



MARITIME SAFETY COMMITTEE
81st session
Agenda item 23

MSC 81/23/18
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WORK PROGRAMME

Review of the 1969 Tonnage Measurement Convention

Submitted by the ICFTU

SUMMARY

- Executive summary:** This document comments on the proposal by Australia to initiate a new work programme for the review of the 1969 Tonnage Measurement Convention
- Action to be taken:** Paragraph 8
- Related documents:** MSC 81/23/7, SLF 48/12, SLF 48/INF.4, SLF 48/21, TM.5/Circ.4 and resolution A.947(23)

General

1 The document MSC 81/23/7 submitted by Australia draws attention to legitimate concerns shared by the ICFTU regarding the negative effects of the current 1969 Tonnage Measurement Convention. The original intent of this Convention to “curtail practices under which the shapes and configuration of ships were determined by tonnage measurement rules” has not been achieved, particularly on container vessels. The disincentives to providing crew accommodation to standards compatible with today’s needs, particularly the provision of training berths, is having a long-term effect on the ability of ships to be manned effectively for the future.

2 Gross tonnage does determine the fees for various commercial purposes and therefore is encouraging the design of vessels with minimal, totally enclosed volume. With respect to accommodation this may be equitable for a passenger ship but does nothing to assist the safety or social welfare of the crew or foster training facilities onboard.

3 Unfortunately as indicated in document MSC 81/23/7 any amendments or protocol to this Convention will take time to be adopted and will be resisted if it incurs substantial additional costs to sections of the industry. We do however agree there is an urgent and compelling need for this review and that any solution may require, for some time, a voluntary introduction and application.

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Objective

4 The original intent of the Convention is still pertinent and any review should identify where this has not been effective. The need for a short-term and long-term solution should be recognized and solutions, such as the introduction of a “registered tonnage” proposed in document MSC 81/23/7, must be fully evaluated.

5 The review should therefore have two primary areas of reference to address as identified in document MSC/23/7:

- .1 measures to correct significant inadequacies identified in existing instruments; and
- .2 measures aimed at improving the safety and health of ships’ crews or personnel.

6 In the Committee’s determination of introducing a new work programme, due regard should be given to the Joint Maritime Commission’s resolution concerning tonnage measurement and the accommodation of crews, document MSC 81/23/7, annex 1, inviting the International Maritime Organization to mitigate any adverse effects of the International Convention on Tonnage Measurement of Ships, 1969.

7 When considering the compelling need, full consideration should be given to resolution A.947(23) entitled “Human Element Vision, Principles and Goals for the Organization”, the vision being “to significantly enhance maritime safety, security and the quality of the marine environment by addressing human element issues to improve performance”.

Action requested of the Committee

8 The Committee is invited to consider the need for a review of the 1969 Tonnage Measurement Convention and take appropriate action.
