

## **LOCAL VESSELS ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

### **Proposal of Expanding the Pool for Appointment as Authorized Surveyors**

#### **PURPOSE**

This paper seeks members' comments and endorsement on the proposal of expanding the pool for appointment as Authorized Surveyors (ASs).

#### **BACKGROUND**

2. The Merchant Shipping (Local Vessels) Ordinance, Cap.548 (LVO) came into force at the beginning of 2007. For the past year, the Marine Department (MD) has been closely monitoring the impact of its implementation on all areas including the delegation of survey works through the appointment of ASs. This delegation of survey works is being processed in phases starting with relatively simple vessels and moving progressively to more sophisticated survey works in the final phase in 2009. Throughout this process, we monitor the results and report the findings to the Local Vessels Advisory Committee (LVAC). The feedback from Phase 1 of the delegation is that whilst the local shipping industry supports the appointment of ASs to provide them with greater choice of survey services, however, so far only a small number of ASs are active and able to provide acceptable services at competitive prices. Clearly this concern from the industry needs to be addressed before progressing to the next phase of the delegation programme.

## STATISTICS

3. The following table shows the numbers of vessels surveyed by ASs in 2007 (excluding Class IV vessels (Pleasure Crafts)): -

	Authorized Surveyors	Numbers of Vessels Surveyed in 2007
1	AS 1	36
2	AS 2	24
3	AS 3	23
4	AS 4	8
5	AS 5	2
6	AS 6	1
7	AS 7	0
8	AS 8	0
9	AS 9	0
10	AS10	0
11	AS 11	0
	Total	94

The total number of Hong Kong licensed vessels (excluding Class IV) surveyed in 2007 is 3,650 (The figure included 1,018 vessels involved in the delegation programme). It appears that the contribution by ASs to the survey works in 2007 is less than 3%, which is far lower than our expectation of 30% as the original target set upon the LVO implementation in 2007.

## CONSULTATION

4. In response to the industry's strong request, the possibility of expanding the pool for appointment as ASs was therefore initiated in the meeting of the LVAC Subcommittee on Survey Works of Local Vessels held on 23 November 2007. A preliminary proposal was subsequently made and discussed in details in the second meeting of this LVAC Subcommittee on 27 February 2008. With the exception of the AS representatives, the majority of the members supported the proposal. The views and concerns on the proposal expressed by the AS representatives at the meeting have been carefully considered.

## **THE PROPOSAL**

5. At present, only individuals who are Registered Professional Engineers (Marine and Naval Architecture Discipline) (RPE) are eligible for consideration for the appointment as ASs. In 2007, about 100 qualified RPEs were invited to apply for appointment but only 11 RPEs responded to our invitation and were subsequently appointed as ASs. From the table in para. 3 above, it can be seen that only 3 out of these 11 ASs are more active, another 3 have only performed a small number of local vessel surveys, while the remaining 5 have not performed any survey at all.

6. In order to expand the pool for appointment as ASs, other experienced and qualified maritime professionals should also be considered. Based on the views/feedbacks from the industry in general and from members of the said LVAC Subcommittee, for the proposed expanded pool eligible for appointment as ASs are tabulated at Annex I for easy reference.

7. MD has the responsibility to ensure the safety standard of local vessels. Likewise, the provision of adequate and satisfactory survey services to serve our local shipping industry in order to fully meet the rising demands of the users is a prime concern. The above proposal to expand the AS pool aims to serve the industry better whilst without compromising the high levels of statutory safety requirements for local vessels.

## **ADVICE SOUGHT**

8. Members are invited to comment on and endorse the proposal.

Local Vessels Safety Branch  
Marine Department  
April 2008

	Existing requirements	Proposed new requirements
Qualification	Registered Professional Engineer –(Marine and Naval Architecture Discipline) under section 7 of the Engineers Registration Ordinance, Cap 409.	(a) Registered Professional Engineer – (Marine and Naval Architecture Discipline) under section 7 of the Engineers Registration Ordinance, Cap 409. Or <b>(b) Corporate (professional) membership of a maritime Institute acceptable to the Director of Marine.</b>
Experience	At least 4 years maritime engineering experience as the Director considers appropriate, including either – (i) 9 months practical experience gained in the field on plan approval, inspection or survey of vessels, testing of engine and its auxiliaries, or (ii) 1 year practical experience gained in the field on maintenance, operation, technical services or ship design with at least 3 months experience as specified in paragraph (i).	At least 4 years relevant experience as the Director considers appropriate, including either – (I) 9 months practical experience gained in the field on plan approval, inspection or survey of vessels, testing of engine and its auxiliaries, or (II) 1 year practical experience gained in the field on maintenance, operation, technical services, ship design or <b>teaching/training</b> with at least 3 months experience as specified in paragraph (I).