

IMO'S SUB COMMITTEE ON SHIP DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION (SDC)

11th Session, 13th – 17th January 2025

Session Outcome



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IMO Subcommittee on Ship Design and Construction (SDC) – 11th Session

The 11th Session of IMO's Subcommittee on Ship Design and Construction was held from 13th to 17th January 2025.

Concise Summary of Important Decisions made

SDC 11 agreed on the following with the view to approval at MSC 110:

- ✓ Interim guidelines for emergency towing arrangements on ships other than tankers, with the associated MSC circular and the related revision of MSC.1/Circ.1175/Rev.1, and MSC.1/Circ.1255;
- ✓ Amendments to the IP code (Part IV, Reg 2) to provide a more realistic figure of the mass of the personnel onboard in stability calculation;
- ✓ Amendments to the 2011 ESP Code in relation to the use of remote inspection techniques;
- ✓ Amendments to the Guidelines for construction, installation, maintenance and inspection/survey of means of embarkation and disembarkation concerning the rigging of safety netting on accommodation ladders and gangways (MSC.1/Circ.1331);
- ✓ Amendment to Reg.25 (Protection of the Crew) of the protocol of 1988 relating to the International Convention on Load Lines, 1966 introducing the requirements for installation of guard rails or bulwarks around all access areas which are exposed to sea and which are accessible to crew during navigation.

SDC 11 also agreed on the following:

- ✓ Code on alerts and indicators, and the associated draft assembly resolution, with a view to concurrent approval by MEPC 83 and MSC 110, and subsequent adoption by A 34.
- ✓ Uniform Interpretation clarifying the "remotely operated valve" (in SOLAS II- 1/12.6.2).

Development of Guidelines for Emergency Towing Arrangements for ships other than tankers

The following were agreed on the proposed modifications to the draft Guidelines on minimum towing strength for ships other than tankers.

1. to require 2,000 kN for ships having EN of 3,000 to 10,000;
2. not to limit towing strength requirement of larger ships to 2,000 kN;
3. to require the towing load (kN) of 0.2 tonnes multiplied by the equipment number for ships having equipment number of 10,000 and upwards;
4. to set the safety factor at 2.0; and
5. to keep the guidelines as "interim", with a view to allowing experience gained in their application to be incorporated into further revision.

Further development of the IP code and associated guidance

The Sub-Committee discussed various amendments and proposals related to the IP Code and associated guidance:

1. It was decided that it would be premature to initiate the development of guidance on the IP Code at this stage. The Code had entered into force on 1 July 2024 and it would be preferable to wait for more experience to be gained before initiating the process for drafting the guidance.
2. Proposal to clarify interaction between IP Code and SPS Code was acknowledged to incorporate provisions for passenger ships and, with respect to high-speed craft carrying industry personnel (IP), provisions for sleeping berths and for high-speed craft carrying more than 60 persons.
3. Drafting Group was instructed to finalize draft amendments to part IV of the IP Code and prepare associated draft part III of the check/monitoring sheet for the process of amending the 1974 SOLAS Convention and related mandatory instruments for the amendments.

Revision of the interim explanatory notes for the assessment of passenger ship systems' capabilities after a fire or flooding casualty (MSC.1/Circ.1369) and related circulars

SDC discussed the revision of Interim Explanatory Notes for passenger ship systems' capabilities after a fire or flooding casualty.

1. Draft revision of MSC.1/Circ.1369 were discussed with proposed amendments for enhanced safety.
2. Concerns were raised about SRtP requirements for existing ships and training/drill requirements. It was commented that the Training and drill requirements to be addressed in conjunction with the ongoing revision of the STCW Convention.
3. Further on the discussion on the "one hour" criterion, return to port voyage parameters was encouraged, recognizing the implications for both ship design and operational profiles and considering the diverse operational contexts of passenger vessels globally.
4. Upon finalization of the work by the Sub-Committee, it was decided that the training related provisions should be reviewed by the HTW Sub-Committee, with a view to being taken into account during the ongoing comprehensive review of the STCW Convention, as well as the development of relevant model courses.
5. Working Group established to finalize draft revision and consider consequential amendments to related circulars.

Amendments to the ESP Code

Proposals to include remote inspection techniques (RIT) as an alternative means for close-up survey of the structure of ships and mobile offshore units were discussed and finalised.

SDC 11 made progress with the development of the new guidelines on the use of remote inspection techniques (RIT) under the ESP Code.

Amendments to the guidelines for construction, installation, maintenance and inspection/survey of means of embarkation and disembarkation (MSC.1/Circ.1331) concerning the rigging of safety netting on accommodation ladders and gangways

The Sub-Committee SDC 10 discussed draft amendments to Guidelines for means of embarkation and disembarkation. The Sub-Committee could not complete outstanding issues due to time constraints, including clarification on entry-into-effect date of revised Guidelines. MSC 108 had agreed to the request of SDC 10 to extend the target completion year by one year, i.e. 2025

1. The Sub-Committee agreed with the draft revision of MSC.1/Circ.1331 for approval by MSC 110 and dissemination as MSC.1/Circ.1331/Rev.1.
2. SDC 11 clarified the entry-into-effect date of the revised Guidelines and specified which version of the Guidelines should apply when replacing accommodation ladders and gangways installed on ships built before 1 January 2010. The implementation of new and old ISO standards were also clarified.

Revision of SOLAS chapters II-1 (Part C) and V, and related instruments regarding steering and propulsion requirements, to address both traditional and non-traditional propulsion and steering systems

11th session of SDC discussed the development of maritime regulations related to steering and propulsion requirements in SOLAS chapters II-1 and V.

SDC 11 progressed on the drafting work but options remain open for discussion on each regulation:

- ✓ II-1/3 on Definitions
- ✓ II-1/28-1 on Means of going astern
- ✓ II-1/29-1 on Steering gear
- ✓ II-1/30 on Additional requirements for electric and electrohydraulic steering gear
- ✓ V/25 on Operation of steering gear
- ✓ V/26 on Steering gear: Testing and drills

Amendment to Regulation 25 of the of the 1988 Load line protocol regarding the requirement for setting of guard rails on the deck structure

The Sub-Committee agreed on draft amendments to Regulation 25 for approval at MSC 110 and adoption at MSC 111, with expected entry into force on 1 January 2028.

Guard rails or bulwarks shall be fitted around all exposed decks and all exposed sea access holes (such as edges of moonpools) accessible to the crew during navigation. The height of the bulwarks or guard rails shall be at least 1 m from the deck. If this height interferes with the normal operation of the ship, a lesser height may be approved, if the Administration is satisfied that adequate protection is provided.

Where necessary for the normal operation of the ship, chains fitted between two fixed stanchions and/or bulwarks are acceptable in lieu of guard rails, which shall be tightened as much as reasonably practicable and shall be detachable.

Unified interpretation of provisions of IMO Safety, Security, Environment, Facilitation, Liability and Compensation-related conventions.

Interpretation of SOLAS regulation II-1/12.6.2 to clarify the term "remotely operated valve" was agreed by SDC 11.

Guidelines for use of Fibre-Reinforced Plastics (FRP) within ship structures

1. Progress made on the revision of Revision of the Interim Guidelines for Use of Fibre-Reinforced Plastic (FRP) (MSC.1/Circ.1574) Interim Guidelines, with focus on

- a) fire safety and environmental impact concerns.
 - b) Consideration of load-bearing divisions and elements contributing to global strength within the scope of the output.
 - c) Clarification on the differences between the scope of the FRP Interim Guidelines and the output.
2. Correspondence Group on FRP to continue the work intersessionally on the revision with an emphasis on recycling aspects and improvement in temperature measurement methods.

Review of the 2009 code on alerts and indicators

SDC 11 approved the draft Code on Alerts and Indicators, 2025, for concurrent approval by MEPC 83 and MSC 110 and subsequent adoption by Assembly in December 2025.

Experience-building phase for the reduction of underwater radiated noise from shipping

The Sub-Committee established the Correspondence Group on Underwater Radiated Noise to:

1. review the technical objectives of the URN Action Plan (MEPC 82/17/Add.1, annex 8) and develop next steps to progress these objectives, taking into consideration the high-level guidance provided at SDC 11;
2. develop a framework to assess the progress made on the application and uptake of the Revised URN Guidelines (MEPC.1/Circ.906/Rev.1), with a view towards developing a shared database and other collated resources to represent the results of the EBP (action plan item A2 of the URN Action Plan);
3. make a selection and evaluation of studies on URN emissions from the maritime sector, to discuss knowledge gaps and to integrate the relevant outcomes/results in the context of the EBP;
4. draft terms of reference for a study, as appropriate, addressing the areas where knowledge gaps have been identified in the assessment of selected studies (action plan item D1 of the URN Action Plan);
5. if necessary, consider whether a working group should be established at SDC 12 to further progress the work, and if so, prepare the draft terms of reference; and

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