

LOCAL VESSELS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Minutes of the 31st Meeting

Date : 30 December 2021 (Thursday)
Time : 2:30 p.m.
Place : Conference Room A, 24/F, Harbour Building

Present

Chairman:	Mr S. F. WONG	Deputy Director, Marine Department (“MD”)
Members:	Mr HO Sheung-yan	Chief Inspector (Operations) (Marine Regional Headquarters), Hong Kong Police Force (“HKPF”)
	Mr H. B. CHAN	General Manager/Operations, MD
	Mr Jerry TANG	General Manager/Local Vessels, MD
	Mr Simon CHEN	Naval Architecture
	Mr WONG Chi-ming	Seafarers’ Training
	Mr FAN Keung	Seafarers’ Associations
	Mr CHEUNG Kwok-wai, Demen	Launch & Excursion Vessels’ Operations
	Mr WEN Tsz-kit, Bondy	Ferry Vessels’ Operations
	Mr FONG Chi-fai	River Trade Cargo Operations
	Mr WOO Cho-wing, John	Pleasure Boating Operations
Secretary:	Ms LIU Ka-yu, Athena	Executive Officer (General & Committee), MD

In Attendance

Mr SHI Qiang	Assistant Director/Local Vessels and Examination, MD
Mr YU Kin-chung	Senior Surveyor of Ships/Seafarers and Examination (2), MD
Mr LIU Ren	Senior Surveyor of Ships/Local Vessels Safety, MD

Mr LAM Kong-hei, Yale David	Senior Surveyor of Ships/Quality Management, MD
Mr Emil PUI	HK & Kowloon Motor Boats & Tug Boats Association Limited
Ms Denise YIU	Hong Kong Mid-Stream Operators Association Ltd.
Ms Nicole TSE	The Hongkong and Yaumati Ferry Company Limited

Absent with apologies

Ms LO Chung-shi, Karen	Ship Building and Repairing Industry
Mr NG Tai-sing, Carven	Cargo Vessels' Operations
Mr YEUNG Sheung-chun	Fishing Industry
Mr KAM Dik-chiu, Dick	Ship Survey Work
Mr ZHAO Qijing, Steven	Marine Insurance Industry

Opening Remarks

1. The Chairman welcomed Mr Emil PUI (Secretary of HK & Kowloon Motor Boats & Tug Boats Association Limited), Ms Denise YIU (Hong Kong Mid-Stream Operators Association Ltd.) and Ms Nicole TSE (The Hongkong and Yaumati Ferry Company Limited) as observers, and apprised all of the house rules of the LVAC:
 - (i) All participants are requested to turn their mobile phones to silent mode.
 - (ii) The Secretariat will not make written records of the oral comments made by observers in the meetings.
 - (iii) Observers should have the Chairman's signal of consent before speaking in the meeting. Observers will not have the right to vote if and when there is a question coming or arising before an LVAC meeting.
 - (iv) If the discussion items involve restricted or confidential documents, pursuant to the "need-to-know" principle, the Chairman can ask observers to withdraw from/leave the meeting. The paper concerned and the discussion will be restricted to the staff members of the MD and the members of the LVAC.

I. Confirmation of Minutes of Last Meeting

1. With the Chairman's confirmation, members unanimously endorsed the minutes of the last meeting. The minutes would be uploaded to the website of the MD.

(Post-meeting note: The minutes of the 30th meeting was uploaded to the website of the MD on 7 January 2022.)

II. New Discussion Items

(i) LVAC Paper No. 21/2021 – Recommendations to Enhance the Response to Fire Accidents of Class I Vessels Carrying More Than 100 Passengers

1. Mr LIU Ren (Senior Surveyor of Ships/Local Vessels Safety, MD) explained the LVAC Paper No. 21/2021 regarding the proposals of the MD in respect of amendments to the Code of Practice – Safety Standards for Class I Vessels (CoP), so as to enhance the response to fire accidents occurred in engine rooms of Class I vessels carrying more than 100 passengers and further protect passengers.
2. Mr CHEUNG Kwok-wai, Demen (Launch & Excursion Vessels' Launch & Excursion Vessels' Operations) expressed that in view of the complexity of the proposal and it would take some time for installation, it was suggested that the MD should allow a period of six months for the industry to follow up with the new requirements. Mr Jerry TANG (General Manager/Local Vessels, MD) understood that the installation would take time and hoped to make arrangements with the industry as soon as possible, besides, communication and co-ordination with the industry would continue. Mr Simon CHEN (Naval Architecture) enquired the areas covered and methods for installation of the equipment. Mr TANG said that the new amendments stipulated that at least one set of smoke detector should be installed in each engine room for the relevant vessels and applications should be made to the MD for approval on a case-by-case basis. Mr WEN Tsz-kit, Bondy (Ferry Vessels' Operations) said that most of the smoke detectors available in the market were without a certificate for products exclusively for maritime purposes. Mr TANG indicated that the current amendment was a pilot scheme. The MD suggested that shipowners to plan for installation of the smoke detectors as soon as possible and submit applications to the MD for inspection and function test. In

addition, to ensure normal function of the equipment, the shipowners should conduct regular equipment tests and maintain records.

3. Mr FAN Keung (Seafarers' Associations) asked whether smoke detectors complying with relevant standards accepted by the Fire Services Department (FSD) could fulfil MD's requirements. Mr Jerry TANG (GM/LV, MD) said that products recommended by the FSD might not be able to fully pass the tests tailored for products exclusively for maritime purposes, therefore shipowners were required to apply to the MD for the products to undergo inspections and function tests arranged by the MD. In addition, shipowners must conduct regular function tests and maintain relevant records to ensure the smoke detectors could function normally. Mr CHEUNG Kwok-wai, Demen (Launch & Excursion Vessels' Operations) asked if the proposed amendments covered electric vessels. Mr TANG indicated that follow-up actions pursuant to relevant applicable ordinances would be taken during plan approval for new or modified electric vessels.

4. The Chairman concluded the discussion and indicated that the amendments were of a pilot nature at present. He understood the arrangements took time and the industry could follow up on the new requirements as soon as practicable in six months' time. Besides, shipowners should conduct relevant tests on a monthly basis and maintain proper records. In addition, shipowners should review the circumstances with accumulated experience to examine whether there was a need to further install smoke detectors issued with a certificate for products exclusively for maritime purposes. After discussion, members agreed to endorse the LVAC Paper No. 21/2021. The MD would amend the relevant CoP in a timely manner for submission to the Director of Marine for approval to implement the recommendations.

(ii) LVAC Paper No. 22/2021 – Introduction of Fast Speed Passenger Vessel Endorsement

1. Mr LAM Kong-hei, Yale David (Senior Surveyor of Ships/Quality Management, MD) presented the LVAC Paper No. 22/2021. He reported the MD's proposal of requiring operators of fast speed passenger vessels (FSPVs) to have a FSPV endorsement on their local certificates of competency. Relevant training was required to attain the FSPV endorsement, so as to

enhance the competency and safety awareness level of the operators.

2. Mr CHEUNG Kwok-wai, Demen (Launch & Excursion Vessels' Operations) agreed in principle. He expressed that under the existing assistant coxswain arrangement of the industry, one type of assistant coxswain had already obtained a Grade 1 Certificate, while the other type only possessed a Grade 2 Certificate. Currently, vessels were usually navigated under the command of one coxswain and one assistant coxswain. He would like to know whether the assistant coxswain with a Grade 2 Certificate could apply for relevant training. In addition, he would like to enquire if the new endorsement was also applicable to vessels when they were not carrying passengers. Mr LAM Kong-hei, Yale David (Senior Surveyor of Ships/Quality Management, MD) responded that, at present, the proposed endorsement was only focused on the vessel type and there was no restriction on the grade of coxswain applying for relevant training. He went on to say that during law enforcement, coxswain arrangement required by individual vessels would be taken into account. As regards non-passenger-carrying vessels, Mr LAM said that in view of safety concerns, non-passenger-carrying vessels should also comply with the new requirements under the introduction of fast speed passenger vessel endorsement. Mr WEN Tsz-kit, Bondy (Ferry Vessels' Operations) enquired whether all fast speed passenger vessels in Hong Kong had to declare their vessel speed. Mr LAM responded that the MD would invite relevant vessel owners to make declarations based on existing records. The MD would also review relevant declarations according to professional judgment and actual situations.
3. After discussion, members agreed to endorse the LVAC Paper No. 22/2021. The MD would announce the implementation date and details in due course.

III. Any Other Business

- (i) Mr SHI Qiang (Assistant Director/Local Vessels & Examination) reminded the meeting that the Merchant Shipping (Local Vessels) (Safety and Survey) (Amendment) Regulation 2019, which aims to strengthen the requirements for provision of lifejackets on board local vessels, stipulates that with the exception of certain vessels, all local vessels are required to carry on board suitable lifejackets, the quantity of which must be not less than the total number of persons which the vessel is licensed to carry. Besides, all Class

I vessels, as well as all Class IV vessels which carry more than 12 passengers and are let for hire/reward must have on board infant lifejackets, the quantity of which must be not less than 2.5% of the number of passengers that the vessel is licensed to carry. The transitional period had ended on 22 December 2021. In addition, the new requirements of Very High Frequency (VHF) radiotelephone for certain Class IV vessels would take effect on 1 January 2022. Thanks to the good efforts from the Small Craft Workers Union and the Office of the Communications Authority, many Class IV vessel operators had completed training courses and obtained radio operating personnel certificates through examinations. The MD expressed gratitude for the co-operation and support from various parties.

- (ii) Mr CHEUNG Kwok-wai, Demen (Launch & Excursion Vessels' Operations) expressed his wish for the department to arrange navigational safety notices and related safety seminars about poor visibility conditions to ensure marine safety. Mr H. B. CHAN (General Manager/Operations, MD) said that the department would adhere to past practices and issue a Marine Department Notice before the foggy season to remind masters, coxswains and persons-in-charge of vessels about matters requiring attention when navigating in poor visibility. As regards the safety seminar scheduled in January 2022, due to the current epidemic situation, the department would instead distribute promotional leaflets and related information to the industry to draw their attention to marine safety. Mr CHEUNG suggested that the department should consider arranging online safety seminars to attract more participants in the future. The Chairman said that online safety seminars would need to be arranged by the Information Technology Management Section and he agreed that online arrangement could be considered in the third quarter of 2022 or thereafter.
- (iii) Mr CHEUNG Kwok-wai, Demen (Launch & Excursion Vessels' Operations) pointed out that the safety of vessels would be affected by rising water levels due to the impact of typhoons. Mr H. B. CHAN (General Manager/Operations, MD) said that the above situation was affected by extreme weather and the industry should pay more attention to any approaching typhoons and take responsive measures in good time. The Chairman said that as vessels were their owners' private properties, the owners should keep an eye on the weather/water level conditions and have suitable treatment methods in place to protect their own properties properly.

- (iv) Mr HO Sheung-yan (Chief Inspector (Operations) (Marine Regional Headquarters), HKPF) thanked the department for arranging the inter-departmental joint working group comprising the Police, the Customs and Excise Department and the MD to convene regular meetings to discuss the licensing and survey of pleasure vessels. The working group would follow up on the proposed introduction of a survey mechanism for pleasure vessels fitted with high-power engines.

IV. Adjournment of Meeting

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:40 p.m. The date of the next meeting would be announced in due course.

Marine Department

Committee Unit

Ref.: L/M(4) to MD-COM F02-000-01A-001(Pt.1)