Annual Report on the IMO (International Maritime Organisation) 
Activities

General
In 2008 IMO celebrates the 50th anniversary of the entry into force of the convention that established the organization. IAIN’s presence at IMO since 1976 has always been closely related to its objectives. That is uniting national and multinational institutes and organisations which aim to foster human activities particularly at sea plus a contribution to the development of the science and practice of navigation and related information techniques. Within this framework during 2008 IAIN activities centred around NAV 53, MSC 83 and STW39. Hereunder follow the main particulars for more information members are invited to read the more extensive report that is also available.

NAV 53 (23rd July till 27th July 2007)

Routeing of ships, ship reporting and related matters
Twenty two submissions were (with minor alterations) accepted for submission for approval by MSC 83.

E-navigation.
NAV 53 re-established the working group after considerable discussion and instructed it submit a document to COMSAR 12 raising specific questions that should be dealt with by COMSAR and prepare a comprehensive report to be submitted to NAV 54.

Colregs
A proposal regarding review of the colregs was received from Italy regarding the right of way of commercial vessels over pleasure craft. The initiative for this submission in particular its purpose to prevent accidents between ships and subsequent casualties was acknowledged in general. The International Sailing Federation (ISAF) however indicated in a separate submission the consequences of ambiguity in defining a commercial ship and a pleasure craft. It indicated that without a mandatory universal means of identification application of these rules would seem impossible to apply. During the meeting the delegations of Italy and ISAF were allowed to present their submissions. No other interventions were at that time allowed (taking into account that the meeting had met its closing time for the day at that moment). The item was forwarded to MSC 83 for later implementation in the NAV 54 agenda. It would seem that proper discussion than will have to take place.

MSC 83 (3-12 October 2007)

LRIT
An overwhelming majority supported IMSO to be tasked with coordination. The organisation assuming the function at no cost to the parties. Serious concern was raised over billing policy issues. MSC approved MSC.1/Circ.1219 on interim LRIT Technical specifications and other matters including guidance on setting up and maintaining the Data Distribution Plan.

Security arrangements for non-SOLAS vessels
MSC discussed several submissions on the enhancement of the security of ships other than those already covered by SOLAS. A correspondence group was established:
- define the scope
- categorise the types of non-SOLAS ships that the guidelines are intended for
- prepare draft guidelines, including a list of possible security measures and best practices
- identify what additional guidance, if any, might be offered to ISPS code compliant ships and port facilities in relation to the interface with non-SOLAS ships

**ColRegs**

MSC approved a draft assembly resolution associated to adopt proposed amendments to the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea, 1972, as amended, relating to the revision of Annex IV concerning the use of distress signals.

**NAV items**

The NAV 53 report was discussed and accepted. Revised ECDIS performance standards were initially adopted, but sent back to NAV after an intervention on common data displays and common controls. Several new issues were sent to NAV 54 (to be held in July 2007) concerning a.o. minimising wrong AIS transmissions, guidance on the application of AIS binary messages, SOLAS Regulation V/22 - Navigation bridge visibility and pilot transfer arrangements

**Goal Based Standards**

MSC agreed to establish a correspondence group to develop a Safety Level Approach to Goal Based Standards. A plan for a pilot project was approved using the Common Structural Rules (CSR) of the International Association of Classification Societies (IACS) as its basic materials. This project (to be led by the USA) is to be specifically concerned with trial application of the Tier III verification process in combination with the set goal-based standards (Tier I) and associated functional requirements (Tier II).

**STW 39 (3rd March until 7th March 2008)**

**Comprehensive Review of the STCW convention and the STCW code**

One of the most important item on the agenda was the comprehensive review of the STCW convention and the STCW Code. In essence the first major review since the 1995 STCW Conference. A large number (more than 50) submissions were received. The working group on the comprehensive review of the STCW Convention and STCW Code did however not meet before the 3rd day of the meeting due to the discussion of the amount of submissions that needed to be introduced and discussed in plenary. As a result some chapters under review were still under discussion on the last day of session. It was decided that intercessional working groups were to be held to facilitate discussion on the topics being raised.

**Celestial navigation**

A proposal by Norway was discussed to delete celestial navigation from the navigation courses. This met with negative response from some delegations. The general feeling was summed up by the chairman for it to be retained in the course. It was however pointed out that new ships are not compelled to carry the necessary equipment (sextant) for the measurement and calculation. The item was referred to the working group. Due to some misunderstanding the item was consequently not discussed and will be referred to a intercessional working group of STW to be held late 2007/early 2008.

**Issuing of certificates.**

STW considered a summary of reports on fraudulent certificates and the activities to prevent unlawful practices. A report to the subcommittee showed that over the past years more than 100 cases of fraudulent certificates have been reported.
The general impression seems to be that the problem does not seem to diminish. IMO’s Secretary General Admiral Mitropoulos already underlined in his opening speech the serious implications such practices may have for safety, security and environmental protection.

In conclusion
The above and other IMO meetings were attended by the undersigned, Ms Aline de Bievre and Dr Phil Belcher FRIN. A particular word of thanks goes to these latter two for giving much needed time and effort. IAIN’s delegation acts with IAIN’s purpose and goals in mind. With this in mind, members are invited to send any relevant information of input to the undersigned or other members of the delegation. Members who want to be more actively involved, either by attending meetings and/or participating in working or correspondence groups, are also invited to contact the undersigned. One or other preferably well in advance of meetings so that the presence can be announced in time to IMO’s secretariat.

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