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SHIP RECYCLING CONVENTION 2009

Capt. Rakish Suppiah

BACKGROUND

The new convention on recycling of ships will provide regulations for the design , construction, operation and preparation of ships so as to facilitate safe and environmentally sound recycling , without comprising the safety and operational efficiency of ships.

At the MEPC in its 55th session in October 2006, the MEPC working group on ship recycling further developed the text of the draft convention providing globally applicable ship recycling regulations for international shipping and for recycling activities and it agreed to request the

IMO council, at its 98th session (in June 2008) to consider the allocation of a five day international conference to adopt the convention.

With the adoption of the convention , Malaysia harbouring about 30 major/small shipyards would have to adopt the systematic inspection and precautions outlined in the convention to ensure that ships build would have its inventory of hazardous materials and ensure items banned in the convention is not being used onboard ships to avoid the ships not being able to be recycled after its service period. The guideline provided in the convention would reduce the environmental, occupational health and safety risks related to ship recycling, as well as the need to secure the smooth withdrawal of ships that have reached the end of their operating lives.

ISSUES TO BE CONSIDERED IN MALAYSIA

Following the control elements that have been introduced in the draft convention on ship recycling, Malaysia should take note of the items listed below:

1. An inventory of hazardous materials, specific to each ship and the adoption of the International Certificate for a Ship Inventory of Hazardous Materials. It is important that Malaysian shipyards follow the system developed to itemised or inventory each material being used during shipbuilding into categories of hazardous and non hazardous materials to allow for easy identification and segregation during recycling process.
2. To prepare and compile a list of hazardous materials whose installation or use in ships is prohibited or restricted in shipyards, ship repair yards and ships of parties to the convention, is provided as an appendix to the Convention; in addition a procedure for proposing amendments to this list of ship's hazardous materials is defined by the Convention.
3. To plan and formulate a new surveying regime, envisaging an initial survey to verify the inventory of hazardous materisla, surveys during the life of the ship and a final survey prior to recycling. The introduction of the International Ready for Recycling Certificate , to be isseud to the ship following its final survey verifying ship related statements on the recycling plan.
4. To provide a policy direction for authorization of recycling facilities, in accordance with the requirements of the Convention

The above elements was outlined in the Convention to provide for enforcement mechanisms for its effective implementation throughout the life of a ship, while avoiding as far as possible unnecessary increases in the administartion burden to parties, to the shipping industry and to recycling facilities. The control and enforcement may be categorized as follows:

1. Flag state obligations: control and enforcement system based on a survey and certification regime, ensuring that a Party to the Convention takes effective measures for ships flying its flag to comply with the requirements of the Convention.
2. Port State Control rights: a port states control regime ensuring that ships of other parties and ships of non-parties comply with the Convention during their operating life
3. Detection of violations; the draft Convention establishes extensive provisions for the detection and investigation of alleged violations and on how Parties shall cooperate. Requirements are also set for the establishment of sanctions under national law of Parties.