14 February 2023

IUMI Policy Agenda

1. Arctic sailings

Brief description

Ice conditions make Arctic sailings a relevant option for more commercial vessels transiting between Europe and Asia (although currently constrained by the Russian war on Ukraine with subsequent sanctions and inclusion of Russia among the Joint War Committee's listed areas), and the number of cruise vessels in polar waters are on the rise. Ice conditions, the role of class, vessel design, remoteness, support networks, availability of icebreakers, SAR, and experience and training of crew are amongst the relevant issues for underwriters in assessing this risk. While it is recognised that maritime and offshore energy activities in the Arctic poses a number of associated risks and challenges, this agenda item is limited to considerations concerning vessel transits and destination shipping in relation to the Polar Code only.

Polar Code

The International Code for Ships Operating in Polar Waters (Polar Code) and the associated new SOLAS chapter XIV and MARPOL amendments entered into force 1 January 2017. After four years, IMO Member States and international organizations have been invited to report on their experience with the use of an interim guidance on methodologies for assessing operational capabilities and limitations in ice (POLARIS) and consider any necessary amendments. The Maritime Safety Committee (MSC) invited in April 2022 interested parties to submit a proposal for a new output aimed at addressing the identified gaps in and challenges experienced with the implementation of the Polar Code.

IUMI participates in the Arctic Shipping Best Practices Information Forum of the Arctic Council. The Forum supports the implementation of the Polar Code, and a public web-portal is available with accurate information from authoritative sources including the Arctic States, intergovernmental organisations, classification societies, the shipping industry, marine insurers, and non-governmental organisations.

Non-SOLAS vessels

MSC instructed in June 2019 the Sub-Committee on Navigation, Communications and Search and Rescue (NCSR) to consider the feasibility and consequences of applying chapters 9 and 11 of the Polar Code to non-SOLAS vessels and how best to enhance the safety of these vessels. In June 2022, NCSR finalised amendments to SOLAS Chapter XIV together with draft amendments to the Polar Code to mandate safety measures for non-SOLAS vessels operating in polar waters. MSC 106 approved in November 2022 the draft amendments, and subject to adoption by MSC 107 in June 2023 the amendments

are expected to enter into force 1 January 2026. The amendments will be applicable for both new and existing (from 2027) fishing vessels 24 metres and above, pleasure yachts of 300GT and upwards not engaged in trade, and cargo ships of 300 GT and upwards but below 500GT.

As an interim measure, the IMO Assembly adopted in November/December 2019 a resolution urging Member States to implement, on a voluntary basis, safety measures of the Polar Code on vessels not certified under the SOLAS Convention. The MSC approved in May 2021 recommendatory safety guidelines for fishing vessels of 24m in length and over, and pleasure yachts above 300 gross tonnage not engaged in trade. Similar guidelines are being considered for pleasure yachts engaged in trade and cargo vessels, both of 300 GT and above and less than 500 GT, operating in polar waters.

Relevant authority / organisations and documents

- **IMO MEPC & MSC** with input from Sub-Committees (HTW, SSE, SDC, NCSR)
  - ***Polar Code***
    - Resolution MSC Res.385(94), adopted 21 November 2014.
    - SOLAS Ch. XIV (MSC Res.386/94).
    - MEPC 68/21/Add.1/Corr.2, adopted 15 May 2015.
  - ***MSC.1/Circ.1519:*** Guidance on methodologies for assessing operational capabilities and limitations in ice (POLARIS), 6 June 2016.
  - ***MSC.1/Circ.1612:*** Guidance for navigation and communication equipment intended for use on ships operating in polar waters, 14 June 2019.
  - ***MSC.1/Circ.1614:*** Interim guidelines on life-saving appliances and arrangements for ships operating in polar waters, 26 June 2019.
  - ***A31/Res.1137:*** Interim measures for ships not certified under the SOLAS Convention operating in polar waters, 17 January 2020.
  - ***NCSR8/5:*** Safety measures for non-SOLAS ships – application of chapters 9 an 11 of the Polar Code, report of the correspondence group, 15 January 2021.
  - ***NCSR8/5/1:*** Response to the report of the correspondence group, submitted by FOEI, Pacific Environment and WWF, 12 February 2021.
  - ***MSC.1/Circ.1641:*** Guidelines for safety measures for fishing vessels of 24 m in length and over operating in Polar waters, 24 June 2021.
- **Arctic Council** comprising Canada, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Russia, Sweden and the U.S.
  - ***Arctic Shipping Best Practices Information Forum web-portal***
  - ***Guideline for Arctic Marine Risk Assessment, April 2020.***
- **The Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Programme** – status of, and threats to, the Arctic environment.
- **Arctic "Best Practice Declaration"**. IUMI letter of support 19 April 2013.
- **Arctic information database** - Centre for High North Logistics.
- **Northern Sea Route:**

- ***NSR Administration***
- ***Russian Government:*** Northern Sea Route Development Plan for the period until 2031, 21 December 2019.
- ***Northern Sea Route Information Office***

- **Insurance industry:**
  - ***Lloyd's / Chatham House:*** Arctic Opening: Opportunity and Risk in the High North, 1 April 2012.
  - ***Cefor:*** Arctic Sailings Check List, October 2012.
  - ***Gard:*** Climate change creates a new trade route – and new risks, 16 February 2014.
  - ***Skuld:*** Arctic checklist, 16 February 2015.
  - ***IUMI:*** Position paper on Arctic sailings, 29 August 2018.
  - ***MS Amlin:*** Navigating in ice conditions, December 2021.
- **Oil Companies International Marine Forum (OCIMF)**: Northern Sea Route Navigation – Best Practices and Challenges, December 2017.
- **ICS & OCIMF:** Guidelines for the Development of a Polar Water Operational Manual, November 2019.
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Timeline / important dates

- Polar Code entered into force 1 January 2017.
- MSC 103: 3-14 May 2021.
- NCSR 9: 21 June -30 June 2022
- MSC 105: 19-29 April 2022.
- Paris MoU inspection campaign 13 June – 1 July & 1 – 19 August 2022. Results available after Committee meeting in May 2023.
- MSC 106: 2-11 November 2022.
- MSC 107: 31 May – 9 June 2023.
- Entry into force of amendments (if approved) to SOLAS and the Polar Code for non-SOLAS vessels: 1 January 2026.

IUMI will:

- Participate in discussions with industry, IMO and coastal states on necessary standards and infrastructure in Polar waters.
- Support amendments to SOLAS and the Polar Code for non-SOLAS vessels operating in polar waters.
- Participate in the Arctic Shipping Best Practice Information Forum, which is responsible for the information web-portal launched to support implementation of the Polar Code.