

Brief Report on MEPC 62

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Brief introduction to the outcome of the 62nd session of IMO MEPC (Marine Environmental Protection Committee), which was held from 11 to 15 July 2011.

MARPOL Annex I

There will be a new UI to regulation 12.2.2 clarifying that regulation 12.2.2 of MARPOL Annex I should not be retroactively applied to ships delivered before 1 January 2014 thus allowing for the sludge tank discharge piping and bilge water piping using common piping that leads to the standard discharge connection for existing ships.

MARPOL Annex IV

The concept of "Special Areas" and the designation of the Baltic Sea as the first of those areas, is adopted as an amendment to MARPOL Annex IV.

The new regulations for discharge of sewage for passenger ships operating in this "Special Area" will be effective for new ships from 1 January 2016, and for existing ships from 1 January 2018 subject to provision of adequate reception facilities.

MARPOL Annex V

A revised text for the new MARPOL Annex V was adopted and will enter into force on 1 January 2013. The new MARPOL Annex V generally prohibits the discharge of garbage into the sea, except as provided otherwise. The prohibition applies, among others to cleaning agents contained in washing water and classified as harmful to the environment, as well as all kind of plastics.

The respective guidelines are expected to be adopted during MEPC 63.

MARPOL Annex VI

The United States Caribbean Sea was designated as a new ECA (Emission Control Area) by an amendment that comes into force on 1 January 2013. At the same time, a circular will be provided as a reminder that transition periods for North American ECA will terminate on 31 July 2012, whereas the period for the US Caribbean ends on 31 December 2013.

A new chapter 4 was adopted following a lengthy debate introducing the EEDI (Energy Efficiency Design Index) as one measure to reduce GHG emissions from ships.

The amendment is expected to come into force on 1 January 2013 and requires all new ships above 400 gt to be in possession of an International Energy Efficiency Certificate, which certifies the ship as having an "Attained EEDI" that does not exceed the maximum "Required EEDI".

All ships will need to have a Ship Energy Efficiency Management Plan (SEEMP) showing how the ship is being operated in an energy-efficient manner.

Administrations may waive the requirement for the EEDI for up to four years after the application dates.

The technical guidelines required by the amendment will be dealt with by an intersessional working group and will be completed at a later MEPC.

MARPOL Annexes I, II, IV, V, VI

The possibility of arranging for regional port reception facility agreements was approved for adoption at MEPC 63.

NO_x Technical Code

The Committee approved the amendments to the NO_x Technical Code to allow certification under the Scheme B concept using modelling procedures for engines fitted with SCR (Selective Catalytic Reduction). The relevant guidelines were adopted this session.

BWM Convention

For the application of the D-2 standard for ships with a ballast water capacity of 5000 m³ or more that were constructed between 2009 and 2012, it was clarified that these ships must also comply at the first intermediate or renewal survey after the anniversary date of the date of delivery in 2016.

Furthermore, it was clarified that the water in the hopper area of dredgers is not being considered as ballast water and a procedure for approval of "other methods of ballast water management" was approved.

Recycling of Ships (Hong Kong Convention)

Two of the intended four guidelines could be finished by the working group, namely the "2011 Guidelines for the development of the Ship Recycling Plan" and the "2011 Guidelines for the development of the Inventory of Hazardous Materials".

Formal Safety Assessment

A working group completed the work on the development of environmental-risk-evaluation criteria within the framework of the FSA guidelines and the outcome was given to the MSC (Marine Safety Committee) for incorporation into the guidelines.

Black Carbon

The BLG Sub-Committee was tasked with defining how black-carbon emissions are to be defined, measured and controlled. For the time being, this is focused on Arctic regions.

More detailed explanation by GL experts to follow in due course.

Contact

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