



United States Coast Guard

INTERNATIONAL
MARITIME
ORGANIZATION



International Maritime Organization *e-newsletter*

Covering issues under consideration at the International Maritime Organization of interest to the United States

In this Issue

From the Director's Desk..... 1

World Maritime Day

Parallel Event..... 2

Assembly 3

Council Chairman..... 4

Committees:

Marine Environment

Protection..... 4

Maritime Safety 5

Technical Cooperation / Legal... 6

Subcommittees:

Communications, Search & Rescue/

Ship Design & Equipment 7

Dangerous Goods, Solid Cargoes
& Containers 8

Standards of Training &

Watchkeeping..... 8

Flag State Implementation..... 9

Fire Protection..... 9

Bulk Liquids & Gases..... 10

Safety of Navigation..... 10

**A complete listing of upcoming
IMO meetings for 2010 can be
found on the IMO
[Programme of Meetings Website](#)**

From the Director's Desk

In opening the first 2010 edition of the USCG IMO e-Newsletter, I'd like to thank all those who contributed to making 2009 a successful year for the United States' engagement at IMO. The U.S. engagement at IMO is truly multilateral, and one that requires the attendance and input from multiple sources, including the USCG, other supporting agencies, and interested private sector organizations. Thanks to everyone's efforts, the results produced in 2009 will have lasting impact to ensure safe, secure, and efficient shipping on clean oceans.

This past October, I was pleased with the overwhelming support and participation in the World Maritime Day Parallel Event, which the U.S. hosted for the first time. The theme of the event was climate change, including the prevention of air pollution from ships, which is one of the most pressing issues of our time—not just at IMO but throughout every aspect of our society.

The International Maritime Organization has been working diligently on this issue as it pertains to international shipping. The U.S. has taken an active role at IMO to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from ships, and recently proposed a mandatory efficiency standard for new and existing ships. This proposal provides an attractive alternative to earlier proposals, while focusing on technological and operational improvement methods. In addition, the U.S. received approval for its joint proposal with Canada, which would designate much of the U.S. and Canadian coastline as an Emission Control Area (ECA). This will require stringent international controls to reduce emissions of sulphur oxide (SOx) and particulate matter (PM), as well as nitrogen oxide (NOx) emissions. It would apply to ocean-going ships and deliver substantial benefits to large segments of the population, as well as to marine and terrestrial ecosystems.

Another high-profile issue at IMO is piracy. It is readily apparent that attacks on merchant vessels in waters of the Indian Ocean off Somalia have continued to rise. In 2009, the dangers of shipping hit home, not only to the shipping community but to the U.S. public as well, with the attack on the U.S.-flagged *Maersk Alabama*, and the heroic response taken by the vessel's crew and U.S. Navy. In light of this serious concern, the U.S. led efforts at both the UN and the IMO to address this issue. The USCG and its inter-agency partners' active engagement with both organizations helped create international coordination, industry guidelines, and a legal structure to counter future pirate attacks. This engagement resulted in the Djibouti Code of Conduct, the New York Declaration, and approval of new and updated UN and IMO circulars and resolutions.

In closing out the year, the Commandant of the USCG, Admiral Thad Allen, attended the IMO's biennial Assembly as head of the U.S. delegation, where the U.S. met all objectives, including being re-elected to Council. Of particular note was the approval of the Assembly resolution on Piracy and armed robbery against ships in waters off the coast of Somalia. Following the General Assembly, the 103rd session of Council met primarily to determine its next Chairman (see page 4).

Even with all the accomplishments of 2009, there are countless challenges ahead of us. These challenges include, but are by no means limited to, further work on climate change and the reduction of greenhouse gases, a mandatory polar code, and small vessel security. I applaud all who contributed to our success of 2009, and sincerely look forward to working with you again in 2010.

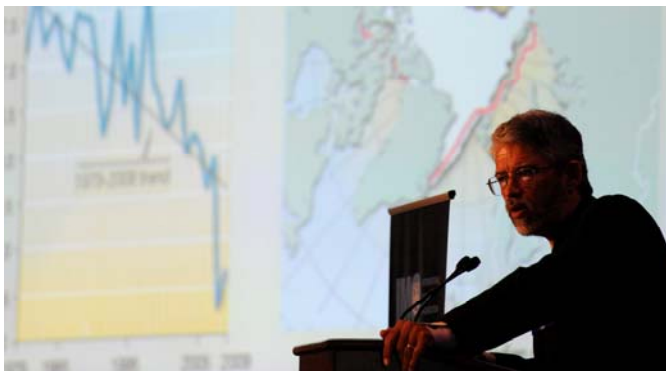
Jeff Lantz
Director of Commercial Regulations
& Standards

United States Hosts 2009 World Maritime Day Parallel Event

Each year, the IMO hosts World Maritime Day at its headquarters in London as a day to focus attention on the importance of shipping safety, maritime security, and the marine environment. In recent years, the IMO has also asked a Member State to host a Parallel Event in order to raise global visibility on World Maritime Day. Parallel Events have been held in Singapore, Greece, and Brazil; on October

16, 2009, the United States was pleased to host the fifth World Maritime Day Parallel Event in New York City. The theme for the year was "Climate Change: A Challenge for IMO Too!" It demonstrated the international maritime community's commitment to reducing greenhouse gas emissions from international shipping. This theme was especially appropriate as the event provided a venue for lively discussions in preparation for the United Nations' climate change negotiations that were held in Copenhagen in December.

During the planning process, the USCG worked with the North American Marine Environmental Protection Association and our agency partners—the Department of State, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Maritime Administration, and the Na-



Keynote speech on Climate Change by Dr. John Holdren, President Barack Obama's Director of the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy.

tional Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration—to deliver a widely attended event that brought together international maritime policy makers, private industry, academia, and the general public. With the collaboration of the IMO, our agency partners and various maritime community organizations, the 2009 Paral-

"Climate change is like a giant oil tanker in that to stop it or even alter its course not only needs a massive force but also takes a considerable amount of time and distance, even though it only takes a light push of the right button to initiate the action."

– Efthimios Mitropoulos, Secretary-General of the IMO

lel Event drew nearly three hundred delegates, and hundreds more members of the public.

The event kicked off with a Delegate's Conference, held to explore the issues and challenges presented to the maritime community by climate change. Leading authorities from the

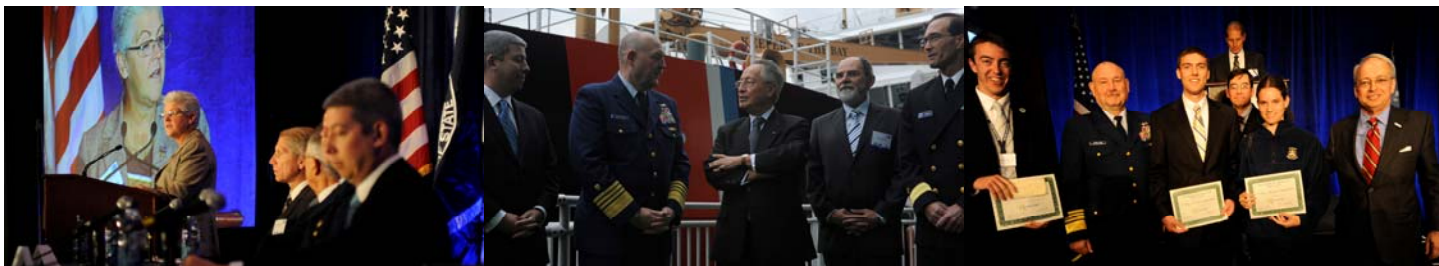
U.S. and the international community debated and discussed the many aspects of this global issue, and how the maritime community is responding to this changing environment. The Delegate's Conference closed with a keynote speech by Dr. John Holdren, President Barack Obama's Director of the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy. Other notable highlights included the unveiling of the

EPA's clean diesel hybrid yard hostler, a Green Ship Technologies Exhibition, an innovative high school and university student designs presentation and award ceremony, and public tours of government and commercial ships displaying their green initiatives.

In addition to the event in New York City, a dozen other ports within the U.S. brought together members of the maritime community to hold local level observations of World Maritime Day and engage in discussion of cleaner maritime technologies.

Further information, including videos, presentations, and photos of the event, can be found at the [2009 World Maritime Day Parallel Event Website](#).

The next Parallel Event is expected to be held in Argentina in Fall 2010.



Ms. Gina McCarthy (Assistant EPA Administrator) delivers opening remarks. Also pictured, Mr. Jeff Lantz (USCG Director of Commercial Regulations and Standards), Mr. Efthimios Mitropoulos (IMO Secretary-General), and Mr. David Matsuda (MARAD Administrator)

Maritime leaders (l. to r.) Mr. David Matsuda (MARAD Administrator), ADM Thad Allen (USCG Commandant), Mr. Efthimios Mitropoulos (IMO Secretary-General), Mr. Miguel Palomares (Director of the IMO's Marine Environment Division) and RDML Philip Kenul (Director of the NOAA's Marine & Aviation Operations)

Presentation of the 1st place University Design Competition presented by ADM Thad Allen (USCG Commandant) and Mr. Clay Maitland (NAMEPA Chairman). Also pictured with their certificates are the awardees from Webb Institute (l. to r.) Mr. Lowell Dickerson, Ms. Amanda Malarkey & Mr. Ian McCauley and their advisor

The 26th Session of the General Assembly (A 26)

The 26th Session of IMO's highest governing body, the Assembly, met in London from November 23—December 2, 2009.

The meeting highlighted the Organization's ongoing work on key issues, and considered matters concerning acts of piracy and armed robbery against ships in waters off the coast of Somalia, ships operating in polar waters, harmful emissions from ships, and ballast water management.

A number of resolutions and amend-



U.S. Head of Delegation, Admiral Thad Allen (USCG Commandant) at the Delegation Desk during A26

ments to mandatory instruments, submitted by the MSC, MEPC, and Council, were adopted by A 26. The topics of these resolutions included the Code of Practice for the Investigation of the Crimes of Piracy and Armed Robbery Against Ships; Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in the Waters off the Coast of Somalia; Guidelines on the Implementation of the ISM Code, 2009; MODU Code; and Guidelines for Ships Operating in Polar Waters. Among other significant achievements during the biennium, the Assembly highlighted the International Convention for the Safe and Environmentally Sound Recycling of Ships, adopted in May 2009, which will enter into force 24 months after ratification.

The Assembly also considered and approved work regarding the governance of the Organization during the 2008—2009 and 2010—2011 bienniums. Highlights include the adoption of a five-year plan that would see the Voluntary IMO Member State Audit

Scheme phased in as a mandatory scheme. In addition, the Assembly considered and approved the organization's Strategic Plan for 2010-2015, its High-level Action Plan of the Organization and priorities for the 2010—2011 biennium; the related work programmes; and the results based budget for the 2010—2011 biennium.

As one of its most significant responsibilities, at the start of each biennium the Assembly elects 40 Member States to serve two-year terms in the upcoming Council according to those Member States that represent the largest interest in international shipping services (Category A), the largest interest in international seaborne trade (Category B), and geographic representation to the Council (Category C). The U.S. has been an active member in Category A since it ratified the IMO Convention in 1959. Although this category has maintained a stable membership over the past several years, the Council election for 2010—2011 was competitive with the announcement of Liberia candidacy. In the end, the results of the election kept the Council membership unchanged with the exception of Belgium being elected to fill the seat vacated by New Zealand which did not run for re-election. The U.S. re-election is a testimony to its contribution to the IMO and the international shipping community.

The IMO presented its Award for Exceptional Bravery at Sea, an award presented annually to those who, at the risk of losing their own lives, perform acts of extraordinary bravery attempting to save lives at sea. This year IMO, unable to single out one nomination, presented two awards, both coincidentally to U.S. citizens: Petty Officer Abram Heller, a USCG rescue swimmer, who, in Arctic conditions, single-handedly rescued eight crew members of a foundered fishing vessel in the Bering Sea, and Mr. Maurice Conti and Mrs. Sophie Conti, two amateur sailors who rescued three people from a sunken yacht in

very heavy weather off a remote South Pacific coral reef. In addition to the Bravery Awards, certificates were presented to four nominees whom the award committee felt deserved recognition. In a linked ceremony, Certificates for Exceptional Services Rendered to Shipping and Mankind were presented to naval vessels that have participated in international efforts to repress piracy off the coast of Somalia and in the Gulf of Aden. The awardees included CAPT Mark Cedrun, U.S. Navy, on behalf of the



U.S. Delegation to A 26.

U.S. Naval vessels and Commanding Officers of other vessels representing over 20 Member States.

The U.S. held a reception for the Assembly delegates onboard the *HMS Wellington*, the last surviving member of the Grimsby Class of sloops that served the British with distinction in WWII, which is now a floating museum. The reception was hosted by Admiral Allen and was attended by the U.S. Ambassador, IMO Secretary-General, IMO Bravery at Sea awardees, and over 150 international delegates. During the reception, Admiral Allen presented Distinguished Public Service Awards to Dr. Sam Ryan of the Canadian Coast Guard for his leadership as chairman of the Long Range Identification and Tracking System (LRIT) Working Group and development of the LRIT system, and the Maritime Security Centre—Horn of Africa (MSC-HOA) for the organization's contributions to the deterrence and repression of acts of piracy and armed robbery off the coast of Somalia.

IMO Elects New Council Chairman



On December 8th, Mr. Jeffrey Lantz, the USCG's Director of Commercial Regulations and Standards, was elected to serve as the Chairman of the IMO Council for next biennium (2010—2011). As only the second U.S. representative ever to hold this position, Mr. Lantz takes on the heavy responsibility of leading the IMO's Executive body during a critical period. In the coming years, the IMO will be working to confront such complex challenges as reducing greenhouse gas emissions from shipping, international piracy, and governing Arctic waterways that are more accessible as a result of global warming. In speaking on the subject, USCG Commandant Admiral Thad Allen stated, "In an ever changing maritime environment, Jeff will be looked to as a leader, as the IMO makes some of the most significant decisions the international community has considered in quite some time. From climate change to piracy, America's concerns are the world's concerns. I couldn't think of a better choice to lead the international community on these issues."

59th Session of the Marine Environment Protection Committee

The 59th session of the IMO's Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC) met on July 13—18, 2009, at IMO headquarters in London. The Committee addressed several important issues, including MARPOL Annex VI; greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions; ballast water management (BWM); ship recycling; the use and carriage of heavy grade oil on ships operating in Antarctica; the prevention of pollution during transfer of oil cargo between oil tankers at sea; the minimization of risk of ship strikes with cetaceans; noise from commercial shipping and its adverse impacts on marine life; shipboard oil waste pollution prevention plans; and a code for ships operating in polar waters.

The Committee approved amendments to MARPOL Annex VI to designate a North American Emission Control Area (ECA), which was proposed by the U.S. and Canada, and later joined by France. The amendments will be considered for adoption at MEPC 60, and if adopted will enter into force in August 2011.

MEPC 59 made significant progress on GHG by finalizing and circulating guidelines on the voluntary energy efficiency design index, an operational indicator for existing ships, and a ship efficiency management plan.

Basic approval was granted for three ballast water management (BWM) systems and final approval for five BWM systems. The Committee also agreed that sufficient ballast water treatment technologies were available, and therefore concluded that no changes to the ballast water convention compliance dates were needed.

The Committee adopted a resolution on the calculation of recycling capacity for satisfaction of the entry-into-force conditions of the Hong Kong International Convention for the Safe and Environmentally Sound Recycling of Ships, 2009. The Committee adopted the "Guidelines for the Inventory of Hazardous Materials" by resolution; it also re-established the ship recycling correspondence group to continue work on other guidelines, including the guidelines for ship recycling facilities.

MEPC 59 also approved:

- An amendment to ban the use and carriage of heavy grade oil on ships operating in Antarctica and agreed to circulate the amendment for adoption at MEPC 60;
- A guidance document for minimizing the risk of ship strikes with cetaceans on the basis of the U.S. submittal; and,

- "Guidance on Best Management Practiced for Removal of Anti-Fouling Systems (AFS) from Ships, Including TBT Hull Paints," as an AFS circular (The focus of this particular guidance document is on the removal of harmful anti-fouling systems and not in-water hull cleanings).

The Committee adopted amendments to MARPOL Annex I for a new Chapter 8, entitled "Prevention of Pollution During Transfer of Oil Cargo Between Oil Tankers at Sea."

The Committee agreed to re-establish the Correspondence Group on Noise from Commercial Shipping and its Adverse Impacts on Marine Life and the Correspondence Group for the Review of MARPOL Annex V.

The Committee approved the inclusion of a high-priority item in the work programme and agenda of the DE Subcommittee on "Development of Guidelines for a Shipboard Oil Waste Pollution Prevention Plan" and concurred with the decision of MSC 86 to include a high-priority item on "Development of a Mandatory Code for Ships Operating in Polar Waters" in the work programme of the DE Subcommittee.

86th Session of the Maritime Safety Committee

The 86th session of the Maritime Safety Committee (MSC) convened May 27—June 5, 2009, in London. The primary issues addressed included the adoption of amendments to the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS) and approval of numerous circulars. The U.S. delegation actively participated in the committee's three working groups on Goal-Based Standards (GBS) for new ship construction; Long Range Identification and Tracking Systems (LRIT); Formal Safety Assessments (FSA) Group of Experts; and the two drafting groups on piracy and amendments to mandatory instruments and capacity building.

The Committee adopted amendments to SOLAS regarding such topics as materials containing asbestos, bilge pumping arrangements, new electronic navigational systems and equipment, material safety data sheets, and infant life jackets.

The GBS working group was re-established and again chaired by CAPT Patrick Little of the USCG. The Committee approved the working group's recommendations to approve the SOLAS amendments, and an international construction standard to make GBS mandatory for bulk carrier and oil tanker construction. The Committee plans to finalize the GBS

Guidelines and funding options for GBS audits at its next session in May 2010.

The Committee agreed on 30 decisions regarding the implementation of LRIT, the most important of which were the approval of two circulars on LRIT testing—one on survey and certification of ships, and one on the LRIT Coordinator's role in review and audit of the system. LRIT Ad Hoc



Somali pirates in small boats hijack the MV Faina, a Belize-flagged cargo ship (Photo courtesy of the Daily Nation)

group will meet before the Committee's next session to decide on issues arising during the implementation of the system.

The Committee convened the Experts Group to initiate a review of the FSAs on cruise ships, Roll-on Roll-off Passenger (RoPax) Ships, Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) carriers, and containerships. The Committee noted that more time was needed to examine the FSA studies, and approved an inter-

sessional meeting and correspondence group to complete the reviews before its next session.

The Committee approved the revised Recommendations to Governments for preventing and suppressing piracy and armed robbery against ships (MSC.1/Circ.1333); and Guidance to shipowners and ship operators, shipmasters and crews on preventing and suppressing acts of piracy and armed robbery against ships (MSC.1/Circ.1334). In addition, the Committee adopted UN hostage survival guidance as well as guidance for fishing vessels, and adopted a Best Management Practices (BMP) for vessels operating off the coast of Somalia.

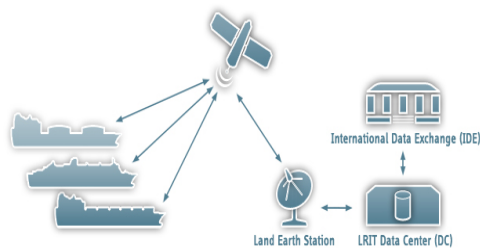
The Committee reviewed the reports of the seven subcommittees that have held sessions since its last session, and approved the work program and provisional agenda for all nine subcommittees. In particular, the Committee agreed to include five new work program items proposed by the United States, to include mandatory requirements for ships operating in polar regions, guidelines regarding visible elements to passenger ship general alarms, review of the performance standards for float-free satellite EPIRB, review of the GMDSS, and amendments to the World-Wide Radionavigation System.

Ad Hoc Long Range Identification and Tracking (LRIT) Working Group

The US has been instrumental in the development and operation of IMO's Long Range Identification and Tracking (LRIT) System. Using satellite technology, the LRIT system tracks the positions of all vessels subject to SOLAS. The system provides Contracting Governments worldwide with tracking information on their SOLAS vessels and those SOLAS vessels calling on their ports or transiting within 1,000 nautical miles of their coastline.

The US is temporarily operating the International Data Exchange (IDE) through December 31, 2011, and is operating the US National Data Cen-

ter. Both U.S. operated LRIT systems are maintained in the Coast Guard's Operations Systems Center, Martinsburg West Virginia.



LRIT architecture (Graphic courtesy of Thrane & Thrane)

As a key member of the Ad Hoc LRIT Working Group, the US has drafted an LRIT Continuity of Service Plan, which will be presented to the Group in March 2010. This LRIT Continuity of Service Plan was required to be developed by MSC86 before MSC 87. MSC may provide additional direction at its Eighty-Seventh session, scheduled for May 2010.

59th Session of the Technical Cooperation Committee (TC 59)

On June 23—25, 2009, the Technical Cooperation (TC) Committee convened at IMO Headquarters in London. During the session, the Committee discussed highlights from the Integrated Technical Cooperation Program (ITCP) implementation in 2008 and upcoming activities in response to piracy off the coast of Somalia, and reviewed and approved the ITCP and its adjoining budget of \$22 million for the 2010—2011 biennium.

During 2008, \$10.3 million were spent on implementing the ITCP, which included 41 advisory missions and 76 training events. The United States continues to support the IMO's Technical Cooperation activities through its financial contributions to the International Maritime Security Trust Fund, as well as in-kind contributions, by providing expert consultants. In 2009, USCG experts led two TC training workshops in the Caribbean, focusing

on Flag State Implementation and Standards of Training, Certification, and Watchkeeping.

Although most activities have centered on maritime safety, the ITCP has also included other goals such as implementation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), expanding search and rescue capabilities, and



TC and LEG worked diligently to address piracy off the coast of Somalia. (Photo courtesy of www.standupforamerica.wordpress.com)

addressing piracy off the coast of Somalia. It contributes to the MDGs by promoting the role of women in the maritime sector, and by focusing on the needs of Small Island Developing States and Least Developed Countries. TC funds were also used to establish maritime rescue coordination centers (MRCC) in Nigeria and Liberia, with plans for another in Morocco.

One of IMO's largest upcoming priorities and activities for 2010—2011 will be to address the increased piracy in the Horn of Africa region. It will do this through the implementation of the Djibouti Code of Conduct and its adjoining multi-donor trust fund, initiated by a \$15 million contribution by the Japanese government. Its activities will include the assessment, establishment, and training of a Coast Guard and law enforcement officers in Djibouti, and the opening of an information sharing center in Sana'a, Yemen.

95th & 96th Sessions of the Legal Committee (LEG 95 & 96)

The Legal Committee (LEG) held its 95th session on March 30—April 3, 2009, and its 96th session on October 5—9, 2009.

LEG's main agenda item during LEG 95 was the approval of a draft Protocol to the 1996 International Convention on Liability and Compensation for Damage in Connection with the Carriage of Hazardous and Noxious Substances by Sea (HNS Convention). The draft Protocol is designed to facilitate the HNS Convention's entry into force by addressing practical problems that have prevented many states from ratifying the original Convention. In lieu of a spring 2010 LEG conference, a diplomatic convention will be held to consider the adoption of the draft Protocol.

In its 95th session, LEG noted the outcome of the ninth session of the

Joint IMO/ILO Ad Hoc Expert Working Group on Liability and Compensation regarding Claims for Death, Personal Injury and Abandonment of Seafarers (EWG), which was chaired by the U.S., including the draft principles EWG proposed to be the basis for amendments to the 2006 Maritime Labour Convention (MLC). During LEG 96, LEG noted the final report of the EWG and agreed with the EWG's recommendations to propose amendments to the MLC that would guarantee financial security in case of abandonment of seafarers, make mandatory contractual claims for personal injury to or death of seafarers, and ensure that the IMO and ILO continue to impress on governments the importance of the voluntary implementation of the existing Guidelines (IMO resolution A.930(22)) pending the adoption and entry into force of the appropriate mandatory solutions.

LEG 96 also considered two piracy-related reports submitted by the IMO Secretariat, one on national legislation on piracy and the other on developments relating to Working Group 2 of the Contact Group on Piracy off the coast of Somalia. The U.S. has participated in the facilitation of national legislation development by providing draft piracy legislation to the IMO for use by other Member States. Additionally, Member States were encouraged to ratify the Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Maritime Navigation (SUA Convention) to strengthen their anti-piracy legislation. LEG was informed that three countries, including the U.S., were in the process of ratifying the SUA Convention, which would bring the SUA Convention within one Member State of the required number for entry into force.

52nd Session of the Subcommittee on Ship Design and Equipment (DE 52)

The DE 52 was held in London on March 16—20, 2009, with an extremely full agenda.

Among the issues considered, the Subcommittee completed amendments to the Guidelines for ships operating in Arctic ice-covered waters. The revisions included broadening the application of the Guidelines to include the Antarctic as well as the Arctic, taking into consideration a proposal by the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting (ATCM). The Subcommittee also considered a submission by the U.S. to develop mandatory requirements for ships operating in the polar regions which has since been approved by the MSC and MEPC and is now a new DE work program item.

Other issues considered by the Subcommittee fell under the umbrella of life-saving appliances and arrangements. The Subcommittee approved draft amendments relating to performance of new and safer lifeboat on-load release mechanisms, which will require replacement of some existing

mechanisms determined to be unsatisfactory. In addition, the Subcommittee is continuing work intersessionally, under the coordination of Mr. Kurt Heinz of the USCG, to develop guide-



A vessel operating in the polar regions. (Photo courtesy of the *World Meteorological Organization*)

lines for lifeboat on-load release mechanisms. DE 52 also approved amendments to the Life-Saving Appliance (LSA) Code and the associated recommendation on testing, to increase the assumed weight of occupants of inflatable life rafts for design and testing purposes, consistent with occupants of cargo ship lifeboats. The Subcommittee finalized an MSC

Circular on Guidelines for the approval of inflatable life rafts subject to extended service intervals not exceeding 30 months.

The Subcommittee also completed a draft MSC circular on guidelines for maintenance and repair of protective coatings applicable to dedicated seawater ballast tanks on all types of ships and double-side skin spaces of bulk carriers; completed a draft SOLAS regulation on Corrosion protection of cargo oil tanks of crude oil tankers; completed revisions to the Code for the Construction and Equipment of Mobile Offshore Drilling Units, 2009; and proposed a new item on "Revision of the provisions for helicopter facilities in SOLAS and the MODU Code" in the Subcommittee's work programme, in cooperation with the FP. Among other items of interest, the Subcommittee completed revisions of the Code on Alarms and Indicators.

Due to a heavy workload, DE is scheduled to meet twice in 2010.

13th Session of the Subcommittee on Communications, Search & Rescue (COMSAR)

The COMSAR 13 met in London on January 19—23, 2009.

With an increasing interest in expanded GMDSS services in the Arctic the subcommittee agreed to the establishment of five new areas for promulgation of Maritime Safety Information broadcasts of navigation and meteorological safety information. These new area broadcasts will be managed by Canada, Norway, and Russia, and trial broadcasts via MF and HF radio will be conducted in 2009 and 2010.

The U.S. was successful in gaining approval of its request for a new work program item to develop a new class of VHF portable radios with integral GPS, commonly referred to in the international community as Global Navigation Satellite System (GNSS). The development of a specification is ongoing in the International Telecommunications Union (ITU), but it is important to get a supporting liaison state-

ment of operational requirements from the IMO to guide that development.

The U.S. submitted a proposal to integrate AIS which included data showing the superiority of AIS over the 121.5 MHz homing signal for scene of action location. The Subcommittee expressed interest, but was unwilling to eliminate the 121.5 homer for which many search aircraft are configured. Some favored the addition of AIS with retention of the 121.5 homer, but this proposal would be undesirable from the standpoints of size, weight, cost and power budget. Further work on this issue is expected, perhaps with an outcome similar to the AIS SART—permitted as an alternative to the Radar SART but not required.

The terms of reference were approved for the establishment of the "Editorial Group" to conduct a major update and restructuring of the International Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue (IAMSAR) Manual. The goal

of the fundamental restructure is to delete or add sections, reposition content to improve logical flow, etc., based on experience gained after 10 years' use of this document by the global community. Mr. Dave Edwards in CG-534 was selected to serve as the Editorial Group Coordinator.

Other continuing issues of interest included satellite detection of AIS signals; the continuing desire to find a replacement for Narrow Band Direct Printing (NBDB); and the hope to find an alternative to the vanished marine operator services for non-safety traffic at VHF, MF, and HF. In the case of the latter, there is a strong consensus that universal Internet access at sea would be a fine, but so far unaffordable, solution. The Subcommittee agreed that further debate was needed before making a final decision.

14th Session of the Subcommittee on Dangerous Goods, Solid Cargoes and Containers

The 14th session of the Subcommittee on Dangerous Goods, Solid Cargoes and Containers (DSC 14) was held September 21—25, 2009. The Subcommittee completed work on amendments to the International Maritime Dangerous Goods (IMDG) Code and, in particular, took decisions on issues regarding polymeric beads and plastic molding compounds, lithium and nickel metal hydride batteries, and the safe transport of sodium nitrate and potassium nitrate when formed to a specific shape. The Subcommittee also began work on amendments to the International Maritime Solid Bulk Cargoes (IMSBC) Code and considered carriage requirement proposals for Direct Reduced Iron (DRI), ferrous sulphate, coal, ammonium nitrate based fertiliz-



Container lashing operation
(Photo courtesy of wikipedia.org)

ers, and survey and certification requirements for vessels carrying solid cargoes in bulk.

The Subcommittee agreed with the joint proposal by the United States and Brazil to allow an exemption for citrus pulp

pellets, and agreed with the U.S. proposals on minimum dimensions for container lashing positions and permanent lashing bridges in order to improve working conditions on ves-

sels. After considerable debate, the Subcommittee agreed that the width of lashing positions should preferably be 1000 millimeters and no less than 750 millimeters, and the width of permanent lashing bridges should be no less than 750 millimeters between top rails of fencing.

The Subcommittee continued work on revisions to the Code of Safe Practice for Ships Carrying Timber Deck Cargoes, revisions to Chapter 7 of the IMDG Code, and began work on revisions to the Recommendations for entering enclosed spaces aboard ships. Work on these items will continue intersessionally in correspondence groups with a view of finalization at the Subcommittee's 15th session which is scheduled for September 13—17, 2010.

41st Session of the Subcommittee on Standards of Training and Watchkeeping (STW 41)

The STW 41 met in London from January 11—15, 2010. The two main issues of importance to the U.S. were the comprehensive review of the STCW Convention and Code and the review of principles for establishing safe manning levels of ships. The comprehensive review attracted the largest number of new proposals and the Subcommittee was able to discuss and finalize draft text in view of adoption of the amendments by the Diplomatic Conference in June 2010.

The proposals related to the comprehensive review were referred to two working groups for in-depth discussion. Ms. Mayte Medina from the USCG chaired the working group addressing the comprehensive review of the STCW Convention and Code, Chapters I and III.

The topics of concern to the U.S. during this session included amending the requirements on training and medical examination/certification. Regarding training, the most notewor-

thy issues included standards of competence for leadership and management training, basic safety training, minimum training standards for Engineer Officers, Electro-technical officers and ratings, polar waters, piracy,



An instructor demonstrating the benefits of bridge simulation. (Photo courtesy of Northeast Maritime Institute)

and specialized training for personnel onboard tankers. With regard to medical examination and certification, the Subcommittee finalized draft text on minimum standards of physical/medical fitness.

Concerning review of the principles for establishing the safe manning levels of ships, the Subcommittee agreed on a draft revised Assembly resolution, taking into account recommendations by NAV prior to its final adoption. The revised Assembly resolution includes a goal-based framework that provides a process for shipowners and administrations to conduct an analysis of the workload necessary to support safe ship operations while considering emergency response needs and crew fatigue.

Three issues will require further discussion at the Diplomatic Conference in Manila, Philippines, set for June 21—25, 2010. These include whether to add provisions that would allow for the release of the countries' audit reports to other countries upon request, whether minimum standards of physical/medical fitness should be mandatory or advisory, and whether there should be additional exceptions to the minimum hours of rest requirements.

17th Session of the Subcommittee on Flag State Implementation (FSI 17)

The FSI 17 was held April 20–24, 2009, at IMO Headquarters. A number of issues were discussed that have possible impacts to U.S. interests. The most substantive discussions centered on the development of a Code for Recognized Organizations (ROs). Currently, the IMO has various mandatory and non-mandatory instruments covering the conduct of ROs and oversight of those entities by Flag Administrations. It has been proposed that these instruments be consolidated and updated. The U.S. agreed with the decision of the FSI to request the IMO Secretariat provide members with a summary of all RO-related references that currently reside in IMO instruments. Member states will be invited to submit intersessional papers that identify gaps in the current regulations and guidelines, and propose solutions for consideration at FSI 18.

Discussions on the best way forward for creation of consolidated audit summary reports under the Voluntary

Member State Audit Scheme continued from FSI 16 to FSI 17. Various Member States proposed this idea in order to identify best practices for implementation of IMO instruments, trends in major non-conformities, and observations during the audits; and to bring those to the attention of other Member States that would be undergoing the audit in the future. During the intersessional period, the correspondence group felt that the lack of standardized audit reports and generic coding systems for proper assessment of the audit findings would make it difficult to continue work without external assistance. As a result, the Subcommittee requested that a study be conducted for the analysis of findings, best practices, and implementation of instruments.

At this session, the U.S. continued its chairmanship of the working group on casualty analysis. This group developed lessons learned from casualties for presentation to seafarers, and ana-

lyzed serious marine incidents to identify preventive measures and safety issues that might require changes to IMO instruments. The Subcommittee agreed on the re-establishment of the correspondence group on casualty analysis to continue the work intersessionally.

The U.S., as the coordinator of the correspondence group, provided a brief intervention on the substantive work completed by the group intersessionally on the action plan to tackle issues relating to reception facilities. The Subcommittee agreed to re-establish the correspondence group on the action plan for tackling port reception facilities issues under the coordination of the U.S.

Finally, a number of IMO instruments, including the Harmonized System of Survey and Certification Code and the Port State Control Procedures, were reviewed and necessary updates were agreed upon.

53rd Session of the Subcommittee on Fire Protection (FP 53)

The 53rd session of the Subcommittee on Fire Protection (FP 53) was held at IMO headquarters the week of February 16–20, 2009. The work program included 16 agenda items on fire safety and evacuation issues.

The Subcommittee completed a comprehensive review of the Fire Test Procedures Code, the culmination of a three-year effort. However, because a complete consolidated draft of the amended Code could not be assembled and reviewed in depth in the short time before MSC 86, MSC 86 decided to defer approval until MSC 87, allowing for further review and editorial refinement by a drafting group at FP 54. To minimize the impact on industry of re-testing of currently approved materials, the amendments allow for new requirements to be gradually phased in, as promoted by the U.S.

The working group on Performance Testing and Approval Standards for Fire Safety Systems, chaired by Mr. Randy Eberly of the U.S., had a very successful session, completing work on 19 different annexes. Highlights



Response to a fire at sea (Photo courtesy of Randy Eberly USCG)

include five MSC Circulars containing guidelines for drainage of fire-fighting water from roll-on-roll-off decks, testing of foam concentrates, design of dry chemical systems for LNG carriers, test protocols for evaluating toxicity of halocarbon extinguishing agents, and inspection and maintenance guidelines for carbon dioxide systems. The group also completed three MSC Circulars relating to the capacity of the emergency

fire pump, and the entry into force of recent amendments to the design criteria for fixed gas and water mist extinguishing systems.

The agenda item on measures to prevent explosions on oil and chemical tankers transporting low-flash point cargoes was, as expected, a very contentious issue that kept the Subcommittee in session until late on the final day of meetings. The U.S. supported the Subcommittee's decision to require inert gas systems on tankers less than 20,000 DWT. However, no clear agreement was reached on a new lower tonnage limit. Proposals for enhanced crew training and stricter operational safety measures were also offered as means of explosion prevention. The Subcommittee agreed that further debate on the issue was needed before making a final decision, and invited the MSC to extend the target completion date to

13th Session of the Subcommittee on Bulk Liquids and Gases (BLG 13)

The BLG 13 was held at IMO Headquarters on March 2—6, 2009. The Subcommittee discussed key issues, including guidelines for Port State Control under MARPOL, extension to the guidelines on biofuel, and guidelines for natural gas-fueled engine installations.

The Subcommittee agreed to the report from the U.S.-chaired Working Group on the review of MARPOL Annex VI and the NO_x Technical Code. The decision finalized the text to amend guidelines for Port State Control under MARPOL Annex VI, and forwarded the amendments to the guidelines to the Subcommittee on Flag State Implementation for review and final approval at the next session of the Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC).

At the suggestion of the U.S., BLG 13 requested that MEPC extend until July 1, 2010, the interim guidelines that

permit the carriage of biofuel blends on Annex I ships. Although biofuel blends are mixtures of petroleum products and products from vegetable oils—two cargoes regulated separately under MARPOL Annex I and Annex II respectively—they are not currently regulated as a blend. The extension will allow the Working Group on Evaluation of Safety and Pollution Hazards the necessary time to address the fusion of the two MARPOL annexes.

The Subcommittee prepared a draft resolution on interim guidelines on safety for natural gas-fueled engine installations in ships for consideration at the upcoming session of the Maritime Safety Committee (MSC). Natural gas is seen by some as an alternative to high-priced oil, but gas has unique safety problems that are currently being addressed by BLG in the development of a Gas-Fueled Ships Code.

The Subcommittee approved the recommendations for Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDSs), developed by the Correspondence Group and the Drafting Group on Amendments to the Recommendation for MSDSs for MARPOL Annex I Cargoes and Marine Fuels, both of which were coordinated by the United States. The recommendations were forwarded for adoption at the next session of MSC.

The Subcommittee drafted amendments to MARPOL Annex I, which bans the bulk carriage of heavy grade oils as cargo or carriage, and for use as fuel in the Antarctic area except for vessels engaged in securing the safety of ships or in a search and rescue operation. The amendments mandate the use of distillate fuels for vessels transiting south of 60°S latitude, including research vessels and cruise ships, due to the potential for environmental damage with heavier, residual fuels.

55th Session of the Subcommittee on Safety of Navigation (NAV 55)

On July 27—31, 2009, NAV 55 met under the chairmanship of Mr. Mike Sollosi of the U.S. A major accomplishment of NAV 55 was the Subcommittee's approval of the U.S. proposals to establish an Area to be Avoided (ATBA) and two No Anchoring Areas around the new Neptune Deepwater Port (DWP) off Boston, MA. Other accomplishments for the session were the approval of a proposal by the IMO Secretary-General to endorse the Internationally Recommended Transit Corridor (IRTC) in the Gulf of Aden to help shield vessels from piracy attacks and the re-election of Mike Sollosi as chairman for 2010.

The Subcommittee agreed on proposed amendments to SOLAS regulation V/23 and resolution A.889(21) relating to pilot transfer arrangements. The significant change to this regulation is that it directs mechanical pilot hoists not to be used. In addition, the proposed revisions add a breaking strength for side ropes and a provision for easing or cutting back on rubbing bands to accommodate the safe ap-

proach of the pilot boat.

The Subcommittee considered the draft MSC resolution on conduct during campaigns against ships on the high seas that it had prepared at NAV 54 and sent to FSI 17 for coordination, as directed by MSC. The Subcommittee approved the draft MSC resolution prepared by NAV54, as endorsed by FSI 17, without amendment.

The Subcommittee finalized the draft SN/Circular on Guidelines for bridge equipment and systems, their arrangement and integration, agreeing that these guidelines superseded the existing performance standards for IBS (resolution MSC.64(67)).

Noting that the purpose of the alert management specified in the draft performance standards was to enhance the handling, distribution and presentation of alerts on the bridge in order to enable the bridge team to devote full attention to the safe operation of the ship and to immediately identify any abnormal situation requiring action to maintain the safe opera-

tion of the ship, the Subcommittee finalized the draft MSC resolution on performance standards for Bridge Alert Management. The Subcommittee further developed and finalized the draft MSC circular on High-Speed Craft (HSC) Compliance with the provisions of SOLAS regulations V/18 to 20.

The Subcommittee noted communications between the Commandant of the USCG and the Secretary-General of IMO, in which the U.S. planned to take all necessary measures to maintain the integrity, reliability and availability of the GPS SPS, and expected to provide at least six years notice prior to any termination of GPS operations or elimination of the GPS Standard Positioning Service (SPS). When questioned about reports of possible GPS outages in the near future, the U.S. delegate responded in detail about the health of the constellation, the number of "on orbit spare" satellites and the planned investment for future launches.