Report from the Secretary General

It is my pleasure to report on the work carried out by the IFSMA Secretariat under the direction of the Executive Council.

The IFSMA Annual General Assembly was hosted by CAMM and took place in San Pedro, Los Angeles on the 8th and 9th May 2006. Further details of this conference are on the IFSMA web site.

There were four resolutions passed and details of these are included in the Minutes and Annexes of the 32nd AGA. These resolutions dealt with the following issues.

- Criminalisation of Seafarers
- E-Learning in maritime Training and Education
- Shipmasters and the Fishing Industry
- Manning and Fatigue concerns.

The Secretariat and the Executive Council have worked on each of these resolutions and will continue to commit themselves to ensuring the Shipmasters' interests are kept to the forefront of national and international bodies responsible for introducing and implementing treaties and codes that affect the shipmaster. The following is a report on some of the work that has been carried since the 32nd AGA and March 15th 2007.

Fair treatment of seafarers

IFSMA continued its campaign for the fair treatment of seafarers with representatives attending the IMO Legal Committee's 92nd session held in Paris France during October 2006. The Guidelines on fair treatment of seafarers in the event of a maritime accident were adopted by the Legal Committee at its previous session and also by the Governing Body of the ILO at its 296th session on 12 June 2006.

The Legal Committee, at this session, discussed submissions relating to possible changes, but decided, at this point in time, that it would be premature to amend the Guidelines. The Committee agreed, however, that review and monitoring of the Guidelines should be kept on its agenda.

This issue was also raised at the Sub-Committee on Flag State Implementation (FSI), in June 2006 when it continued its review of the Code for the investigation of marine casualties and incidents, with a view to making the Code mandatory. The foreword, general provisions, mandatory standards and recommended practices in the new draft revised code were further developed, taking into account the Guidelines on fair treatment of seafarers in the event of a maritime accident.

During this time the case of Captain Schroeder was causing great concern amongst the shipping community and this highlighted the need for taking the guideline further to a code or convention that is internationally accepted.

Claims for death, personal injury and abandonment of seafarers

The Joint IMO/ILO Ad Hoc Expert Working Group on Liability and Compensation regarding Claims for Death, Personal Injury and Abandonment of Seafarers is continuing to develop a standard and guidelines in relation to claims for death, personal injury and abandonment of seafarers.

The drive to complete these arrangements has been prompted following a resolution adopted by the ILO International Labour Conference which, at its 94th session in February 2006, adopted the 2006 Maritime Labour Convention. The ILO Resolution notes that the text in the Convention does not address many of the provisions set out

in the Guidelines on Shipowners' Responsibilities in respect of Contractual Claims for Personal Injury to or Death of Seafarers and the Guidelines on Provision of Financial Security in Cases of Abandonment of Seafarers, which have been adopted by both the IMO Assembly and the ILO Governing Body. The resolution, therefore, recommends to both Organizations that the way forward would be for the Working Group to develop a standard accompanied by guidelines, which could be included in the Maritime Labour Convention or another existing instrument, at a later date.

Fatigue and safe manning

Lessons that have been learned from casualty investigations showed that excessive hours of work or insufficient rest can contribute to fatigue, identified as an important contributing factor to maritime casualties and to health problems of seafarers. The guidance notes that States which have ratified ILO Convention No.180 (Seafarers' Hours of Work and the Manning of Ships Convention) are entitled to examine the records for hours of work or minimum rest periods on ships flying their flags. It should be noted that the ILO Maritime Labour Convention 2006 (MLC 2006), which was adopted in February, incorporates the provisions of ILO Convention No.180 relative to seafarers' hours of work.

Taking this on to the STW sub committee the subject was discussed and after a lot of debate, the Sub-Committee agreed to have a holistic approach towards addressing fatigue, and to consider in future all issues relating to fatigue under two work programme items; Review of the principles for establishing the safe manning levels of ships and a comprehensive review of the STCW convention, rather than duplicated consideration of a further item on the programme.

The Sub Committee concluded that Resolution A.890 (21) as amended, should be reviewed and the need for revisions to be identified, however the Sub-Committee was against legislation that gave prescriptive manning levels based on all types and size of ship. There was support for IFSMA's proposal that goal-based standards to be developed on the basis of A.890 in deciding safe manning levels on ships.

IFSMA's submission for all ships to have a minimum of a Master and two mates was rejected at this session. It remains an issue in the review of the Convention based on the premise that the Master should not be considered a watch-keeper when deciding the composition of the navigational watch.

E-Navigation

The Maritime Safety Committee decided to include, in the work programmes NAV and COMSAR Sub-Committees, a high priority item on "Development of an e-navigation strategy", with a target completion date of 2008 and with the NAV Sub-Committee acting as co-ordinator. NAV 52, which meets in July 2006, was instructed to give preliminary consideration to this important topic.

The aim is to develop a strategic vision for e-navigation, to integrate existing and new navigational tools, in particular electronic tools, in an all-embracing system that will contribute to enhanced navigational safety (with all the positive repercussions this will have on maritime safety overall and environmental protection) while simultaneously reducing the burden on the navigator.

As the basic technology for such an innovative step is already available, the challenge lies in ensuring the availability of all the other components of the system, including electronic navigational charts, and in using it effectively in order to simplify, to the benefit of the mariner, the display of the occasional local navigational environment.

E-navigation would thus incorporate new technologies in a structured way and ensure that their use is compliant with the various navigational communication

technologies and services that are already available, providing an overarching, accurate, secure and cost-effective system with the potential to provide global coverage for ships of all sizes.

The COMSAR sub-committee discussed the development of an E-Navigation strategy at their eleventh session and having considered the working group's report on the development of an e-navigation strategy, the sub-committee agreed that the user requirements should be clearly defined by the NAV sub-committee (meeting July 2007) before the any technical improvements could be studied if the GMDSS equipment was to utilised as a data communication network for e-navigation. IFSMA is part of the correspondence group involved with this project

It was agreed that the development of e-navigation should be user driven and not technology driven. Importantly, the sub committee agreed that there should be standardisation of performance standards including a standard mode of operation for shipboard equipment, and the software provided for the operating systems should follow a formal change control process to ensure that all elements of the e-navigation system would operate efficiently.

Education Training and Competence

The Comprehensive Review of the STCW Convention and the STCW Code took up considerable time at the STW Sub-Committee meeting. Importantly for IFSMA it was agreed that any item for review must fall within the following eight principles:

- Retain the structure and goals of the 1995 revision,
- Do not down scale existing standards,
- Do not amend the articles of the convention,
- Address inconsistencies, interpretations, outdated provisions, MSC instructions, clarifications already issued and technological advances,
- Address requirements for effective communication,
- Provide flexibility in terms of compliance and for required levels of training and certification and watch-keeping arrangements due to innovation in technology,
- Address special character and circumstances of short sea shipping and the off shore industry, and
- Address security related issues.

Furthermore IFSMA was particularly concerned on two items at this meeting;

- that there was need for clarifications as to what the acceptable minimum time that could be constituted as a period of rest should be, and
- that the Master should not be considered a watchkeeping officer when deciding the composition of the navigating watch.

It was pleasing therefore that the Sub Committee agreed to having the hours of work and rest provisions in Chapter VIII reviewed, with a view to harmonizing with the ILO 180 Convention, including the mandatory recording of hours.

On the subject of training to meet the requirements to enhance Maritime Security STW agreed that there should be a three tiered approach to security training for ships' crew which should be included in Chapter VI of the STW Convention in addition to the adopted standards VI/5 for Ship Security Officer.

- Basic security-related awareness training, (new sections A.VI/2-1 and A. VI/2-2), for all seafarers employed or engaged in any capacity onboard ship.

- Mandatory minimum requirement for seafarers with designated security duties, (new section A.VI/6), and
- Security familiarization training, (new section VI/1). This training is to be carried out by the ship's security officer for all those with designated security duties.

It was also agreed that the best approach would be for all seafarers that do not have specific security duties to receive basic training for security awareness. However it was further agreed that SSO's will not be required to qualify as instructors, supervisors or auditors in accordance with the provisions of regulation 1/6 and section A I/6.

Although IFSMA was unable at this meeting to persuade the sub-committee that a logical approach to training ship's security officers (SSOs) was to include the training with requirements foe OOW, the argument will continue at future meetings. The logic behind this initiative is that almost every watch-keeper will, during the course of their career, be required to act as a SSO. It would be cost effective to train them during their college training rather have to spend time training specifically for this later in their career. Importantly it would also over time ensure that the vast majority of ship's officers were trained in basic security.

E-Learning

With regard to the development of E-Learning in maritime Training and Education the Secretary General has been engaged in developing and operating an electronic training system for non-STCW maritime related courses. This has been carried through our connections with Lloyds Maritime Academy. So far the feed back has been very positive although it must be stressed that the system does require dedicated tutors with experience in this method of training to maintain a discipline of giving almost instant feed back to the students, and making regular visits to the forum. At present the limitations for seafarers is still the cost of setting up a broadband connection, but these barriers as gradually being broken down..

Development of Competency for Ratings.

The requirements for competencies for deck and engine able seafarers under the STCW Convention have been finalised by STW but we will have to await the review of STCW Convention before these can be adopted by the Maritime Safety Committee.

Unlawful Practices Associated with Certificates of Competency

The United Kingdom provided information on a report on the investigation they conducted on the types of fraud associated with Certificates of Competency, and also how fraud might be effectively identified and prevented. Latvia has also initiated a research project on the problems of fraudulent certificates to address awareness of the situation. Although over six thousand visits to the IMO website on verifying certificates had been recorded, few countries appear to report to the IMO instances where the use of fraudulent certificates had been discovered,

Goal-based new ship construction standards (GBS)

IMO continues to work on the basis of a prescriptive approach for GBS for provisions for hull construction for bulk carriers and oil tankers and of a safety level approach for all other ship types. With regard to the GBS for bulk carriers and oil tankers, the MSC has already agreed on a five-tier system, consisting of goals (Tier I), functional requirements (Tier II), verification of compliance criteria (Tier III), technical procedures and guidelines, classification rules and industry standards (Tier IV) and codes of practice and safety and quality systems for shipbuilding, ship operation,

maintenance, training, manning, etc. (Tier V). Tier I goals and Tier II functional requirements have already been agreed in principle.

Following consideration of the matter, the MSC approved the Plan for the pilot project on trial application of the Tier III verification process using the IACS Common Structural Rules (CSR) and agreed that the nomination of candidates for the Pilot Panel should be open to all, while the selection of members by the MSC Chairman, in consultation with the Secretariat, would assure that the Panel would be balanced. The objective of the pilot project is to conduct a trial application of Tier III for oil tankers and bulk carriers with the intention of validating the Tier III verification framework, identifying shortcomings and making proposals for improvement

Passenger ship safety

The MSC completed its major work programme item on passenger ship safety, which has based its guiding philosophy on the premise that the regulatory framework should place more emphasis on the prevention of a casualty from occurring in the first place and that future passenger ships should be designed for improved survivability so that, in the event of a casualty, persons can stay safely on board as the ship proceeds to port.

The amendments include new concepts such as the incorporation of criteria for the casualty threshold (the amount of damage a ship is able to withstand, according to the design basis, and still safely return to port) into SOLAS chapters II-1 and II-2. The amendments also provide regulatory flexibility so that ship designers can meet any safety challenges the future may bring. The amendments include:

- alternative designs and arrangements;
- safe areas and the essential systems to be maintained while a ship proceeds to port after a casualty, which will require redundancy of propulsion and other essential systems;
- on-board safety centres, from where safety systems can be controlled, operated and monitored;
- fixed fire detection and alarm systems, including requirements for fire detectors and manually operated call points to be capable of being remotely and individually identified;
- fire prevention, including amendments aimed at enhancing the fire safety of atriums, the means of escape in case of fire and ventilation systems;
- time for orderly evacuation and abandonment, including requirements for the essential systems that must remain operational in case any one main vertical zone is unserviceable due to fire.

These amendments are expected to enter into force on 1 July 2010.

Fire regulations on balconies

The MSC adopted amendments to SOLAS chapter II-2 and to the International Code for Fire Safety Systems (FSS Code) to strengthen the fire protection arrangements in relation to cabin balconies on passenger vessels. The amendments were developed in response to the fire aboard the cruise ship Star Princess, while on passage between Grand Cayman and Montego Bay, Jamaica, in March of this year. The fire began on an external balcony and spread over several decks.

For existing passenger ships, relevant provisions require that furniture on cabin balconies be of restricted fire risk unless fixed water spraying systems, fixed fire detection and fire alarm systems are fitted and that partitions separating balconies be

constructed of non combustible materials, similar to the provisions for new passenger ships.

The amendments are expected to enter into force on 1 July 2008.

Prevention of accidents involving lifeboats

The MSC adopted an amendment to SOLAS regulation III/19.3.3.4 concerning provisions for the launch of free-fall lifeboats during abandon-ship drills. The amendment will allow, during the abandon-ship drill, for the lifeboat to either be free-fall launched with only the required operating crew on board, or lowered into the water by means of the secondary means of launching without the operating crew on board, and then manoeuvred in the water by the operating crew. The aim is to prevent accidents with lifeboats occurring during abandon-ship drills. The amendment is expected to enter into force on 1 July 2008.

Meanwhile, the MSC agreed a consolidated circular to include the Guidelines for periodic servicing and maintenance of lifeboats, launching appliances and on-load release gear; Guidance on safety during abandon-ship drills using lifeboats; and Guidelines for simulated launching of free-fall lifeboats.

Assessment of the impact and effectiveness of implementation of the ISM Code

The MSC reviewed the report of a study on the impact and effectiveness of the ISM Code which was carried out by a Group of Independent Experts selected from administrations, organizations, academia and the shipping industry. Based on the data collected, the group concluded that where the ISM Code had been embraced as a positive step toward efficiency through a safety culture, tangible positive benefits were evident; and ISM Code compliance could be made easier through a reduction in the administrative process. The Group recommended that a further study should be undertaken, at a later date. The Human Element Working Group considered this report and its effectiveness in the enhancement of safety of life at sea and protection of the marine environment and reported to the Committee which agreed with the recommendations made by the GIE, in particular that: guidelines for Administrations should be revised to make them more effective and user-friendly; and guidelines and associated training should be developed to assist companies and seafarers in improving the implementation of the Code. It also agreed that the results of the study should be given wide publicity across the industry

In discussing the GIE's conclusions, the MSC agreed that the paperwork that supports ISM compliance should be proportionate to the size, type and operation of the company; concise and user-friendly; and relevant to the operations related to safety and environmental protection.

The Committee noted that the industry had identified common areas between the ISM and ISPS Codes and that resolution A.852(20) on Guidelines for a structure of an integrated system of contingency planning for shipboard emergencies, may provide guidance to handle or manage common areas of the ISM and ISPS Codes.

It was noted that, in order to properly motivate seafarers, companies should take into account feedback from shipboard personnel, including the outcome of shipboard safety committees to improve their operations and procedures relating to safety and environmental protection and it was essential for the company to respond in a constructive and timely fashion to any feedback received from seafarers operating the safety management system (SMS). Since seafarers are integral to the effective operation of the SMS, they should, therefore, be involved in the development and improvement of the system in order to ensure that the manuals are proportionate, concise and relevant.

Near misses

The MSC agreed there was a need to encourage companies and seafarers to document and record information on near misses and hazardous situations in order to understand the precursors to events that were detrimental to safety and the marine environment. It invited Member Governments, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations in consultative status to submit proposals to the next session of the Joint MSC/MEPC Working Group on the Human Element, which is scheduled to be reconvened at MEPC 56 (9 to 13 July 2007).

Long Range Identification and Tracking System (LRIT)

A new regulation on LRIT is included in SOLAS chapter V on Safety of Navigation, through which LRIT will be introduced as a mandatory requirement for the following ships on international voyages:

- passenger ships, including high-speed craft;
- cargo ships, including high-speed craft, of 300 gross tonnage and upwards;
- and mobile offshore drilling units

This establishes a multilateral agreement for sharing LRIT information for security and search and rescue purposes, amongst SOLAS Contracting Governments, in order to meet the maritime security needs and other concerns of such Governments.

It maintains the right of flag States to protect information about the ships entitled to fly their flag, where appropriate, while allowing coastal States access to information about ships navigating off their coasts.

The LRIT information ships will be required to transmit include the ship's identity, location and date and time of the position. There will be no interface between LRIT and AIS. One of the more important distinctions between LRIT and AIS, apart from the obvious one of range, is that, whereas AIS is a broadcast system, data derived through LRIT will be available only to the recipients who are entitled to receive such information and safeguards concerning the confidentiality of those data have been built into the regulatory provisions. SOLAS Contracting Governments will be entitled to receive information about ships navigating within a distance not exceeding 1000 nautical miles off their coast.

The regulation foresees a phased-in implementation schedule for ships constructed before its expected entry into force date of 1 January 2008 and an exemption for ships operating exclusively in sea area A1 from the requirement to transmit LRIT information, since such ships are already fitted with AIS. It also identifies which authorities may have access to LRIT information.

The MSC made progress on the development of the technical specifications of the components of the Long Range Identification and Tracking (LRIT) System, including the technical specifications for the International LRIT Data Exchange, the International LRIT Data Centre and for communication within the LRIT System network; protocols for the development testing of the LRIT System and for the testing of the integration into the system of new LRIT data centres; and guidance on setting up and maintaining the Data Distribution Plan.

Ballast water management

The following guidelines, which are part of a series developed to assist in the implementation of the BWM Convention, were adopted:

- ballast water exchange design and control standards (G11)
- design and construction to facilitate sediment control on ships (G12);

- designation of areas for ballast water exchange (G14);
- sediment reception facilities (G1);
- ballast water reception facilities (G5).

The Ballast Water Review Group considered the latest information on ballast water treatment technologies and tried to determine whether appropriate technologies are available to achieve the ballast water performance standard required under regulation D-2 of the BWM Convention by 2009 at which time new ships must comply with the performance standard. This Group's conclusions were that type-approved ballast water management systems would probably be available for installation prior to the first application date of the BWM Convention. However, the installation of type-approved ballast water management systems on ships already contracted to be built in or after 2009 may not be feasible or only possible at excessive cost and/or delivery.

Port Reception Facilities (Inadequacy of shoreside reception facilities)

The MEPC approved an Action Plan to tackle the alleged inadequacy of port reception facilities - seen as a major hurdle to overcome in order to achieve full compliance with MARPOL. The Plan was developed by the Sub-Committee on Flag State Implementation (FSI) and it is hoped that its outcome will contribute to the effective implementation of the MARPOL Convention and promote quality and environmental consciousness among administrations and shipping.

The Plan contains a list of proposed work items to be undertaken by IMO with the aim of improving the provision and use of adequate port reception facilities, including items relating to reporting requirements; provision of information on port reception facilities; identification of any technical problems encountered during the transfer of waste between ship and shore and the standardization of garbage segregation requirements and containment identification; review of the type and amount of wastes generated on board and the type and capacity of port reception facilities; revision of the IMO Comprehensive Manual on Port Reception Facilities; and development of a Guide to Good Practice on Port Reception Facilities. With regard to regional arrangements, the Committee agreed to recognize them as a means to provide reception facilities in light of the MARPOL requirements, taking into account the benefit of having such regional arrangements in place.

The development of the action plan followed a submission to the MEPC by the shipping and port industry's Reception Facilities Forum, which has identified a number of problem areas associated with the inadequacy of port reception facilities. It should be noted that IFSMA takes part in this forum and hosted the May meeting. See also the GSIS web site now available.

Harmonization of port State control activities

IMO has been working on a framework to promote the global harmonization and co ordination of port State control activities, bearing in mind the fundamental principle that flag State implementation is the very first line of defence for compliance with international standards, with port State control being complementary to the role of the flag States. For global harmonization of port State control, the following were considered to be the most important elements:

- ratification by all Member States of the IMO instruments and other relevant Conventions (i.e. ILO Conventions);
- unified understanding and implementation by authorities and port State control officers of the provisions contained in the Conventions, codes and guidelines;

- compatibility of port State control procedures, reporting systems and standard formats;
- transparency of information as well as reliable statistics on inspection results;
- co-operation and efficient exchange of information between Member States and port State control regimes;
- analysis of port State control activities, practices and statistics; training of qualified professionals as port State control officers and good understanding of processes, standards, codes and practices by all involved (flag States, port State control officers, authorities, crew, recognized organizations, etc.);
- and revision of the available training material such as IMO model course 3.09 and developing globally harmonized training materials.

.Persons rescued at sea - administrative procedures to be reviewed

The administrative procedures involved when dealing with persons rescued at sea, especially those who subsequently turn out to be involved in unregulated migration, should be reviewed, and a correspondence group on administrative procedures for persons rescued at sea is working on this. The group will identify relevant administrative procedures from Member States, consider the procedures and identify common threads and prepare additional guidance that could be useful for the expeditious and orderly disembarkation of persons rescued at sea.

The 1 July 2006, amendments to the SOLAS and SAR Conventions concerning the treatment of persons rescued at sea (adopted in May 2004) entered into force. These amendments were developed in response to IMO Assembly resolution A.920(22) on Review of safety measures and procedures for the treatment of persons rescued at sea, which was adopted by IMO's 22nd Assembly in 2001, following a number of incidents that highlighted concerns surrounding the treatment of persons rescued at sea, in particular undocumented migrants, asylum seekers, refugees and stowaways.

Revisions and amendments of MARPOL

Annex III Revisions have been adopted to harmonize the regulations with the criteria for defining marine pollutants which have been adopted by the UN Transport of Dangerous Goods (TDG) Sub-Committee, based on the United Nations Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals (GHS).

Amendments to the Condition Assessment Scheme (CAS) have been adopted clarifying the validity of the Statement of Compliance where there is a change of ownership of the ship, change of recognized organization or change of flag and giving the procedures to follow in these cases.

Amendments to the Guidelines for the transport and handling of limited amounts of hazardous and noxious liquid substances in bulk on offshore supply vessels have been adopted

Revised sewage standards have been adopted and revised Guidelines on implementation of effluent standards and performance tests for sewage treatment plants will apply to sewage treatment plants installed onboard on or after 1 January 2010, and replace the Recommendation on international effluent standards and guidelines for performance tests for sewage treatment plants adopted by resolution MEPC.2(VI) in 1976. The MEPC also adopted a standard for the maximum rate of discharge of untreated sewage from holding tanks when at a distance equal or greater than 12 nautical miles from the nearest land.

Draft wreck removal convention approved

A draft convention on the removal of wrecks has been approved by the IMO's Legal Committee, and the draft text will now be forwarded to a Diplomatic Conference, scheduled to be held from 14 to 18 May 2007 at the United Nations Office in Nairobi, Kenya.

Once adopted and in force, the new convention will provide the legal basis for States to remove, or have removed, from their exclusive economic zones (EEZs), wrecks that may pose a hazard to navigation or, because of the nature of their cargo, to the marine and coastal environments, or to both. The new convention will also require shipowners to take out insurance to cover costs of removal and provide States with a right of direct action against insurers.

Proposals to extend the scope of the new convention to the territorial sea of States Parties are still under consideration and will be the subject of consultations by interested delegations before the Diplomatic Conference.

Measures to enhance maritime security

The MSC also approved amendments to the Revised recommendations on the safe transport of dangerous cargoes and related activities in port areas (MSC/Circ.675), to include provisions intended to address the security of the transport of dangerous goods by sea. and it also approved amendments to the IMO/ILO/UNECE Guidelines for packing of cargo transport units to broaden the scope of the guidelines to address the need for vigilance and the need for security procedures to be developed and followed by all concerned.

Security of ships which do not fall within the scope of SOLAS chapter XI-2 and the ISPS Code

The MSC began consideration of issues relating to the security aspects of the operation of ships which do not fall within the scope of SOLAS chapter XI-2 and the ISPS Code (including cargo ships of less than 500 gross tonnage which travel on international routes).

The Committee agreed that non-SOLAS vessels shared the same operational environment as ships which fall within the scope of application of SOLAS chapter XI-2 and the ISPS Code and the operations of the former affect the security of the latter. Thus, it was necessary to address the security aspects of the operation of non-SOLAS ships in a systematic and analytical manner, so as to achieve a tangible enhancement of the global security net which the provisions of SOLAS chapter XI-2 and the ISPS Code were seeking to establish.

It was agreed also that any guidelines developed should be non mandatory and that their application should be under the purview of the individual Contracting Governments concerned and proportionate to the assessed levels of threat and risk.

Measures to prevent fires in engine rooms and cargo pump rooms

The Sub-committee reviewed draft Guidelines for measures to prevent fires in engine rooms and cargo pump room developed by a correspondence group and agreed that further work was needed. The group was asked to further develop the draft guidelines, while also being tasked with giving preliminary consideration to matters related to fixed hydrocarbon gas detection systems on double hull oil tankers.

Safety of CO2 fire-extinguishing systems installed before 1 October 1994

The Sub-Committee agreed to draft amendments to SOLAS regulation II-2/10, to require all carbon dioxide systems to have two separate releasing controls. The draft amendments will be submitted to MSC 83 for approval and subsequent adoption, on the basis that existing ships would have to comply by completion of the first scheduled dry-docking after 1 July 2009.

Water-based fire-extinguishing systems for machinery spaces and cargo pump-rooms.

The Sub-Committee also agreed to draft amendments to the Revised Guidelines for the approval of equivalent water-based fire-extinguishing systems for machinery spaces and cargo pump-rooms (MSC/Circ.1165), also for submission to MSC 83 for approval. The draft amendments to figures 1, 2 and 3 in MSC/Circ.1165 have been revised to clearly show the specified recommended fire test configurations and spray fire locations.

The work on standards related to the maintenance and inspections of fixed carbon dioxide fire-extinguishing systems and aerosol fixed fire-extinguishing systems were also agreed, in principal, for inclusion on the revised FSS Code, to be completed in 2009.

In addition to IMO attendance the Executive Council met in Paris on the 20th October 2006 and London on 27th and 28th March 2007.

Other visits made since the AGA

The Secretary General attended and presented a paper at the LSM Manning and Training Conference in Saint Petersburg from 23rd to 24th May 2006. He also chaired a workshop debating the issues of fatigue and safe manning.

The Deputy Secretary General attended representing IFSMA, the IALA VTS Committee in Paris in September 2006 March 2007.

IFMSA is a board member of the world VTS guide and both Secretary General and the Deputy Secretary General attended their annual meeting in London in July 2006

The Secretary General attended as deputy chairman of the Honourable Company of Master Mariners new Education and Training Committee which was formally the Apprentices Committee on January 26th and also as the IFSMA representative at the Nautical Institute Education and Training Committee.

The Secretary General also attended the Annual Great Gale Service at Prior Church, Bridlington, and expressed the Shipmaster's appreciation to those who volunteer to operate the lifeboats around the coast of the United Kingdom.

In conclusion I would like to thank the support of the Executive Council and all our members and especially the hard work carried out by my colleagues Paul Owen and Roberta Howlett.