



# Asian Shipowners Forum

## Safe Navigation & Environment Committee (SNEC)

c/o Federation of ASEAN Shipowners' Associations (FASA)

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### PRESS RELEASE

1. The 14<sup>th</sup> Interim Meeting of the Asian Shipowners Forum (ASF) Safe Navigation & Environment Committee (SNEC) was held in Bangkok, Thailand on 30<sup>th</sup> November 2007. It was hosted by the Thai Shipowners' Association (TSA).
2. The meeting was attended by 26 representatives of shipowner associations from China, Hong Kong, Japan, Korea, Chinese Taipei and ASEAN, as represented by the Federation of ASEAN Shipowners' Associations (FASA) which is composed of the shipowner associations of Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam. The ASF Secretary General, Mr Wang Cheng was present. A representative from The Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia (ReCAAP) attended as an observer.
3. Mr. S.S. Teo, President of Singapore Shipping Association chaired the SNEC meeting on behalf of FASA.
4. During the meeting, the Committee considered and discussed various important issues concerning the safe navigation of ships and the protection of the marine environment. It wishes to highlight the following issues:

- **Piracy & Armed Robbery**

The Committee noted with concern the increased incidence of piracy and armed robbery around the world for the first three quarters of 2007. The African region with 91 attacks reported, now ranks as the most dangerous with close to 50% of the world's total number of attacks. The increase was notably significant in Somalia and Nigeria. To - date 13 reported hijackings off the Somalian coast had been reported. This is almost three times more than the five hijackings reported in the area for all of 2006.

It was further noted that the 59 attacks reported in the South East Asian region, although significantly reduced from previous year, still ranked the second highest accounting about 30% of the world's total. 45 of these reported attacks were petty robberies whilst the ships were berthed alongside or at anchor. 14 attacks, however, took place when the ships were underway.

The Committee was nevertheless pleased with the good efforts of the enforcement agencies of the three littoral states of Indonesia, Malaysia and

Singapore in ensuring that ships transiting the Straits of Malacca and Singapore are safe from pirate attacks. The joint coordinated air and sea patrols mounted by these three countries in the Straits presently are acknowledged as effective in combating piracy and armed robbery in the Straits. The Committee strongly urged the three littoral states to keep up with their good work. The Meeting also cautioned all ship masters to remain vigilant when transiting or trading to pirate prone areas. Ship masters whose vessels are not calling at Somalian ports are strongly advised to maintain a distance of at least 200 nautical miles from the Somalian coastline. In the unfortunate event that their vessels are being pursued by pirates, they should urgently enlist the assistance of the US and UK naval forces deployed in that area.

- **Enhancement of Safety, Security and Environment Protection in the Straits of Malacca and Singapore.**

The Committee applauded the efforts of the three littoral States of Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore in successfully establishing the Co-operative Mechanism between the littoral States and user States on safety of navigation and environmental protection in the Straits of Malacca and Singapore at the IMO<sup>1</sup> Conference held in Singapore on 4 – 6 September 2007.

The Committee reaffirmed its support on the concept of the Co-operative Mechanism (CM), which comprises a Cooperation Forum, a projects' Coordination Committee and the voluntary Aids to Navigation Fund. The Meeting expressed confidence that the CM will help to promote dialogue and facilitate close collaboration among the littoral states, user states and other stakeholders. It was further envisaged that this CM will help to strengthen regional maritime cooperation in a transparent and inclusive manner within the confines of Article 43 of UNCLOS<sup>2</sup>.

The Committee further expressed its readiness to participate and contribute its ideas, views or proposals in the Cooperation Forum.

- **Marine Air Emissions**

The Committee reaffirmed its stand that the global shipping industry, like any other industry, has an important role to play in actively encouraging and ensuring a clean marine and air environment. In this respect, the Committee has strongly supported the IMO in commissioning a comprehensive study by an informal cross government/industry scientific group of experts.

The Committee was concerned about recent media reports suggesting that carbon emissions by ships have been significantly underestimated and that shipping's impact on global warming may be substantially greater than aviation. These reports have been found to be grossly misleading and confusing.

The Committee wishes to highlight that shipping, which transports more than 90% of world trade, is by far the most carbon friendly form of commercial transportation. In terms of CO<sup>2</sup> emitted per tonne of goods carried per mile, shipping is at least 30 times more efficient than air transport, and about 5 times more efficient than trucks.

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<sup>1</sup> International Maritime Organisation

<sup>2</sup> United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea

(see [www.shippingfacts.com](http://www.shippingfacts.com)). By transferring cargo from other modes of transport to ships, the Committee strongly believes that ships will actually help reduce the global transport related CO<sup>2</sup> emissions. The Committee pledged its support for continued research into increased efficiency in order to further reduce CO<sup>2</sup> emissions.

- **Ballast Water Management (BWM)**

The Committee noted with concern that a problem is confronting shipowners currently placing orders for many new ships, which under the terms of the Ballast Water Management (BWM) Convention will be required to be fitted with special treatment equipment to eliminate nuisance aquatic species, if constructed after 1 January 2009. The problem is that there is very limited equipment available that is officially type-approved to comply with the required IMO standards for treatment systems.

The Committee supports the proposed draft resolution submitted to the IMO General Assembly for adoption on 30 November 2007. The draft resolution would have the effect of suspending the January 2009 date for new equipment, and it further recommends that, for a limited period of time, States should not require ships calling at their ports to comply with the standard contained in regulation D-2 of the BWM Convention. The Committee still has concern about ships constructed between 1<sup>st</sup> January 2009 and 31<sup>st</sup> December 2010 which should be considered as 'existing ships' and hopes that a later IMO meeting can resolve the matter.

5. The members of the Committee expressed their appreciation to the TSA for hosting the 14<sup>th</sup> Interim Meeting of the SNEC in Bangkok, Thailand.

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**Editor's Note:**

*The Asian Shipowners Forum consists of 7 Shipowners' Associations in the Asian region, being those from the Federation of ASEAN Shipowners Associations (FASA), which are Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam, as well as Australia, China, Chinese Taipei, Hong Kong, Japan and Korea.*

*The aims of the ASF are to promote the interests of the Asian shipowning industries. Between annual ASF meetings, the ongoing work is carried out by five "S" Committees; the Shipping Economics Review Committee, the Seafarers Committee, the Ship Recycling Committee, the Safe Navigation and Environment Committee, and the Ship Insurance and Liability Committee. It has been estimated that ASF Owners and Managers control and operate around 50% of the world's cargo carrying fleet.*

*For further information on the Press Release, please contact Mr Daniel Tan, Secretary of the Committee at the address shown on the Letterhead.*