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**CIRCULAR LETTER 11/2017
06 February 2017**

REPORT ON THE 97th SESSION OF THE IMO MARITIME SAFETY COMMITTEE

References:

- A. IHO CL 24/2016 dated 25 May - *Report on the 96th Session of the IMO Maritime Safety Committee (MSC96)*
- B. IHO CL 13/2016 dated 10 March - *Report on the 3rd Session of the IMO Sub-Committee on Navigation, Communications and Search and Rescue (NCSR3)*

Dear Hydrographer,

1. As announced in Reference A, the 97th session of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) Maritime Safety Committee (MSC97) was held at the IMO Headquarters in London from 21 to 25 November. Assistant Director David WYATT represented the IHO.
2. The following paragraphs cover matters discussed at MSC97 that may be of particular interest to IHO Member States' representatives.

Unsafe Mixed Migration by Sea

3. The Committee reviewed the MSC.1/Circ.896/Rev.2 – *Interim measures for combating unsafe practices associated with the trafficking, smuggling or transport of migrants by sea* – and invited Member States and international organizations to report incidents with information via the facilitation module in Global Integrated Shipping Information System (GISIS).

GMDSS

4. The MSC, having received a report from the IMO Secretariat regarding progress on the development of the draft Modernization Plan of the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS) and noting the need for the involvement of the Sub-Committee on Human element, Training and Watchkeeping (HTW), instructed the Correspondence Group on the Modernization of the GMDSS to submit the draft Modernization Plan of the GMDSS to the 4th session of HTW for its consideration, and for HTW to provide comments and advice to the 4th session of the Sub-Committee on Navigation, Communications and Search and Rescue (NCSR) as appropriate. Further the Committee authorised late submissions to these sub-committees on this topic.

5. The Committee approved MSC.1/Circ.1551 – *Navigational Warnings concerning endangering the Safety of Navigation* – to ensure appropriate navigational warnings were issued in accordance with resolution A.706(17), as amended, – *World-Wide Navigational Warning Service* – prior to operations which might threaten the safety of navigation. The MSC considered information provided by the United Kingdom on the Inmarsat Fleet Broadband Maritime Safety Data Service (MSDS) for recognition and use in the GMDSS. It was agreed that the NCSR should consider how the process should be undertaken and whether it should be considered as a new application or as an up-grade to the existing services; further the NCSR should report to the next session of the MSC with advice on which requirements of resolution A.1001(25) – *Criteria for the provision of Mobile Satellite Communication Systems in the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS)* – should be applicable.

Hydrography and Charting

6. The MSC adopted amendments to resolution A.572(14), as amended, – *the General provisions on ships' routing* – on establishing multiple structures at sea which had been approved at NCSR 3 as reported in Reference B. The revision will be distributed as a MSC circular once confirmed by the IMO Assembly at its next session. The Committee approved MSC.1/Circ.1364/Rev.1 – *Amendments to the International SafetyNET Manual* – and MSC.1/Circ.1403/Rev.1 – *Amendments to the IMO NAVTEX Manual* which had been approved at NCSR 3 (see Reference B). The IHO representative made an intervention proposing an earlier entry-into-force date and to delete the requirement of providing at least 12 months notification; the MSC decided to refer this proposal to the NCSR for further consideration before agreeing to the proposed modifications relating to the entry-into-force dates. The Committee also authorized the NCSR to establish an Expert Group on ships' routing at future sessions, as appropriate, taking into account any submissions received on navigation-related subjects.

7. The Committee considered the information provided by Georgia and Ukraine (MSC97/4/2) and the Russian Federation (MSC97/4/3) regarding safety and security of navigation in the North-Eastern part of the Black Sea. The MSC agreed that the IMO was not the appropriate forum in which to discuss such matters; however, recognizing the importance of security and safety of navigation, the Committee invited Member States and interested parties to notify the Organization of any threats to the security and safety of navigation in the North-Eastern part of the Black Sea, for circulation in accordance with IMO procedures.

8. The MSC considered a submission by Ukraine (MSC97/19/9) proposing a new output with a view to amending paragraphs 12.2 and 15.2 of resolutions A.817(19) – *Performance Standards for Electronic Chart Display and Information Systems (ECDIS)* – and MSC.232(82) – *Adoption of the revised Performance Standards for Electronic Chart Display and Information Systems (ECDIS)* – respectively, to provide an additional capability to connect ECDIS equipment with communication equipment. The majority of delegations felt this should be considered from a wider perspective under the current work made on output 5.2.6.1 relating to the harmonization of bridge design and display of information – *Development of additional modules to the revised Performance Standards for Integrated Navigation Systems (INS)* – and therefore the Committee invited Ukraine to submit a document to NCSR 4 for further consideration under the above output.

Maritime Cybersecurity

9. The Committee reviewed the MSC.1/Circ.1526 – *Interim guidelines on maritime cyber risk management* – and a submission from the Islamic Republic of Iran (MSC97/4), which proposed the development of a mandatory instrument to ensure consistent application of cyber security measures and procedures on board ships and on shore-based systems interfacing with ships. The MSC agreed a careful assessment should be conducted before developing any mandatory provisions on maritime cyber risk management and therefore it

decided to wait for the 41st session of the IMO Facilitation Committee (FAL 41) to complete its work on facilitation aspects before any further consideration to the possible mandatory nature of the Guidelines.

Office Bearers

10. The MSC unanimously re-elected Mr Bradley GROVES of Australia as Chair and Mr Juan Carlos CUBISINO of Argentina as Vice-Chair of the Committee for 2017.

Report of the Session

11. The final report of MSC97 (MSC97/22) is available on the IMO website under IMODOCS.

Next Sessions

12. The next sessions of the MSC are scheduled from 7 to 16 June 2017 (MSC 98) and May 2018 (MSC 99) at the IMO Headquarters in London. The Committee also approved the intersessional meeting of the thirteenth session of the Joint IMO/ITU Expert Group on Maritime Radiocommunication Matter to take place from 10 to 14 July 2017 at the IMO Headquarters.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Robert Ward', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Robert WARD
Secretary-General