



MARITIME SAFETY COMMITTEE
84th session
Agenda item 11

MSC 84/11/4
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SHIP DESIGN AND EQUIPMENT

Definition of the term “bulk carrier”

Submitted by the Chairman of the Sub-Committee on Ship Design and Equipment

SUMMARY

<i>Executive summary:</i>	This document comments on the proposal by Norway to further consider the issue of the definition of the term “bulk carrier” and the Sub-Committee’s approach to allow for in depth consideration of the matter in accordance with MSC’s tasking.
<i>Strategic direction:</i>	2.1
<i>High-level action:</i>	2.1.1
<i>Planned output:</i>	2.1.1.2
<i>Action to be taken:</i>	Paragraph 10
<i>Related documents:</i>	MSC 84/11/2, MSC 84/11/3; DE 51/28, section 27, DE 51/WP.8; DE 50/27, section 25 and DE 50/WP.9

Introduction

1 This document is submitted in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 4.10.5 of the Guidelines on the organization and method of work (MSC-MEPC.1/Circ.1) and provides comments on document MSC 84/11/2, submitted by Norway.

2 The background information on the need for developing an interpretation of the term “bulk carrier” is presented in document MSC 84/11/3 by the Secretariat. It acknowledges the need for clarification for port State control officers to establish whether compliance with SOLAS chapter XII is to be proven in cases where inspecting a vessel carrying bulk cargoes.

3 The Sub-Committee on Ship Design and Equipment has attempted to meet MSC’s request for a resolution of the matter twice: at DE 50 as well as at DE 51. The outcome of either discussion can be found in documents DE 50/WP.9 and DE 51/WP.8.

4 Any solution developed so far – however close the discussion within a group of experts came to resolving the issue – was not supported by the Sub-Committee.

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Proposed course of action

5 In support of the Norwegian proposal (MSC 84/11/2), the Chairman of the Sub-Committee suggests that further consideration of the issue is needed. This consideration **may** include expert opinion building on any of the proposed interpretations so far seen or even more.

6 At the same time this consideration **must** include flag States' views, taking the responsibility for a non-judgemental distinction between ships carrying cargoes in bulk to which SOLAS chapter XII either does or does not apply. Thus the involvement of flag State responsibility for bulk carrier safety in the core discussion needs to be ensured.

7 In line with the Guidelines on the organization and method of work (MSC-MEPC.1/Circ.1) this would require an in-depth discussion in plenary or in a dedicated working group taking into account both camps: industry experts as well as flag States.

8 Neither of the previous DE Sub-Committee meetings had the privilege of dedicating a working group to address this issue. With the current stringent methods of work which have to be observed in order to prioritize parts of the agenda to deliver the expected outcome, there is not enough flexibility to allow adequate allocation of resources to this issue which has been pending since FSI 13. There is a need to overcome the deadlock in view of the Sub-Committee's current workload, leading to not being able to allocate a working group to this particular task in the near future.

9 The Chairman of the Sub-Committee on Ship Design and Equipment supports the proposal that a solution be found at the Committee level, preferably at MSC 84 with the assistance of a drafting group, continuing if necessary at MSC 85. However, the Committee may wish to consider whether in-depth consideration could be carried out by an intersessional meeting of a working group.

Action requested of the Committee

10 The Committee is invited to take the above views into account and decide as deemed appropriate.
