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Press release

25 May 2009

THE PARIS MOU ADOPTS NEW PORT STATE CONTROL INSPECTION SYSTEM

The Paris Memorandum of Understanding on Port State Control (Paris MoU) held its 42nd Committee meeting in Reykjavik, Iceland from 18 - 22 May 2009. The meeting adopted the "New Inspection Regime" (NIR), which is a ground-breaking development in Port State Control. The NIR, which will enter into force from 1 January 2011 will replace the existing Port State Control system. The NIR was developed following a process of review of the existing Port State Control mechanism. It has been developed in parallel with the EU's 3rd Maritime Safety Package. The NIR is a significant departure as it is a risk based targeting mechanism, which will reward quality shipping with a smaller inspection burden and concentrate on high-risk ships, which will be subject to more in-depth and more frequent inspections. The NIR is based on the latest developments at the IMO and makes use of company performance and the IMO audit for identifying the risk profile of ships together with the performance of the flag State and the recognised organisation. The past inspection record of the ship as well as the ship's age and ship type will influence the targeting. Full implementation of the system will rely on collection of port call information. The NIR will be accompanied by a new information system "THETIS" which will replace the current SIRENaC system.

The Committee looking ahead and recognising that the International Labour Organisation's Consolidated Maritime Labour Convention 2006 may enter into force from 2011 onwards decided to develop guidelines for port state control officers in respect of the implementation of the Port State Control requirements of the Convention. These guidelines will be based on the MLC 2006 and taking into account the recently adopted port state control guidelines from the ILO, which were developed at a tripartite meeting in September 2008. The Committee re-established a task force which will work on the Guidelines and report to the next Committee meeting.

The Committee continued with the development of the PSCO training scheme, which is providing training to PSCOs and updating their technical and procedural knowledge. The Committee noted the ongoing development of "Rulecheck" which is an electronic tool for PSCOs to check the application of legislation. This electronic tool has proven itself to be extremely useful to PSCOs in their inspections and together with the new training scheme is improving the quality of inspections.

The Committee continued to take actions in response to the 2nd Joint Paris/Tokyo MoU Ministerial Conference, held in Vancouver in 2004. It gave high importance to

Concentrated Inspection Campaigns (CICs) and scheduled a CIC on Lifeboat Launching Arrangements from September to November this year. The campaign will be carried out jointly with the Tokyo MoU. In addition the Committee considered a number of options for other joint CICs with the Tokyo MoU for 2010 and beyond. The report of the CIC on the Safety of Navigation, SOLAS Chapter V, carried out in September, October and November of 2008, was presented to PSCC42 and the results will be submitted to the IMO next year.

The Committee adopted the 2008 Annual Report including the new Black, Grey and White List and a performance list of Recognised Organisations. Both lists will be published early June and used for targeting purposes starting 1st July 2009. The Annual Report is expected to be published by the end of July this year.

The Paris MoU has increasing relations with port State control regimes in other areas of the world. The meeting heard reports from the US Coast Guard, the Caribbean MoU, Black Sea MoU and Tokyo MoU. The International Labour Organization and International Maritime Organization were also represented and provided updates.

Iceland will join the MoU Advisory Board (MAB) of the Paris MoU for the coming 3 years to represent the non-EU members and the Committee thanked the outgoing MAB member Canada for their positive contributions over the past period. Dr. Vitaly Klyuev of the Russian Federation was elected as vice-Chairman of the Committee.

The Committee also agreed to include all inspections carried out by Canada in its West Coast ports into the inspection data base.

Mr. Hogan, the Chairman, stated: "I am very pleased with the outcome of this meeting. By adopting the New Inspection Regime we have taken a major step forward in enhancing the safety of shipping in our region and rewarding quality ship operators and ship owners for their commitment to and investment in safety". Mr Hogan concluded the meeting by thanking, on behalf of the Member States, the Icelandic Maritime Administration for the excellent arrangements they made for this Committee meeting in Reykjavik.

Notes to editors:

The Icelandic Maritime Administration hosted the 42nd meeting of the executive committee of the Paris Memorandum of Understanding on Port State Control in Reykjavik from 18 - 22 May 2009.

Port State Control is a check on visiting foreign ships to see that they comply with international rules on safety, pollution prevention and seafarers living and working conditions. It is a means of enforcing compliance where the owner and flag State have failed in their responsibility to implement or ensure compliance. The port State can require defects to be put right, and detain the ship for this purpose if necessary. It is therefore also a port State's defence against visiting substandard shipping.

Regional Port State Control was initiated in 1982 when fourteen European countries agreed to co-ordinate their port State inspection effort under a voluntary agreement known as the Paris Memorandum of Understanding on Port State Control (Paris MoU). Current membership includes 27 countries. The European Commission, although not a signatory to the Paris MoU, is also a member of the Committee.

The new inspection regime (NIR) will introduce full coverage of visiting ships and a more risk-based method of ship selection and thereby a more effective use of resources. It will also strengthen current banning measures and the training for inspectors.

Inspection reports are recorded on a central database SIRENaC located in St Malo - France, available for search and daily updating by MoU member countries. Inspection results can be viewed on the Paris MoU public website and are also provided to the Equasis public database.

The Secretariat of the MoU is provided by the Netherlands Ministry of Transport, Public works and Water Management and located in The Hague.

For more information on the Paris MoU on Port State Control please consult our Internet Website on the following address: www.parismou.org