REPORT from Christos Verveiotis

MEPC 56 (9-13 July 2007)

Day1/Meeting at Plenary

Main focus on Air pollution and the coming revision of MARPOL Annex VI and the NOx technical code.

Shipping was identified as one of the main contributors to air pollution although results varied between 1.8% - 5% of total CO2 and Green House Gas (GHG) emissions. However, information on emissions from ships are scarce and the need for field measurements was identified. Issues raised on which data to be collected, whether Particulate Matter should be included and if the focus should be only on CO2.

The set up of a scientific group of experts to evaluate the effects of the different fuel options in reducing Sox and PM and the impact of such reduction on other emissions (as proposed under the revision of Annex VI) was agreed. However, I personally find the time frames of the proposed schedule as being very optimistic.

The need for careful assessment of future/proposed emission reduction solution was also identified, as their effects can be conflicting with other gaseous emissions.

Market based methods for dealing with GHG emissions were proposed. These include Funds/Caps and emissions trading schemes although there are concerns of their applicability in a marine international environment.

It is clear that there has been not much progress within IMO on GHG emissions and there is no monitoring or any data available on IMO progress to date.

Day2/Air Pollution Working Group

Workgroup divided into 2 parties, one focusing on GHG and the other on Annex VI related issues and mainly Exhaust Gas-Sox Cleaning Systems (EGCS-Sox). I followed the 2nd party.

Objective of the meeting to discuss and possibly finalise washwater criteria for (EGCS-Sox).

-Presentation of current scrubber technology was given by

a) Wartsila (FW scrubbing)
b) Krystallon (SW scrubbing)

- a) Concerns about the amount of FW required (capacity of evaporators & FW generation and storing)and CAPEX. Although the system is more complex when compared to the SW scrubbers, there is no effluent discharge in ports.

- b) This is a much simpler system but due to the effluent discharge these scrubbers will not be able to operate in ports and ships will have to switch to distillate fuels.

It is clear that any new criteria for waterwash would greatly affect the specification of future EGCS units.

Discussion on criteria and water discharge/plume measurements focused on the following:

-pH, Oil Content/PAH, COD, Turbidity (indication that PM is removed), Heavy Metals and Ash, NOx.

PAH: Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbon

PM: Particulate Matter

Concerns raised regarding the monitoring of heavy metals are those are directly dependent on the quality of Fuel Oil which is outside the control of owners/operators. This indicates that the quality of the FO and the criteria should be in alignment.

Some discussions also around the issue of scrubber performance and how this can be demonstrated for compliance.

Areas of coverage for application of criteria was discussed and whether these should apply only to SECA.

However, majority of opinions to divide criteria to 3 zones (port, coastal, at sea).

A lot of discussions around the limit of Oil Content; as scrubber are used continuously it would make sense to have a lower limit than 15ppm, currently used on Oily Water Separators (OWS) (which are used periodically), with proposed limit at 1ppm.

For such a low level of oil content measuring the PAH content will be required for accuracy.

Best Regards

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