.5, 2.1.7, 2.1.10, 3.1.2 and 3.1.3 in the annex.

The 'tacit agreement' procedure is used for amending the other parts of the annex. Such amendments will be deemed to have been accepted 12 months after the date of adoption and will then enter into force six months later.

### **CSC 1972**

The amendment procedures are found in Articles IX and X. Article IX covers amendments to the Convention itself. Such amendments need explicit acceptance. For amendments to the annexes, the 'tacit agreement' procedure is used.

## 6 Referencing IMO and other instruments in IMO conventions and other mandatory instruments

Conventions and Protocols are by their very nature mandatory instruments.

Codes are, as a general rule, Resolutions. As such they are not automatically mandatory instruments. They can, however, be made mandatory through direct reference in a mandatory instrument.

A number of Resolutions and Circulars are referenced by footnote in consolidated publications of Conventions, etc.

For many years it has been rather uncertain which instruments are mandatory and which are not. The main reason for this was the non-systematic use of different words such as 'guidance', 'guidelines', 'standard' etc in the mandatory instruments.

In 1999 IMO adopted MSC/Circ.930 – MEPC/Circ.364 providing guidance on the subject. In November 2001 this circular was replaced by resolution A.911(22) on Uniform Wording for Referencing IMO instruments.

## 7 Types of documents issued by IMO

Type	Example	Explanation	Examples of use
Note Verbale	A1/A/8.02(NV.116)	Consecutively numbered (NV.116) for each Code. The Code (A1/A/8.02) is the IMO internal Registry File	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ certain invitations</li> <li>▪ amendment information</li> <li>▪ rectification of errors, etc.</li> </ul>
Circular Letter	Circular Letter No. 2104	Consecutively numbered	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ invitations to IMO meetings</li> <li>▪ proposed amendments</li> <li>▪ signatories to mandatory instruments</li> </ul>
IMO Circulars	IMO.6/Circ.28	Consecutively numbered	IMO.6 is used in relation to the 1993 amendments to the IMO Convention
Resolutions	A.824(19)  MSC.80(70)	A means Assembly, 824 is a consecutive number, and (19) means the 19th session  80 is a consecutive number and (70) means the 70th session as for MSC	Issued only as an annex to the relevant MSC report
Circulars	MSC/Circ.1014 FAL.6/Circ.1  SN/Circ.114  COMSAR/Circ.12  STCW.5/Circ.1	Consecutive numbering .6 indicates that it is a sub-series of the series of FAL circulars	FAL.6 contains information on ship/port interface (SPI). From the Sub-committee on Safety of Navigation From the Sub-committee on Radio Communications and Search and Rescue Concerning the STCW Convention. .5 relates to information on regulation I/5
Meeting documents	MSC 71/15/2  MSC 71/15/2/Add.1  MSC 71/15/2/Corr.1  MSC 71/15/2/Rev.1 MSC 71/INF. 2 MSC 71/WP.1  MSC 71/J/1	71 means the 71st session, 15 is the agenda item and 2 is a consecutive number under the relevant agenda item  An addition to MSC 71/15/2, which will be considered together with that document  Corrects MSC 71/15/2 and will be considered together with that document  Replaces MSC 71/15/2 Information paper Working paper produced during the session – primarily reports of working or drafting groups Ad hoc-paper produced by the Secretariat during the session	Issued in English, French and Spanish  Issued in English, French and Spanish  Issued in English, French and Spanish  Issued in English, French and Spanish Issued in the original language only Issued in English, French and Spanish  Usually issued in English only

## 8 Guidelines on the organisation and methods of work

Guidelines on the organization and methods of work have been approved for:

- |                        |                         |
|------------------------|-------------------------|
| ■ The Council          | Circular Letter No 3292 |
| ■ The MSC and the MEPC | MSC-MEPC.1/Circ.4/Rev.2 |
| ■ The Legal Committee  | LEG.1/Circ.6            |
| ■ The FAL Committee    | FAL.3/Circ.206          |

In the following the guidelines for the MSC/MEPC will be used as an example.

The guidelines for these two Committees cover the work of the Committees themselves as well as the work of their subsidiary bodies (Sub-committees, Working Groups, Drafting Groups and Correspondence Groups).

The provisions of these guidelines are aimed at achieving the following objectives:

- to align and strengthen the planning and reporting processes by more clearly linking agenda setting and reporting to the Strategic Plan and High-level Action Plan;
- to strengthen the linkage between the planned outputs and the resources required to deliver the outputs;
- to facilitate the efforts of the Committees in controlling and monitoring the organization's work;
- to promote a greater understanding and assimilation of the interconnections between the Strategic Plan and High-level Action Plan and the planned outputs;
- to promote a new culture and discipline in adherence to the planning procedures and Guidelines;
- to promote objectivity, clarity and realistic timeframes in the establishment of biennial agendas by the Committees and their subsidiary bodies;
- to ensure maximum possible participation of all Member States and organizations with observer status in the work of the Committees and their subsidiary bodies;
- to establish responsibilities and promote involvement in the planning and reporting processes of the organization.

It is essential that delegates to IMO meetings and those preparing submissions for IMO meetings are thoroughly familiar with the guidelines. The guidelines are strictly adhered to by the Secretariat and the Chairmen. Problems will arise for delegates who do not follow the relevant guidelines.

Three points of particular importance should be mentioned here:

- Submission of documents – beware of the deadlines.
- When submitting proposals for new work programme items (unplanned outcomes) or proposals to amend mandatory instruments, full justification ('compelling need') must be provided.
- Use the standard format (see Figure 3).

### **Working arrangements for Working and Correspondence Groups**

Most of the technical work of the committees and sub-committees is done through working groups (up to three per sub-committee), one or two drafting groups and/or correspondence groups.

Working groups may start work on the morning of the first day of a meeting on the basis of the draft terms of reference presented by the chairman of the committee or sub-committee and usually should complete the work by Wednesday and present their reports on Fridays. TOR may be amended by the plenary.

Correspondence groups may be established and instructed to work on the basis of a consolidated draft text prepared by a "lead country" or the Secretariat. The committees and subsidiary bodies should not establish more than three correspondence groups.

### **Meeting documents**

A template for preparation of documents can be found on IMODOCS.

Documents made available at IMO 13 weeks and more before a session should generally not be introduced in the plenary. Information documents and documents that require no action should rather not be introduced in the plenary.

Documents containing proposed amendments to mandatory instruments should be presented in a format which permits to clearly identify the modifications introduced (e.g. use of underlined and strike-through text).

- In drafting recommendations, codes or guidelines, cross references may, whenever possible, be made to texts and terminology previously developed by IMO or other organizations and in due consultations with them.

Reports of the committees and their subsidiary bodies should contain under each section:

- a summary of key documents and listing of other documents submitted;
- a summary of views expressed during consideration of an item, which may have influenced the decision taken by the reporting body, and statements by delegations should be included therein only at their expressed request during the session; and
- a record of the decisions taken.

To ensure that all documents are available in time before a session of a committee or subsidiary body, the following should be observed:

- documents should not contain more than 50 pages. In the case of reports from reporting groups and in other exceptional circumstances, this number of pages may be exceeded, provided that the deadline for receipt by the Secretariat, is put back by one week for every 20 pages;
- documents containing proposals for UOs should be received by the Secretariat not later than 13 weeks before the opening of any session of the committees;
- documents containing more than 6 pages of text (bulky documents) should be received by the Secretariat not later than 13 weeks before the session;
- non-bulky documents should be received by the Secretariat not later than 9 weeks before the session;
- documents containing less than 4 pages and commenting on those documents referred before should be processed if received by the Secretariat not later than 7 weeks before the session. These documents should start with a paragraph clearly indicating the document on which comments are made.



## 9 Checklist – Submissions

### Be Aware

All documents submitted on behalf of IFSMA must go through and be approved by both, the IFSMA Executive Council and the IFSMA Secretariat and follow the standard format (see Figure 3).

If the subject of a submitted paper is on the agenda for the relevant meeting and is not a proposal for a new work programme item (unplanned output) for a Subcommittee, such proposals may be submitted directly to the Committee, or Subcommittee.

If a submitted paper is not substantive or in response to another paper, it may be submitted as an information paper, bearing in mind that information papers are not formally considered.

On submitting a proposal for a new work programme (unplanned output) the Committee Chairman will be guided by the strategic directions and high level actions established in the IMO Strategic Plan and the High-level Action Plan. Any submission for an unplanned output by a NGO must be co-sponsored by a member state and should contain information as follows:

1. **IMO objectives:** Provide evidence whether and how the proposal:
  1. is within the scope of IMO objectives; and
  2. is strictly related to the scope of the Strategic Plan and contributes to the implementation of the High-level actions established in the Strategic Plan.
2. **(Compelling) need:** Demonstrate and document:
  1. the need for a proposed measure; and
  2. the compelling need for a proposal for a new convention or an amendment to an existing convention.
3. **Analysis of the issue:** Provide an analysis of the proposed measure, including a plausible demonstration of its practicability, feasibility and proportionality.
4. **Analysis of implications:** Provide an analysis of the implications of the proposal, addressing the cost to the maritime industry as well as the relevant legislative and administrative burdens.
5. **Benefits:** Provide evidence that the benefits vis-à-vis enhanced maritime safety, maritime security or protection of the marine environment expected to be derived from the inclusion of the new item justify the proposed action.

6. Industry standards: Provide information on whether adequate industry standards exist or are being developed.
7. Output: Specify the intended output in SMART terms (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, time-bound). If a final output cannot be specified in the submission for a proposal for inclusion of an unplanned output, an interim output to be produced before the end of the current two-year period should be specified in SMART terms.
8. Priority/urgency: Provide, with reference to the current Strategic Plan and High-level Action Plan, evidence on:
1. the urgency of the proposed unplanned output;
  2. the date that the proposed unplanned output should be completed; and
  3. timescale needed for the IMO organ to complete the work.
9. Action required: Specify the action required by the IMO organ.

### Remember

- to use the standard format given in Figure 3;
- to meet the relevant deadline dependant on the type of submission and the options contained within the agenda / invitation Circular.

### Also remember

- you will require support from Member Governments for co-sponsoring your submission on any new work items (unplanned output);
- lobby member states and the industry NGOs for support both on the submission and in the plenary as delegates who understand your position are more likely to speak in support than those who do not have it within their brief.
- be prepared to introduce your submission during the session and, where possible, have a written intervention available for the IMO secretariat.

# 10 Guidance on meetings

All items on the agenda and relevant papers of the Committees and Sub-committees are addressed in plenary and all decisions are made in the plenary after consideration of any Working or Correspondence Group. No more than three Working Groups and two Drafting Groups are allowed to be established during any session. No more than three Correspondence Groups are to be established by each body. Intercessional meetings need acceptance by the relevant Committee and must be approved by the Council. Only the plenary is conducted in a number of languages with interpreters.

## Chairman

The Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Committees and Sub-committees are elected by the member states and reconfirmed at each meeting. Chairmen of Working or Drafting Groups are normally appointed by the IMO Secretariat. In theory, the method of work of the Working Groups is the same as the plenary but much of this is dependant on the Chairman.

**The important detail to remember is that unlike the ILO, Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) have no vote or power of veto.**

The ability to make an intervention is at the discretion of the Chairman. Some Chairmen will not allow an intervention by an NGO until every Member State who requests to speak by raising their card has made their intervention (sometimes more than once). Normally, whilst the Chair will give preference to the flag states, they will accept interventions in the sequence of flags being raised. Any delegation may request that their intervention is noted in the final report.

In Working and Drafting Groups it is usually less formal and all speakers have equal input with the final outcome agreed by consensus of the entire group. This agreed report to the plenary, in theory, should not then be contested by any who have taken part, and it should be accepted without alteration by the Committee or Sub-committee. However any comments made by delegations regarding the conclusions can be entered in the report of the plenary.

A Working Group has more freedom, but only within the instructions given to it by the plenary. If you are in doubt about your instructions – ask before leaving plenary! Usually the task of a Working Group is to consider in detail issues of a more or less technical nature and report back with specific proposals. In the ideal situation, such proposals would have been accepted by all members of the group. In some cases, Working Groups will be dealing with controversial or otherwise sensitive issues where consensus cannot be reached.

## Sub-committees

The agendas of the Sub-committees are determined by relevant Committees and some items appear on a number of Sub-committee agendas. Sub-committees generally are more technical groups and provide more specific technical consideration to matters on the wider agenda of the Committees. Reports are sent to the Committees usually with recommendations and Committees will assign the number of sessions required and any further instructions based on its considerations.

Correspondence Groups may further consider issues between sessions of a body in order to facilitate the work of that body.

# 11 Practical information for IFSMA delegates to IMO

## Preparing yourself

IFSMA affiliates may join the IFSMA delegation or other Member State or NGO delegations.

The IFSMA delegation would normally consist of:

- the IFSMA Accredited Representative to the IMO as Head of Delegation;
- any member of the IFSMA Executive Council;
- any representatives of the IFSMA affiliates as well as any IFSMA Individual Members which have contacted the IFSMA Secretariat in advance and are being registered to IMO by IFSMA to attend the specific IMO meeting as Adviser.

All IFSMA delegates should make themselves aware of the IFSMA position and policies by reading both, the **Guidance for Delegates Representing IFSMA** as well as the **Compilation of IFSMA Resolutions & Statements**. Furthermore it is essential to read all documents prior to the meeting, highlighting everything of particular interest. They should ensure that the IFSMA delegation is aware of their national position on all relevant issues and, where possible, communicate and lobby for support on the IFSMA position. Delegates speaking on behalf of the IFSMA should ensure that they remain within the agreed parameters and understand fully the IFSMA aims and goals as defined in the **IFSMA Statutes & Bye-Laws**.

## Local transport to and from IMO

Buses 77 and 344 stop just in front of the IMO building and go to Vauxhall Station where you will find a tube station (Victoria Line) to Victoria Station and continuing north (Oxford Circus, etc). Bus 77 travelling in the opposite direction (bus stop on the other side of Albert Embankment – the river side) goes to Waterloo Station.

Bus 3 stops in Lambeth Road just round the corner to your right when leaving the IMO building. This bus goes north to Westminster, Trafalgar Square and on to Oxford Circus, etc.

Bus C10 also stops in Lambeth Road (as Bus 3) and goes to Victoria Station via Pimlico.

Bus 507 (only Monday to Friday and not in late the evening) stops on the opposite side of the roundabout at Lambeth Bridge and goes (stop at the Lambeth Palace side) to Victoria Station and (stop on the river side) to Waterloo Station.

## Registration

For those wishing to join the IFSMA delegation, remember to register well in advance with the IFSMA Secretariat.

Because of new security measures in the IMO building, you are advised to arrive early on the first day of the meeting. Register on arrival to receive your security pass.

## Security Passes

A permanent security pass will be handed to you by security in the IMO lobby. The pass should be visible at all times while you are in the building. The pass is used for gaining entry beyond the security barriers in the foyer. You must keep the pass and bring it with you to all subsequent meetings at the IMO. It will be reactivated by the IMO staff based on your pre-registration.

## Facilities in the IMO building

On the Ground Floor you will find the security desk, the main meeting room and the documents desk.

The IMO no longer makes available meeting documents so delegates need to download all papers they require prior to the meeting and bring them either as hard copy or in an electronic format. Power and Internet connections are available in the seating areas of the Plenary and Working Groups.

There is a manned desk where all documents issued during the meeting are placed in pigeon holes according to the number indicated by one of your delegation on the registration form.

On the First Floor you will find the Delegates' Lounge. Here you can buy tea or coffee during the official morning and afternoon breaks. You will also find a small sales shop with various items carrying the IMO logo. On this floor you will find a number of smaller (interior) meeting rooms. One room with Personal Computers and Internet access and printers is also provided on this floor. The telephone exchange and the fax room are also located on the First Floor.

On the Second Floor you will find two larger meeting rooms and a number of smaller meeting rooms. A manned conference desk is available for assistance and practical information.

On the Fourth Floor you will find the Restaurant.

Telephones are available to delegates on the Ground, First and Second Floors. You can call direct (free) to the local area codes 0207 and 0208. Calls to other areas in the United Kingdom as well as to overseas numbers must be ordered through the telephone exchange (3515).

Faxes and letters for delegates will be brought to the delegation's seats in the main meeting room.

### **Where to find the Secretariat offices**

The Maritime Safety Division and the Marine Environment Division are located on the Sixth Floor except for the STCW & Human Element Section, which is found on the Third Floor.

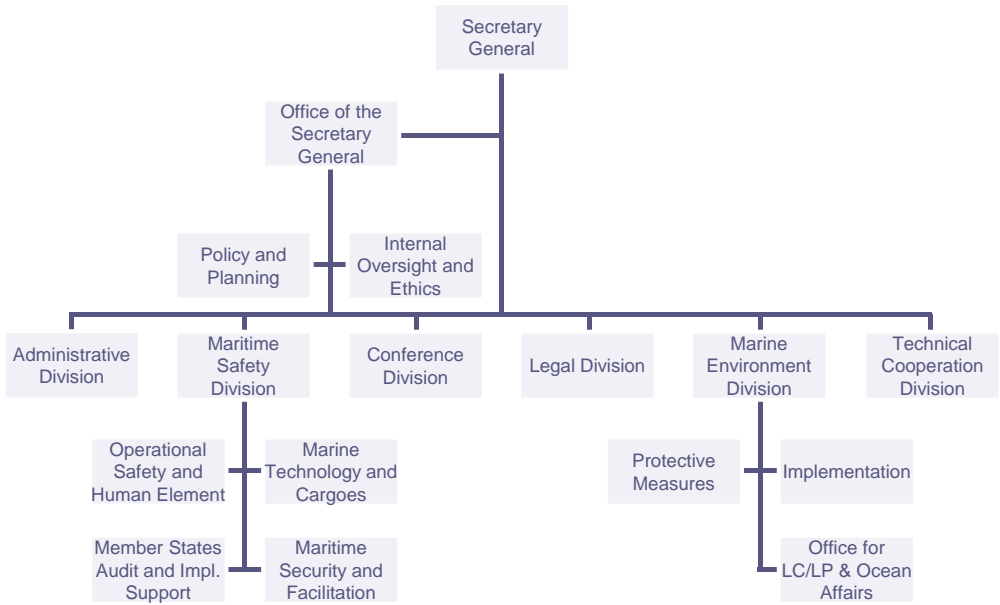
The Legal Division is located on the Seventh Floor where you will also find the Office of the Secretary-General.

The Technical Co-operation Division is located on the Fifth Floor.

### **Normal time schedule for meetings**

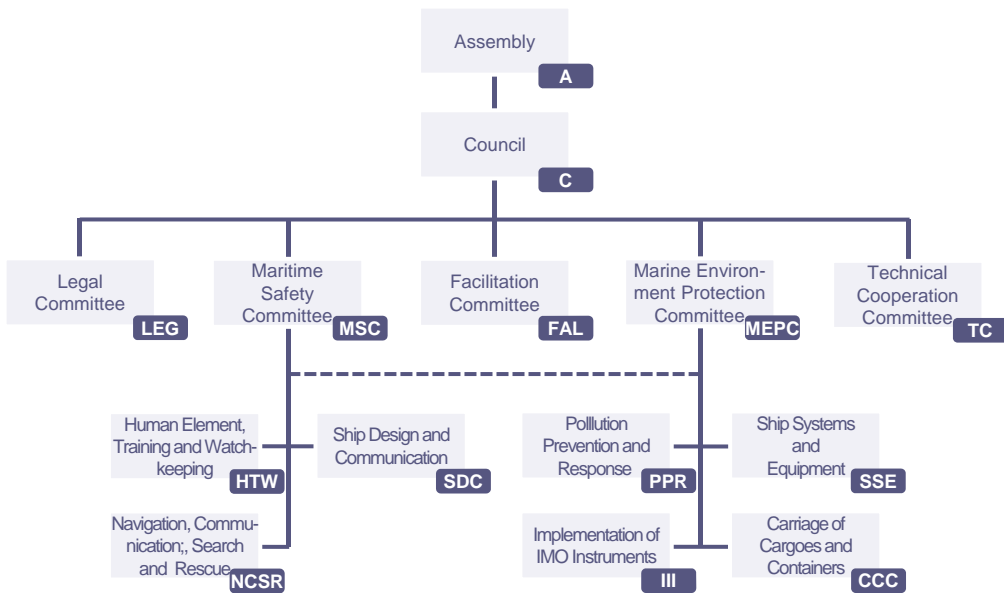
Meetings normally start at 09:30 hrs and go on until 17:30 hrs with coffee/tea breaks at 11:00-11:30 hrs and at 16:00-16:30 hrs. The lunch break is at 12:30-14:30 hrs.

Fig 1: The IMO Secretariat





# Fig. 2: Revised Structure of IMO Committees and Subcommittees



New Sub-Committees		Formerly
HTW	Human Element, Training and Watchkeeping	STW
SDC	Ship Design and Construction	DE, FP, SLF
NCSR	Navigation, Communication and Search and Rescue	COMSAR, NAV
PPR	Pollution Prevention and Response	BLG
SSE	Ship Systems and Response	DE, FP, SLF
III	Implementation of IMO Instruments	FSI
CCC	Carriage of Cargoes and Containers	DSC

# Fig. 3: Submission format



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MARITIME SAFETY COMMITTEE  
87th session  
Agenda item 17

MSC 87/17/3  
18 February 2010  
Original: ENGLISH

## ROLE OF THE HUMAN ELEMENT

Consideration of the human element in the rule making process

Submitted by INTERTANKO and ITF

### SUMMARY

*Executive summary:* INTERTANKO and ITF believe that it would be prudent and appropriate to incorporate the human element principles into the guidelines of the organization (MSC-MEPC.1/Circ.2). In this regard, we would like to suggest that the Committee gives consideration to including a provision in paragraph 2.10 of the guidelines when considering proposals for new work programme items. The elements of MSC-MEPC.7/Circ.1 and MSC/Circ.763-MEPC/Circ.313 could be reviewed to determine the appropriate provision to be included in paragraph 2.10 of MSC-MEPC.1/Circ.2

*Strategic direction:* 4, 5.4, 6.3, 7.4

*High-level action:* 4.0.5

*Planned output:* 4.0.5.1

*Action to be taken:* Paragraph 9

*Related documents:* A 26/INF.4, A 26/6(b)2, MSC-MEPC.1/Circ.2, MSC-MEPC.7/Circ.1, MSC/Circ.763-MEPC/Circ.313

### Background

1 INTERTANKO and ITF submitted document A 26/INF.4 to the twenty-sixth session of the Assembly, informing of the outcome of the "Young Seafarers Focus Group", a three-day workshop organized for young seafarers of different nationalities for them to express their views on a career at sea and on what attracts young people to the shipping industry.

2 Committee 2 of the Assembly noted with appreciation the information provided and agreed to refer document A 26/INF.4 to the MSC and the MEPC for consideration by the Joint MSC/MEPC Working Group on Human Element, and requested INTERTANKO and ITF to submit proposals on how to address the issues raised in the aforementioned document.

the 1990s, the number of people in the UK who are employed in the public sector has increased from 10.5 to 13.5 million (19.5% of the population).

There are a number of reasons why the public sector has expanded. One reason is that the population has aged. The number of people aged 65 and over has increased from 10.5 million in 1990 to 13.5 million in 2000. This has led to an increase in the number of people who are eligible for state pension and other social security benefits.

Another reason is that the government has increased its spending on health care, education and other public services. This has led to an increase in the number of people employed in these sectors. For example, the number of people employed in health care has increased from 1.5 million in 1990 to 2.5 million in 2000.

There are also a number of reasons why the public sector has become more important in the UK. One reason is that the private sector has become more important in the UK. This has led to a decline in the number of people employed in the public sector. For example, the number of people employed in the public sector has declined from 10.5 million in 1990 to 9.5 million in 2000.

Another reason is that the government has become more interventionist in the economy. This has led to an increase in the number of people employed in the public sector. For example, the number of people employed in the public sector has increased from 9.5 million in 1990 to 10.5 million in 2000.

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