



SIXTH ITEM ON THE AGENDA

Invitation by the International Maritime Organization (IMO) to the ILO to participate in the development of safety standards for small fishing vessels

1. The IMO Secretary-General has written to the Director-General to invite the ILO to participate in the development of safety standards for small fishing vessels (see letter in appendix from the IMO Secretary-General). This paper provides information on the action the Office proposes to take in response to this invitation.
2. At its 79th Session, the IMO's Maritime Safety Committee (MSC 79) approved the FAO/ILO/IMO Code of Safety for Fishermen and Fishing Vessels, 2005, and the FAO/ILO/IMO Voluntary Guidelines for the Design, Construction and Equipment of Small Fishing Vessels, 2005. As will be recalled, the ILO Governing Body considered these reports at its 292nd (March 2005) and 293rd (June 2005) Sessions, approving the publication of these documents at the latter session.¹ MSC 79, in order to address the safety of small fishing vessels that are not covered by these instruments (i.e. those under 12 metres in length and undecked vessels of any size), agreed to include in the work programme of its Sub-Committee on Stability and Load Lines and on Fishing Vessels Safety (SLF) and the provisional agenda of SLF 48, a new item on safety of small fishing vessels, with the objective of developing safety standards for small fishing vessels.
3. SLF 48 (12-16 September 2005), inter alia, agreed to the establishment of a correspondence group under the coordination of South Africa. The correspondence group is to examine existing regional and national safety standards for small fishing vessels and develop a consolidated draft text of the standards for small fishing vessels covering decked fishing vessels of less than 12 metres in length and undecked fishing vessels of any length. It is to submit a report to SLF 49 (24-28 July 2006).
4. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) is already participating in the work. As noted in paragraph 1 above, the ILO has also been invited to participate.

¹ See GB.292/STM/4; GB.292/13(Rev.), paras. 60-68; GB.293/5, paras. 24-27.

5. The correspondence group will hold several informal meetings early this year and will submit a report to SLF 49. The SLF will then refer the draft text of the safety standards to other IMO Sub-Committees, as appropriate, for review. This review will take place in 2007 and 2008. It is expected that in 2009 the SLF Sub-Committee will finalize the text and send it to the IMO's Maritime Safety Committee for approval.
6. The Office proposes that it respond positively to the letter of invitation from the IMO Secretary-General to participate in the correspondence group and related IMO meetings concerning the development of the standards for small fishing vessels, and to report back to the STM on the progress in developing these standards. It will present a proposal, at a future session of the STM, on how the tripartite constituents may wish to contribute to the outcome of the proposed new standards following the discussion of the proposed Convention and proposed Recommendation concerning work in the fishing sector at the International Labour Conference in 2007 but before the final consideration of the new small fishing vessels standards by the IMO MSC or SLF in 2008 or 2009.
7. *The Committee on Sectoral and Technical Meetings and Related Issues is invited to:*
 - (i) *take note of the letter from the IMO Secretary-General inviting the ILO to participate in the development of standards for small fishing vessels; and*
 - (ii) *recommend that the Governing Body approve the proposals by the Office set out in paragraph 6.*

Geneva, 15 March 2006.

Point for decision: Paragraph 7.

Appendix

Letter from the Secretary-General of the IMO to the Director-General of the ILO requesting the ILO's involvement in development of safety standards for small fishing vessels

15 November 2005

Dear Juan,

Safety of small fishing vessels

You may recall that IMO's Sub-Committee on Stability and Load Lines and on Fishing Vessels Safety (SLF) considers, inter alia, matters related to the development of requirements concerning the safety of fishermen and fishing vessels. The contribution of the ILO in these matters and the support ILO has provided to this Organization have always been appreciated by the Sub-Committee.

At its forty-eighth session (12 to 16 September 2005), the Sub-Committee agreed that the ILO, in view of its previous involvement in fishing vessel safety, should be invited to participate in the development of safety standards for small fishing vessels. To this end it instructed the IMO Secretariat to seek ILO's involvement in the development of such standards from the outset.

Attached, for information, is a copy of the relevant part of the Sub-Committee's report (SLF 48/21), together with the documents on the issue considered at its forty-eighth session (SLF 48/16 and SLF 48/WP.7). I should, therefore, be most grateful for any contribution ILO should wish to make to the consideration by IMO of the issue of small fishing vessel safety.

With best regards.

Yours sincerely,

(Signed) E.E. Mitropoulos,
Secretary-General.