

**ACTION PLAN FOR THE  
TONNAGE CORRESPONDENCE GROUP (CG)  
RE-ESTABLISHED AT SLF 52**

## **1 Purpose**

This document provides the action plan for the Tonnage Correspondence Group (CG) that was re-established at the 52<sup>nd</sup> session of the Sub-Committee on Stability and Load Lines and on Fishing Vessels Safety (SLF 52) of the International Maritime Organization (IMO). This work is being conducted under the work programme item on “Development of options to improve effect on ship design and safety of the 1969 TM Convention”, approved by the Maritime Safety Committee (MSC) at its 81<sup>st</sup> Session (MSC 81), with the completion deadline extended to 2011 by MSC 85.

## **2 Terms of Reference**

Per document SLF 52/WP.5, SLF 52 re-established the Tonnage CG, under the coordination of the United States, instructing it as follows:

- .1 consider further and finalize the information provided in annex 2 to document SLF 52/5/2 (Report of the correspondence group) with respect to improving the effect of the 1969 Convention on the design of ships and in particular with reference to the effect on safety;
- .2 examine, in relation to the options listed in annex 2 to document SLF 52/5/2:
  - .1 improvement of crew accommodation; and
  - .2 the tonnage measurement of ships carrying deck cargoes and, in particular, of containerships;
- .3 identify and investigate the benefits and disadvantages of the options listed in annex 2 to document SLF 52/5/2; and
- .4 submit a report to SLF 53.

## **3 Summary of Options in SLF 52/5/2 Annex 2**

The options in Annex 2 of document SLF 52/5/2, along with a brief summary of each, are as follows:

- .1 ***Option A - Ensure the integrity and uniform implementation of the existing gross and net tonnage parameters*** This proposal seeks to ensure the integrity and uniform implementation of the existing gross tonnage (overall size) and net tonnage (useful capacity) parameters, by expanding and strengthening the

- interpretations of Tonnage Measurement Circular TM.5/Circ.5, “Interpretations of the Provisions of the International Convention on Tonnage Measurement of Ships, 1969”. During development of this updated document, possible changes to the TM Convention could be identified and further developed, as necessary.
- .2 ***Option B - Promote use of existing Net Tonnage for tonnage-based fees but take no other action*** This proposal seeks to promote use of the existing net tonnage parameter without the need for amendments to the 1969 Tonnage Measurement (TM) Convention. The parameter favors ships with higher freeboards, and its use for assessing fees – in many cases - would avoid the gross tonnage “penalty” for the volume associated with crew accommodation spaces.
  - .3 ***Option C – Amend TM Convention to establish a third tonnage parameter adjusted net tonnage that includes deck cargo volume*** This proposal seeks to establish a new net tonnage parameter that reflects the volume of deck cargo. Use of a tonnage parameter of this type for assessing fees would have the same advantages of Option B regarding crew accommodation, and would additionally avoid the gross tonnage “penalty” for the volume associated with larger enclosed cargo spaces, that in turn encourages larger deck cargo loads.
  - .4 ***Option D – “Maritime real estate” (MRE) concept (perhaps as third tonnage value under the 1969 TM Convention) with associated resolution recommending use of this value for tonnage-based fees*** This proposal seeks to establish an alternative parameter to gross or net tonnage for use in assessing fees. This alternate parameter, referred to as MRE, is based on the ship’s actual maritime real estate (i.e., volume of length x breadth x draught), which is related to the ship’s full load displacement. Under this proposal, the actual maritime real estate is modified by a factor such that the total aggregate MRE tonnage of the world’s shipping approximately equals the total aggregate gross tonnage (GT) of the world’s shipping. Use of displacement-type parameters for assessing fees would avoid the gross tonnage “penalty” for the volume associated with larger crew accommodation spaces and enclosed cargo spaces.

#### **4 Work Items To Be Completed by the Tonnage CG**

As described in paragraph 2 above, the Tonnage CG is tasked with further finalizing and evaluating these options. This work will be completed in three rounds, as outlined below. A detailed schedule for completing individual work items, along with associated SLF 53 deadlines, is provided in the Annex to this document.

- .1 ***Round 1 - Finalize Options - 12 Mar 2010 – 14 May 2010***  
This round will focus on obtaining additional information to support each of the four identified options. The Tonnage CG will also seek variants of these options to address the concerns expressed at SLF 52 regarding improvement of crew accommodation and treatment of ships carrying deck cargoes, and in particular, of containerships. Participants will be invited to contribute to developing and

- completing questionnaires to: (1) further evaluate and finalize Option A, for which general agreement was expressed at SLF 52; and (2) collect data in support of Option B, for which the most support was expressed after Option A, with little outright rejection, in document SLF 52/5/2. Participants will also be invited to submit current national tonnage rules based on the measurement system of the TM Convention, along with applicable interpretations and novel craft determinations, to facilitate questionnaire completion.
- .2 Round 2 - Evaluate Options - 28 May 2010 thru 23 July 2010**  
This round will focus on evaluation of information gathered during Round 1, as well as other information previously submitted under this and related agenda items (including the work of previous Tonnage CGs). The group will validate/identify advantages and disadvantages for all options and any variants under consideration, and seek consensus on a single option, or combination of options, for which there is the greatest likelihood of improving the effect on design and safety of the TM Convention, while addressing concerns over crew accommodation and deck cargo. During this phase, there may be a need to develop and complete additional questionnaires on an expedited basis to support decision making by the Tonnage CG.
- .3 Round 3 - Develop Final Report - 6 Aug 2010 thru 1 Oct 2010**  
This round will focus on development of the final Tonnage CG report to SLF 53, which will reflect the work done on this agenda item and provide appropriate conclusions for consideration by the Sub-Committee.

## **5 Administration of the Tonnage CG**

The guidelines of document MSC-MEPC.1/Circ.2 apply to the work of the Tonnage CG. Per paragraph 3.41 of this document, it is the responsibility of CG participants to copy all other CG participants when providing comments or other input to the Coordinator that is related to the work of the group. Normally, this will be done via email. A listing of all Tonnage CG participant email addresses will be maintained in a password protected document on the Tonnage CG web site described in paragraph 6 below, in a form that can be readily copied and pasted into an email. To minimize unnecessary email traffic, it is preferred that inquires of an administrative nature to the Coordinator not be circulated to the entire group, unless such inquiries are clearly of interest to the group.

## **6 Tonnage CG Web Site**

To facilitate open exchange of information via modern communication technology means per Paragraph 3.36 of document MSC-MEPC.1/Circ.2, the Coordinator has established and will be responsible for maintaining a Tonnage CG website at <http://www.uscg.mil/imo/slf/tonnagecg.asp>. Elements of the Fishing Vessel Intersessional Correspondence Group (FV ISCG) website ( <http://www.sigling.is/FVS-ISCG> ) and the former Subdivision and Damage Stability (SDS) Correspondence Group website ( [http://legacy.sname.org/committees/tech\\_ops/O44/sdsiscg/home.html](http://legacy.sname.org/committees/tech_ops/O44/sdsiscg/home.html) ) were

incorporated into its design. As has been the case with the FV ISCG and SDS websites, Tonnage CG documents and other general information available on the Tonnage CG website will be open to the public, along with names of Tonnage CG participants. In balancing the need for transparency and open communication against privacy concerns, access to detailed contact information is restricted to Tonnage CG participants through a password protected document posted on the website, with the password to be made available to all participants via the Coordinator. Comments and positions of Tonnage CG participants as summarized by the Coordinator will be posted on this website; however, the individual comments submitted to the Coordinator by the participants will not.

## **7 Tonnage CG Outcomes**

This work program item has been the subject of extensive discussions in plenary of the Sub-Committee and the focus of two previous correspondence and drafting groups, following its approval by the MSC 81 in May 2006. Many of the issues addressed under this work programme item are contentious, requiring solutions to seemingly intractable problems that defied resolution even as the TM Convention was being developed in 1969, and involving disparate stakeholders representing all facets of the maritime industry. Our goal as a group is not necessarily to arrive at a solution that will reconcile all the conflicting concerns while demonstrably leading to improvements in ship design and safety, although that outcome would indeed be welcome. Rather, a successful outcome could be to provide a solid foundation for discussions at SLF 53 by documenting opinions expressed within the group, along with support or objections raised to various approaches, based on as much factual information as can reasonably be obtained. While the time frame to finish this work is compressed, it appears to be well within the grasp of this group to make substantive contributions along these lines, even if broader solutions ultimately prove elusive.

P. D. Eareckson  
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## ANNEX

**Action Plan Schedule for the  
Tonnage CG Re-Established at SLF 52**

<b>Round</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>
-	12 Feb 2010	Issue Draft Plan for comment	Coordinator
-	05 Mar 2010	Comments due on Draft Plan	Participants
-	12 Mar 2010	Resolve comments and issue Plan	Coordinator
1	12 Mar 2010	Solicit input on: (1) Option A,B Questionnaires (2) variants on Option A,B,C,D and (3) copies of tonnage rules / interpretations	Coordinator
1	02 Apr 2010	Responses due on Option A,B Questionnaires and request of copies of tonnage rules / interpretations	Participants
1	16 Apr 2010	Distribute Option A,B Questionnaires	Coordinator
1	14 May 2010	Responses due on variants on Options A,B,C,D	Participants
2	28 May 2010	Solicit input on: (1) advantages / disadvantages of all options and variants; (2) approaches to implementation of Options A, B; (3) need for additional questionnaires on variants; and (4) formats for comparison of options	Coordinator
2	18 Jun 2010	Responses due on May 28 <sup>th</sup> solicitation	Participants
2	02 Jul 2010	Distribute questionnaires for (1) ranking options / variants; and (2) gathering additional information on variants (if needed)	Coordinator
2	23 Jul 2010	Responses due on all Round (2) questionnaires	Participants
3	06 Aug 2010	Distribute draft final report for comment	Coordinator
3	27 Aug 2010	Comments due on draft final report	Participants
3	03 Sep 2010	Distribute revised draft final report for comment	Coordinator
3	24 Sep 2010	Comments due on draft final report	Participants
3	01 Oct 2010	Submit final report to Secretariat	Coordinator
-	08 Oct 2010	SLF 53 Bulky papers (and info papers in hard copy) due	-
-	05 Nov 2010	SLF 53 Non-bulky (and E-info papers) due	-
-	19 Nov 2010	SLF 53 4 page papers due	-
-	10 Jan 2011	SLF 53 begins in London	-