

MARINE ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION
COMMITTEE
66th session
Agenda item 11

MEPC 66/11/11
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REPORTS OF SUB-COMMITTEES

Development of a mandatory code for ships operating in polar waters

Submitted by the Community of European Shipyards' Associations (CESA)

SUMMARY

<i>Executive summary:</i>	This document provides comments of the shipbuilding industries on some of the applicability issues submitted by SDC 1
<i>Strategic direction:</i>	5.2
<i>High-level action:</i>	5.2.1
<i>Planned output:</i>	5.2.1.17
<i>Action to be taken:</i>	Paragraph 7
<i>Related documents:</i>	SDC 1/WP.1, SDC 1/WP.3/Rev.1, SDC 1/WP.4; MEPC 66/1/Add.1 and MEPC 66/11/2

Introduction

1 This document is submitted in accordance with the provisions of document MEPC 66/1/Add.1, relaxing the deadline for submissions commenting on Polar Code matters emanating from SDC 1, and provides comments on documents SDC 1/WP.3/Rev.1 and SDC 1/WP.4, which reflect the agreement of SDC 1, in principle, to the draft International Code for Ships Operating in Polar Waters (Polar Code), for submission to MEPC 66 and MSC 93 for further consideration with a view to subsequent adoption, and invited Member Governments and international organizations to submit relevant comments and proposals to MEPC 66 and MSC 93.

2 In particular, SDC 1 noted a need to resolve the applicability of the Polar Code, with regard to ship types and with regard to existing and new ships, bearing in mind the different application requirements contained in MARPOL and SOLAS, and with regard to the exemption requirements in the MARPOL Annexes.

3 CESA has participated in the discussions of the various aspects of the Code, and it has been our understanding that the so-called two-step approach (agreed for part I-A, i.e. first step SOLAS ships, next step non-SOLAS ships) has been viewed by many as applicable also to part II-A. It seems, for instance, that the requirement for ships of categories A and B, that all tanks used for carriage of oil or oily mixtures shall be separated from the outer shell

by a distance not less than 760 mm, was not introduced with fishing vessels in mind. Such vessels may be (ice-classed) ships of category A or B, but too small to fulfil the requirement as currently worded.

4 For the shipbuilding industry it is important that the structural requirements are suitable for the size range and type of ships to which they are applied. It seems prudent therefore to apply the structural requirements of the Code initially only to SOLAS ships, but to ensure that consideration of a rapid extension to other ship types is undertaken.

5 With regard to the application of the Code for existing ships, the present text in the Code refers to "Ships built prior to [date of entry into force] shall meet the requirements of the Code with the exceptions of". The proposed text of the SOLAS amendments reads "For ships constructed before [date of entry into force] part I-A of the Polar Code applies no later than [date to be determined]".

6 The interval between the [date of entry into force] and the [date to be determined] should be sufficient to allow survey and certification of the ships in question, so that ships covered by the Code can be issued with a Polar Certificate corresponding to their capabilities. The limited growth in vessel traffic seems to indicate that the number of ships that may need to be retrofitted or upgraded before entering polar waters is probably quite limited. The extent of retrofits or upgrades for ships already active in polar waters also seems quite limited. The time interval could therefore be quite short.

Action requested of the Committee

7 The Committee is invited to consider the above and take action as appropriate.
