

## **PAME II-2018: Agenda 6.1(a)**

### **Arctic Shipping Best Practice Information Forum Summary & Next Steps**

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#### **Introduction**

During PAME I -2018 in Quebec City, Canada a Record of Decision was adopted that “*instruct[ed] the Chair of the Forum and the SEG Co-Chairs to provide a status report on the Forum at PAME II-2018*”.

Accordingly, under the theme of Enhanced Maritime Safety, agenda item 6.1 (Linking with International Organizations) at the PAME II-2018 meeting in Vladivostok, Russia allocates time for discussion on the Arctic Shipping Best Practice Information Forum (the Forum), specifically on the outcomes of the Forum’s 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting and launch of its Web-portal, as well as any identified next steps. The following status report is in fulfillment of this.

#### **Meeting Summary**

*2<sup>nd</sup> Meeting of the Arctic Shipping Best Practice Information Forum  
14-15 May, 2018  
Irish Cultural Centre, London, UK*

The 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting of the Arctic Shipping Best Practice Information Forum (the Forum) commenced with opening remarks by distinguished delegates, including the Forum’s Chair, who emphasized the utility of the newly launched web portal as a tool for the effective implementation of the Polar Code. Specifically, Polar Ship Certificates (PSC), Polar Waters Operations Manuals (PWOM), and Operational Assessments, were identified as three key components of the Polar Code that would benefit from the authoritative and reliable information available via the web portal.

Representatives of the Forums’ Organizing Committee jointly presented on the web portal ([www.arcticshippingforum.is](http://www.arcticshippingforum.is)), navigating the audience through its layout (organized according to the individual chapters of the Polar Code) and hyperlinks received to date. The presenters noted that the web portal is designed to be iterative, and that both layout and substance will be continually supplemented and refined based on feedback received. At the time of launch, the web portal contained hyperlinks to over 120 sources of Polar Code relevant information.

Over the course of the day-and-a-half meeting, presentations focused on the unique experiences gained by Arctic States, shipowners, classification societies and intergovernmental organizations in implementing, complying with and/or making information available to support implementation of or compliance with the Polar Code. More specifically, for those involved with implementing or complying with the Polar Code, presentations highlighted the specific type of information needed to apply for or issue a PSC, including information to prepare or review the required Operational Assessment and PWOM.

For example, presentations by the Kingdom of Denmark and the Russian Federation touched upon some of the challenges facing Flag and Arctic Coastal States in implementing the Polar

Code, and identified certain additional domestic measures established around Greenland and along the Northern Sea Route to address Arctic shipping safety and pollution prevention.

Presentations from DNV-GL and Lloyd's Register also highlighted some of the shared challenges encountered by classification societies regarding Polar Code implementation, therefore underscoring the need for unified interpretations wherever possible. Challenges encountered thus far include, inter alia, how to conduct operational assessments, how to model a PWOM, and how to set requirements that meet the minimum five day rescue time provision.

Wherever possible, presentations touched upon the sources of information used, why those particular sources were deemed adequate, and any challenges encountered in locating or reviewing relevant or required information. Presentations also described the types of information that - if made more readily accessible - would facilitate preparation of an application for or review and approval of a PSC or PWOM.

From the perspective of a shipping company and industry association with operations in the Arctic, both Fednav and the Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA) noted that while significant amounts of information already exist to support the harmonized implementation of the Polar Code, the more pressing issue is identifying the right information, and to this end the web portal is considered a positive step. This notwithstanding, a related panel discussion revealed that better information on sea ice break-up/freeze-up patterns, as well as how to more accurately determine ice thickness is needed.

Presentations by organizations that generate or make available information necessary for implementing or complying with the Polar Code focused on identifying that information, explaining how it is collected and/or generated, and describing any challenges encountered in making it widely available to those who need it. These presentations also identified challenges in obtaining desired information, thereby highlighting knowledge gaps.

For example, the International Ice Charting Working Group (IICWG) noted the connectivity challenges associated with distributing ice information to mariners operating in the Polar Regions, as well as the difficulties determining ice thickness using satellite imagery. The World Meteorological Organization (WMO) echoed similar challenges with communicating information at high latitudes, noting the WMO's ongoing work into the development of long term Arctic weather prediction systems, and indicated the benefits of obtaining weather and ice observations from ships operating in Polar Regions (e.g. ice thickness, sea ice pressures, etc.) as a means of improving data accuracy.

The Arctic Regional Hydrographic Organization (ARHC) reiterated the importance of access to timely and high-quality data for purposes of vessels safety and pollution prevention in the Arctic, and much like the presentations made by other international organizations, the ARHC's presentation highlighted how the information the ARHC produces supports the Polar Code – in its case Chapter 9 (Safety of Navigation) and Chapter 11 (Voyage Planning).

### **Next Steps**

Mindful of the Polar Code entry into force dates set by the International Maritime Organization, and wanting to capitalize on momentum generated to date, the Forum's Organizing Committee has begun initial planning for the third meeting of the Forum

sometime during the first half of 2019, with specific details to be announced in the coming months.

Accordingly, Forum Participants were circulated a short summary report (similar to the above summary), were reminded/requested to respond to a four-question survey on how to improve the efficacy of the Forum, and were encouraged to continue to submit hyperlinks to the PAME Secretariat. Specifically, the four questions asked were as follows:

Q1: What topics would you propose for the next Forum meeting agenda?

Q2: What is your top suggestion for improving the Forum?

Q3: What is your top suggestion for improving the Web-portal?

Q4: What is your top suggestion for increasing public awareness of the Web-portal?

From the 51 meeting attendees a total of 18 replies were received in response to the survey, representing an approximate 40% response rate. Of the responses received, the most common refrain concerning improvements to the web-portal was to ensure that it is properly maintained with up-to-date information. In addition, regarding questions of substance and content, suggestions included that the Forum be tailored to review consistency and experiences with the Polar Code's overall goal based requirements; that lessons learned from the Antarctic should be taken into consideration, despite the Forum's Arctic focus; that greater emphasis be placed on the 'human factor' (e.g. training) and, by extension, more emphasis on operator/practical experiences and tailor the portal accordingly; that the Forum consider the Polar Code implementation experiences from non-Arctic flag states; and that other Arctic related developments at IMO that go beyond the Polar Code (e.g. HFO, safety measures for non-SOLAS ship, air emissions, underwater noise, etc.) also be entertained.

Regarding overall question of Forum organization, a variety of suggestions were also received, including requests for Forum participants to review hyperlinks in advance of face-to-face meetings to better facilitate discussion; placing greater attention on categorizing information on the web-portal geographically; how to better optimize the Web-portal's search functions; and to give consideration towards the establishment of working or expert groups to discuss specific issues as they arise, rather than limiting discussions exclusively to an annual meeting.

Based on the comments received in response to the survey, as well as other noted throughout the two-day meeting, a document will be developed and circulated to the larger Forum community advising of any changes or proposed changes.

Finally, regarding a 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting of the Forum, no details have been confirmed, though it is anticipated to occur sometime during the first half of 2019 and will likely be two days in length, similar to the previous two meetings. Regarding a venue, possible locations include the United States Embassy in London and the Headquarters of the World Meteorological Organization in Geneva. Logistical information will be shared as it becomes available.