

# IMO News Flash



The 11<sup>th</sup> session of Sub-committee on Ship System and Equipment (hereinafter referred to as SSE) was convened at IMO Headquarters from 24<sup>th</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup> February 2025. This news flash briefs on the outcomes of SSE 11 on major technical issues.

#### 1. New Requirements for Ventilation of Survival Craft (Agenda 3)

- The ventilation requirements for **Totally Enclosed Lifeboats (TELBs)** were finalized at the SSE 9 and subsequently **adopted** at **MSC 107**. In contrast, discussions on the necessity of ventilation requirements for **Partially Enclosed Lifeboats (PELBs)** continued through SSE 10 and SSE 11.
- As documents justifying the compelling need for ventilation requirements for PELBs were submitted, related discussions continued, with the majority of delegations expressing support for this necessity.
- Accordingly, during the session, the Working Group (WG) was instructed to draft proposed amendments to the LSA Code, referencing relevant documents. The WG prepared a draft of the ventilation requirements\*, which was decided to be further discussed by the Correspondence Group (CG) and at SSE 12.
- Meanwhile, regarding the ventilation requirements for **liferafts**, as no relevant documents were submitted, **the discussion on this matter was closed**.
  - \* The draft amendment considered two approaches for maintaining CO2 concentration below the threshold of 5,000 ppm: Mechanical ventilation providing a minimum of 5 m<sup>3</sup>/h per person; or Natural ventilation with openings of at least 4% of the floor area. Instead of replacing the existing provision (LSA Code 4.5.2.6), a new provision (LSA Code 4.5.5) was proposed

## 2. Development of Design and Prototype Test Requirements for the Arrangements Used in the Operational Testing of Free-fall Lifeboat Release Systems without Launching the Lifeboat (Agenda 4)

- The development of amendments\* to SOLAS Chapter III and LSA Code has been completed to establish criteria for conducting mock abandonment tests for free-fall lifeboat launching devices. During this session, discussions were held on whether to apply the amendments to both new ships and existing ships.
  - \* Criteria for the design and the simulation release test of the free-fall lifeboat release mechanism, including dynamic and static loads, impact loads, and corrosion resistance
- As a result of the discussions, it was agreed that the application would start with newly installed free-fall lifeboats in new ships and existing ships lifeboats after 1<sup>st</sup> January 2031 and the approval for this agenda will be requested to MSC 110 ('25.6). (Discussion completed)



#### 3. Revision of Solas Chapter III and the LSA CODE (Agenda 5)

- The agenda to restructure SOLAS Chapter III and the LSA Code into a goal-based framework is underway, focusing on drafting functional requirements and expected performance standards for each phase of the abandonment process.
- The session reviewed the Inter-Sessional Working Group (ISWG) report and discussed detailed functional requirements and expected performance for each phase of the abandonment process\* in the WG during the session.
- For the "Alarm" phase, discussions emphasized the need for clear linkage with subsequent phases, precise definition of terminology, and ensuring practical performance. The "Proceed to Embarkation" phase was reviewed to maintain alignment with the "Alarm" phase. Due to time constraints, other phases could not be reviewed and are scheduled for further discussion at SSE 12.
  - \* Key phases of the Abandonment Process:
    - Alarm
    - Proceed to embarkation
    - Embarkation
    - Abandonment to safe position
    - Waiting for rescue
    - Person in water
    - Person overboard
    - Retrieval to survival craft
    - Retrieval from survival craft
    - Transfer of a person

### 4. Amendments to SOLAS Chapter III and Chapter IV of the LSA Code to Require the Carriage of Self-righting or Canopied Reversible Liferafts for NEW SHIPS (Agenda 6)

- This agenda is for the discussion on amendments to SOLAS and the LSA Code to expand the application of the " Carriage of Self-righting or Canopied Reversible Liferafts\*" to include not only Ro-Ro passenger ships but also new passenger ships and new cargo ships.
  - \* Self-righting inflatable liferafts, dual-side inflatable liferafts
- As a result of the discussions, it was agreed to expand the scope of application to liferafts on **new** passenger ships and new cargo ships, <u>excluding liferafts for up to 12 persons</u>.
- It was agreed to set a **transition period** based on the **type of vessel (3 years for passenger ships, 5 years for cargo ships)**, and further discussion on the **amendments** will take place at **SSE 12**. (expected to be completed in 2028).



### 5. Review and Update of the Code of Practice for Atmospheric Oil Mist Detectors provided in Engine Room (MSC.1/CIRC.1086) (Agenda 7)

- MSC.1/Circ.1086 was approved in 2003, and a proposal has been put forth to initiate discussions on incorporating the latest advancements into performance requirements, test procedures, and other relevant aspects.
- The WG agreed to retain the scope of the draft revised Code by concentrating on **conventional oil**, i.e. **not to consider alternative fuels** in the draft revised Code.
- During the SSE 11, the WG finalized the draft revision of MSC.1/Circ.1086 and instructed to submit it to MSC 110.
- The amendments of draft revision are as follows:
  - Deletion of the list of detection system types
  - Clarification of approval criteria for detectors
  - Harmonization of alarm and indicator terminology, including a footnote referencing the Code
  - Deletion of measurement range and accuracy requirements for detectors
  - Inspection and maintenance in accordance with manufacturer instructions

### 6. Revision of the 2010 FTP Code to Allow for New Fire Protection Systems and Materials (Agenda 8)

- A proposal has been put forth to initiate discussions on revising the 2010 FTP Code to clarify certain ambiguous terminology and test standards, incorporate guidelines for the use of plastic piping (A.753(18)), and discuss H-class \* test procedures.
  - \* H-class refers to enhanced thermal insulation performance requirements, which are stricter than Aclass, and apply to certain areas of mobile offshore drilling units.
- Due to time constraints, detailed discussions were not held, and the draft amendments to the 2010 FTP Code will be prepared and discussed at SSE 12.

### 7. Review and Update SOLAS Regulation II-2/9 on Containment of Fire to Incorporate Existing Guidance and Clarify Requirements (Agenda 9)

• The agenda aims to consolidate guidance scattered across various MSC circulars related to SOLAS Reg.II-2/9 (fire isolation requirements), incorporate existing IACS Unified Interpretations into SOLAS to clarify requirements, and propose a draft amendment to SOLAS Reg.II-2/9.7.4.5 concerning insulation



requirements for vertical ducts on passenger ships carrying more than 36 passengers.

SOLAS Regulation	MSC Circular	Content
II-2/9.2.2.1	MSC/Circ.1120	Arrangement of main vertical zones
II-2/9.2.2.3.2.2(9)	MSC.1/Circ.1634	Examples of category 9 "Isolated pantry containing no cooking appliances in an accommodation space"
II-2/9.2.3.4.1	MSC/Circ.1120	Construction of protected stairways of cargo ships
11-2/9.3.4	MSC/Circ.1120, MSC.1/Circ.1510	Prevention of heat transmission by insulation and structural details for drainage
II-2/9.7.2 and 9.7.5	MSC.1/Circ.1276	Examples of ducts contiguous to enclosed spaces

#### - SOLAS Regulations and MSC Circulars:

#### - SOLAS Regulations and IACS Unified Interpretations:

SOLAS Regulation	IACS Unified Interpretation (Year)	Content
II-2/9.2.2.1	SC101/Rev.1(2005)	Main vertical zones
II-2/9.2.2.3	SC107/Rev.1(2005)	Continuous ceilings
II-2/9.2.3 and 9.2.4	SC45/Rev.1(2005)	Fire integrity of bulkheads and decks
II-2/9.4.1.2 and 9.4.2.3	SC119/Rev.1(2005)	Balance ducts
II-2/9.7.2.1	SC192(2004)	Arrangement of galley ducts
II-2/9.7.5.1 and 9.7.5.2	SC118/Rev.2(2015)	Galley exhaust ducts

- Proposed Amendment to SOLAS Reg.II-2/9.7.4.5 Where necessary, vertical ducts shall be considered as an extension of the provided space and shall be insulated in accordance with tables 9.1 and 9.2. Ducts shall be insulated as necessary for the decks between the ventilated space and the considered space.
- All flag states supported the agenda to develop consolidated guidance for existing MSC circulars. Based on the draft work conducted by the CG, the discussion will continue at SSE 12.
  - Finland, Sweden, and CESA pointed out that the thermal insulation requirements for continuous ceilings under IACS Unified Interpretation SC107/Rev.1 differ from practical application. Additionally, it was agreed to verify with MSC whether the amendment to SOLAS regulations based on IACS Unified



Interpretations and the proposed amendment to SOLAS Reg.II-2/9.7.4.5 align with MSC's decided agenda. Further discussions will continue within the CG and at SSE 12.

### 8. Unified Interpretation of Provisions of IMO Safety, Security, Environment, Facilitation, Liability and Compensation-related Conventions (Agenda 10)

- Submission of Unified Interpretation Draft to MSC 110 for Approval:
- 1. (SSE 11/10/5) Draft Unified Interpretation on the issuance of a statement of fact for testing and inspection of non-certified cargo handling appliances:
  - Effective Date of January 1, 2026
  - At MSC 107, SOLAS Reg.II-1/3.13 and the guidelines for cargo handling appliances (MSC.1/Circ.1663) were adopted. Accordingly, under SOLAS Reg.II-1/3.13.2.4, existing cargo handling appliances shall undergo testing and thorough inspection at the first scheduled survey after January 1, 2026, with retesting required at least every five years.
  - In response, IACS has prepared a draft Unified Interpretation of SOLAS Reg.II-1/3.13.2.4 to facilitate documentation of load testing and thorough inspection for existing non-certified cargo handling appliances. IACS has also proposed a statement of fact form to be issued by the Recognized Organization (RO) for demonstrating compliance with existing cargo handling appliances without valid inspection certificates. The proposal was supported without objection.
- 2. (SSE11/10/8) Proposal for unified interpretations of paragraph 2.4.2.2 of chapter 9 of the FSS Code relating to the spacing of combined smoke and heat detectors
  - Effective date of January 1, 2026
  - Proposing UIs for paragraph 2.4.2.2 of Chapter 9 of the FSS Code, as amended by **Resolution MSC.555(108)**, to clarify acceptable spacings of combined smoke and heat detectors, with a view toward global and uniform implementation.
  - The draft unified interpretations are as follows.
    - .1 determination of the spacing based on the maximum distance of 9 m between detector centers, i.e. using hexagons of 5.2 m one-side length (See solution 1 below); and
    - .2 determination of the spacing based on the maximum floor area using squares of 74 m2 (See solution 2 below).





### 3. (SSE 11/4) Report of the LSA Correspondence Group (Unified Interpretation of LSA Code Paragraphs 6.1.1.3 and 6.1.2.2)

The SSE 11 concurred with the outcome of the discussion of the LSA CG and, having concluded that the draft UI in annex 9 of document SSE 11/4 satisfied the safeguards and its technical content was agreed, agreed to the draft MSC circular on unified interpretations of paragraphs 6.1.1.3\* and 6.1.2.2\*\* of the LSA Code with a view to approval by MSC 110.

#### \* Draft Unified Interpretation of LSA Code Paragraph 6.1.1.3 [Interpretation]

For cargo ships, hoisting-up of a dedicated rescue boat from its stowed position should be considered as part of launching preparation, but not part of launching process. Therefore, manual hoisting up prior to embarkation may be acceptable for subsequent slewing out.

#### \*\* Draft Unified Interpretation of LSA Code Paragraph 6.1.2.2 [Interpretation]

For cargo ships not fitted with stored mechanical power in compliance with paragraph 6.1.1.3 of the LSA Code, as amended through resolution MSC.459(101), the manual hoisting from the stowed position and turning out to the embarkation position of the rescue boat does not need to be actuated from a position within the rescue boat.

#### [Additional interpretation]

Launching mechanism is the means to control the launch of the lifeboat or rescue boat after the point of embarkation when all persons assigned have boarded. Therefore, for cargo ships, manual hoisting up of a dedicated rescue boat prior to embarkation may be acceptable for subsequent slewing out by stored mechanical power.



#### 9. Development of Amendments to SOLAS Chapter II-2 and the FSS Code Concerning Detection and Control of Fires in Cargo Holds and on the Cargo Deck of Containerships (Agenda 12)

- Agenda for discussions on the application of **eight items\*** across four areas—fire prevention, detection, extinguishing, and containment—to control fires on the cargo deck of containerships.
  - \* ①Linear heat detection system (Cargo holds), ②Video fire Detection Systems (VFDS) (Weather deck),
     ③Portable infrared (IR) thermal imagers (Cargo Holds & Weather deck), ④Water mist lance (Weather deck), ⑤Mobile water monitors(Weather deck), ⑥Fixed water monitors(Weather deck), ⑦fixed CO2 fire-extinguishing systems (Cargo holds), ⑧Protection of hatch covers (Cargo holds)
- As a result of the discussions, a final agreement on the application of the items was not reached. It was decided that the CG to be established will further discuss the equipment, and the outcomes of the CG discussions will be reviewed at SSE 12.
  - Discussions were mainly focused on four types of **the items**\*, including the fixed monitor (proposed by the Republic of Korea), for which draft amendments to SOLAS and the MSC Circular had been prepared. However, no agreement was reached.
    - \* (1) Portable infrared (IR) thermal imagers, (2) Water mist lance, (3) Mobile water monitors, (4) Fixed water monitors
  - Discussions on the remaining four items, including the Video Fire Detection System (VFDS), were deferred and will be addressed in the CG.
  - The agenda documents\* proposing the introduction and type approval criteria for the Video Fire Detection System (VFDS) submitted by the Republic of Korea were divided into cautious consideration and support. It is scheduled to be discussed in the CG.
    - \* ① Proposal for application of video fire detection system and approval standards
      ② The test results of Video Fire Detection System with night condition
    - Additionally, the **agenda document**\* regarding the bilge pumping and drainage for the Hatch Cover Protection System, proposed by the Republic of Korea, will be referred to SDC or CCC Sub-Committee for review once the application of the Hatch Cover Active Protection System is decided.
      - \* Proposal for bilge pumping and drainage arrangement for cargo holds to prevent the loss of ship stability due to the discharge of fire-fighting water for the Hatch Cover Active Protection system (submitted by Liberia and the Republic of Korea).



- 10. Comprehensive Review of the Requirements for Maintenance, thorough Examination, Operation Testing, Overhaul and Repair of Lifeboats and Rescue Boats, Launching Appliances and Release Gear (Agenda 14)
- Discussions were held to identify issues to ensure consistent implementation of the requirements outlined in **Resolution MSC.402(96)\*** by all stakeholders, with a particular focus on defining terms such as "Make" and "Type".
  - \* REQUIREMENTS FOR MAINTENANCE, THOROUGH EXAMINATION, OPERATIONAL TESTING, OVERHAUL AND REPAIR OF LIFEBOATS AND RESCUE BOATS, LAUNCHING APPLIANCES AND RELEASE GEAR
- During the Working Group (WG), draft definitions for "Make," "Type," "Model," and "Series" were prepared as follows:
  - Make original manufacturer of the type, model and series of equipment, as referred to on the approval certificate and/or ID plate, as appropriate
  - Type category of equipment having common functional or design characteristics
  - **Model** a specific version of a particular make and type, as referred to on the approval certificate and/or ID plate, as appropriate
  - Series a specific range of models from the same manufacturer that have equivalent design characteristics and maintenance requirements
- Additional discussions were conducted regarding the Authorization of service providers, including equipment manufacturers, the Manufacturer's established certification programme, and the Clarification of the certification of personnel. These topics will be further addressed at the SSE 12.

11. Evaluation of Adequacy of Fire Protection, Detection and Extinction Arrangements in Vehicle, Special Category and Ro-ro Spaces in order to Reduce the Fire Risk of Ships Carrying New Energy Vehicles (Agenda 16)

- Discussion on amendments to SOLAS and the FSS Code, as well as the development of new guidelines, regarding fire prevention, detection, and the arrangement of fire-extinguishing systems in the cargo (vehicles) and cargo spaces of new energy vehicle carriers.
  - \* Discussion initiated at SSE 10 ('24.3) following the decision of MSC 107 ('23.6).
  - During the session, discussions were held on various fire research reports shared in the Working Group (WG), including the video fire detection system (submitted by the Republic of Korea) and a multi-layered monitoring approach\*.



- \* Early detection of fire risks in electric vehicles through the integration of ship-based detection systems (fire detectors, thermal cameras, video monitoring, etc.) and vehicle-based early warning functions (BMS self-warning, thermal detection patches, etc.).
- As a result of the discussions, the Action Plan\* was developed based on the Roadmap established at SSE 10 ('24.3). Future discussions will be focused on the Action Plan, with further deliberations to continue at SSE 12.
  - \* (1) Review of scientific reports, studies, new technologies and casualty reports
    - (2) Identification of hazards related to new energy vehicles compared to ICEVs (Internal Combustion Engine Vehicles)
    - (3) Consideration of a goal-based approach
    - ④ Identification of gaps in existing regulations and consideration of the way forward
    - (5) Identification of placeholders for possible future amendments
  - Opinions on the introduction of the Video Fire Detection System (VFDS)\* proposed by the Republic of Korea were divided between cautious consideration and support. As it has been included in the Action Plan, detailed discussions will take place in the CG.
    - \* Proposal for application of Video Fire Detection system for vehicle and Ro-Ro space of cargo ships carrying new energy vehicles

Should you have any questions, please contact P.I.C below. Thank you.

#### General Manager Environment & Piping Team

P.I.C: KIM Jihwan / Senior surveyor Tel: +82 70 8799 8473 Fax: +82 70 8799 8519 E-mail: piping@krs.co.kr

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