**IMO** Bulletin

**IMPORTANT NOTICE TO SEAFARERS.**

All seafarers must be aware that to remain employed at sea after January 1st 2017 they must be fully compliant with the requirements of STCW 2010. In just six months the Manila Amendments come fully into force and seafarer will require their current certificate of competency to be in line with the new rules for the position the seafarer is sailing as and the vessel they sail on. Revalidation requirements include

12 months sea service in the preceding five years on valid ships.

Applicable certification for the position held e.g. ECDIS, High Voltage. Required endorsements for vessel including new requirements e.g. Polar Code and IGF Code and

Refresher training e.g. fast rescue boats

STCW Guidance may now be available from your administration or there is a Revised STCW Guide for Seafarers on line, Contact the Nautilus Federation for details of a download

**June 2016**

**Marine Environment Protection Committee, MEPC 69.**

MEPC 69 was tasked with responding to the outcomes of the United Nations Climate Change Conferences held in Paris December 2015. The IMO must once again find an appropriate response to set reduction targets for greenhouse gas (GHG) in the maritime industry and how to finance the technological changes. The major issue remains the interpretation of a ‘Common but Differential Responsibility’ within the competing interests of the FOC system of the shipping industry. Whilst it was agreed by the Committee that the IMO was responsible to find a solution for the maritime industry this would be done in three stages; the first stage being the collection of data. However, there was little progress beyond commencing stage one and there will undoubtable in the future be more frustrated meetings.

The Ballast Water Management Convention is close to implementation with 49 ratifications of Contracting States representing 34.79% of the world fleet (requiring 35% and to come into force after 12 months). With 69 approved systems so far the IMO is now reviewing the guidance for Ballast Water Management Systems (G8), with the possibility of making it mandatory. It has been agreed that where the initial systems, installed in good faith, do not comply with the revised G8 guidelines the company and seafarers will not be penalised. However they would be required to bring it updated or replaced within a given period.

The IMO is now looking at phase 2 of the reductions in power to meet the target of the Energy Efficiency Design Index (EEDI) although we have yet to determine the minimum power requirements for safe manoeuvring of vessels. This problem is exacerbated by the call by some parties for a revised reduced phase 2 EEDI levels based on data that ships currently being built are already within requirements using conventional technology, such as reduced power. It is hoped that two studies investigating minimum safe power, to be released later this year, will give us grounds to contest the ‘race to the bottom’ for ships power requirements.

The use of shore power in port (cold ironing) is once again on the agenda and discussions will need to address the problem of harmonising onshore and ship power supply to International Electrical Standards.

**New Res** MEPC.272(69)-Amendments to the NOX Technical Code 2008 (Testing of Gas-Fuelled and Dual Fuel Engines)

**Maritime Safety Committee, MSC 96**.

**Passenger Ship Safety**: At MSC 94 a revised long-term action plan was developed that reflected the outstanding issues identified by the IMO Casualty Analysis working group, specifically the outcome of casualty analysis on the Costa Concordia. This was brought back to MSC 96 but as there was no justification or compelling need established by the flag states, much of this list was removed. In total 15 safety concerns of this working group will not be considered again by the IMO until they reoccur in a similar incident to the Costa Concordia.

**Carriage of Industrial Personnel**: The carriage of over 12 industrial personnel transported or accommodated on ships in international waters continues to be a concern, however the outcome of MSC 96 was largely in line with our own position. A new chapter to SOLAS should be developed solely for the carriage of more than 12 industrial personnel making a new code mandatory The new code, will be based on the 2008 SPS( Special Purpose Ship) and HSC( High Speed Craft) Codes, as appropriate. Attempts to add the definition of Industrial Personnel to SOLAS Chapter I regulation 2 using SOLAS provisions permitting exceptions and equivalence was rejected by the Committee. We are still aware that some parties are endeavouring to have industrial personnel work on-board ships which would be a direct threat to seafarer employment.

**Free Fall Lifeboats Launching:** We are working with the Industry Lifeboat Group (ILG) on revised guidelines for the simulated launching of free-fall lifeboats which currently is not on the MSC agenda. This is part of the ILG work to make lifeboats safer for crew during abandon ships drills. It is intended that a draft revised guidelines will be submitted to MSC 97 in conjunction with draft amendments and the review of Guidelines on safety during abandon ship drills using lifeboats.

*The trial and conviction of Captain Mangouras after 14 years awaiting trial is inconsistent with due process, his basic human rights, contrary to article 230 of UNCLOS and ignores totally the international commitment to the IMO/ILO Guidelines on Fair Treatment of Seafarers*

*‘George Quick’*

**Measures to Enhance Maritime Security**: With the increasing reliance of ships on computers for operation and navigation combined with increased communication between ship and shore, there is an increasing concern regarding cybercrime. This will become an even greater threat on remotely operated ‘smart ships’ where hackers could take control or have access to sensitive communications. The IMO is putting together its own guidelines on maritime cyber security although there exists ashore a great deal of advice on best practice. Even with best practices cyber security remains an ongoing threat.

**Autonomous Ships:** Whilst autonomous, smart or drone ships are not on the IMO/MSC agenda, with the development and implementation of e-navigation underway, many manufactures are actively advocating greater automation. Their stated compelling need for automation is that it can eliminate the need for seafarers, which is desirable based on their costs, a high level of incompetence, a shortage of seafarers and the high percentage of accidents attributed to human error. They, with some flag states, will be submitting papers to MSC 97 which propose major change to the legislation to facilitate the unmanned or periodically unmanned ship. Whatever your views on the benefits of automation this is not about assisting the seafarer, it is about replacing them and maybe we should be thinking about how to discredit the premise that seafarers are no longer essential and prove they are an incalculable value to the shipping industry.

**John Bainbridge**