The Polar Code

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Fridtjof Nansen (1861-1930)
Nansen:

We are all adventurers in life, whatever path we follow. The most important lessons in life we must discover with our own eyes.
Background

Increased tourism in Polar areas
Large cruise ships with many passengers
Climate changes – New possibilities in the North

New ship lanes
Cargo transport
Basic question

Will current regulatory regimes ensure the same level of safety of lives at sea and protection of the environment in Polar waters as in other waters?
Submissions to MSC 86

- Denmark, Norway and the United States proposing that a new work programme item be added to the agendas of the DE Sub-Committee and any other appropriate sub-committees as a high priority item to consider and develop mandatory requirements for the Polar Regions.

- The DE sub-committee providing a justification for a new work programme item:”Development of a Code for ships operating in Polar waters”. 
Based on these initiative IMO decided to develop an international mandatory Polar Code
Approved as a new agenda item by MSC 86 in May 2009
The Sub-Committee on Ship Design and Equipment (DE) coordinates the work.
Working group during the DE sessions, Correspondence groups in between and a Workshop in Cambridge 27-30 November 2011.
Target Completion date is 2012.
The goal

- The goal of this Code is to provide for safe ship operation and the protection of the Polar environment in by addressing risks specific for the Polar regions and not explicitly considered by other instruments of the Organisation.
Progress DE 53

DE 53 (February 2010) agreed on the principles for the Code:

• Additional requirements to existing IMO legislation (add on code)
• Risk based
• Functional requirements
  Supported by deterministic requirements where necessary
• Ensure same level of safety for persons, the environment and the ships as in other waters
• A correspondence group was formed to progress the work.
Progress DE 54 (October 2010)

- Preliminary agreement on the geographical boundaries of application.
- Agreement that there should be a number of elements in the design criteria
- The structure of the Code is agreed (based on elements from Goal Based Standard, tier 1 and 2)
- Development of hazard identification (additional hazards in polar waters/areas)
- A correspondence group was formed to progress the work
Geographical demarcation of the Arctic water in IMO’s guidelines

60 degree north with exceptions
Geographical demarcation of the Antarctic water in IMO’s guidelines

60 degrees south all the way round
Progress at DE 55 in March 2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Ice Strengthening/Measures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Polar ice covered Ships that may operate in ice-covered waters with 10% or more of ice</td>
<td>Polar class or equivalent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Polar open water Ships that may operate in ice-covered waters with less than 10% ice, where it may pose a structural risk</td>
<td>Assessment/ice-strengthening or other mitigating measures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Polar open water including ice-free waters Ships that may operate in waters with zero to 10% ice cover, where it does not pose a structural risk</td>
<td>No ice-strengthening</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Content of the Code

- The Code addresses:
  - Certification
  - Design
  - Equipment and systems
  - Operation
  - Environmental protection
  - To some extent manning and training
Some challenges in the development

- Geographical limitations – new discussion
- Various opinions on additional risks
- Level of need for additional requirements
- How to mitigate additional risks
- Hesitation on additional environmental protection measures?
- Application – types, Cargo and Passenger – Fishing vessels
- Ship categories, A, B and C – esp. the C category
- Sailing permit system in addition to certification
- Time – progress
How to make the Code mandatory?

- As the Code will affect safety, environment protection, ballast water management and anti-fouling systems, it is a challenge how to make it mandatory.
- Therefore the secretariat was instructed explore the options.
- The Legal Office of IMO provided the following options:
  - Making the Code mandatory solely under SOLAS
  - Developing amendments to SOLAS, MARPOL, AFS and BWM
  - Developing a new convention on polar shipping
- MEPC has not yet considered these options, this will be done in March 2012 (MEPC 63)
Other challenges

• Improvement of existing and development of new charts. Paper and or electronic

• Development of systems for ice information

• Improvement of Search and Rescue

• Improvement of spill preparedness

• Mandatory requirements for additional safe manning or additional qualification and special training
The challenge – The Goal

For safety at sea in a clean environment

Icecovered or not
Thank you for your attention