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NON-TECHNICAL MEASURES TO PROMOTE QUALITY SHIPPING FOR CARRIAGE OF OIL BY SEA

POLLUTION INCIDENTS INVOLVING SHIPS FALLING OUTSIDE THE AMBIT OF THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CLASSIFICATION SOCIETIES AND THE INTERNATIONAL GROUP OF P&I CLUBS

Note by the Director

Summary:	At its first meeting in May 2006 the 4th intersessional Working Group decided to undertake a study to determine the extent to which ships falling outside the ambit of classification societies that were members of IACS and P&I insurers belonging to the International Group of P&I Clubs should be the main focus of the Working Group's attention. This document draws on information in the oil spill database maintained by ITOPF and on the IOPC Funds experience in dealing with 137 oil spill incidents between 1978 and 2006. An analysis of the data shows that vessels falling outside the ambit of the P&I insurers belonging to the International Group of P&I Clubs are not more likely to be involved in pollution incidents and should not therefore be the main focus of attention of the Working Group. Since the majority of vessels insured with P&I insurers belonging to the International Group of P&I Clubs are classed with classification societies that are members of IACS it can be inferred that vessels falling outside the ambit of IACS are not more likely to be involved in pollution incidents and should not therefore be the main focus of attention of the Working Group.
Action to be taken:	Take note of the information.

1 Introduction

1.1 At the first meeting of the 4th intersessional Working Group in May 2006 one delegation stated that it would be helpful to know whether or not the 5% of tanker tonnage not insured with one of the P&I Clubs belonging to the International Group of P&I Clubs or the 5% of tanker tonnage that was not classed with a classification society that was a member of the International Association of Classification Societies (IACS) were the ships most involved in pollution incidents. That delegation had proposed that the Secretariat should be invited to carry out a study to determine the extent to which ships falling outside the ambit of these organisations needed to be the focus of the Working Group's attention. Other delegations supported the idea of a study.

1.2 The Acting Director stated that of the 135 incidents that the IOPC Funds had handled by that time only a handful of the ships involved had not been insured by one of the International Group clubs and that these had usually been very small vessels, carrying less than 2 000 tonnes of oil as cargo, some of which had no insurance cover at all. He indicated that the Secretariat could possibly conduct a wider study on the basis of the oil spill database maintained by the International Tanker Owners Pollution Federation Limited (ITOPF). He pointed out, however, that ITOPF's main source of information on pollution incidents and their cause was the International Group of P&I Clubs, although they also used other sources.

1.3 The Working Group decided to undertake a study to determine the extent to which ships falling outside the ambit of the classification societies belonging to IACS and P&I insurers belonging to the International Group of P&I Clubs should be the main focus of the Working Group's attention.

2 Study findings

ITOPF data

2.1 The ITOPF database does not include information on which classification society a vessel was classed with at the time of an oil spill incident, but does include the identity of the P&I insurer where this is known. For the purpose of the study ITOPF did not include incidents involving vessels with a gross tonnage exceeding 29 548, since there were no spills from such vessels that fell outside the International Group of P&I Clubs.

2.2 A total of 1 313 incidents over a 35-year period were identified involving spills of persistent oil from tankers entered in clubs belonging to the International Group of P&I Clubs. In contrast there were only 15 such incidents involving vessels not entered in clubs belonging to the International Group of P&I Clubs or reinsured through the International Group's pooling agreement.

IOPC Fund data

2.3 The IOPC Funds have been involved in a total of 137 incidents over a 28-year period since 1978 of which a total of 14 involved vessels, all under 2 000 DWT, were not insured by clubs of the International Group of P&I Clubs. Eight of these vessels had no insurance cover at all and the remaining six were insured with fixed premium insurers.

3 Conclusions

3.1 From the information obtained from ITOPF's database 1 313 spills out of a total of 1 328 (98.9%) involved vessels that were entered with a P&I insurer belonging to the International Group of P&I Clubs.

3.2 It is possible that ITOPF's database does not capture a representative sample of spill incidents involving vessels falling outside the ambit of the International Group of P&I Clubs, since much of the data has historically been provided from the P&I Clubs, most of which are in the International Group.

3.3 However, when the ITOPF data is combined with the IOPC Funds' experience of 123 spills out of a total of 137 (89.8%) involving vessels that were entered with a P&I insurer belonging to the International Group of P&I Clubs, it supports the claim that the International Group of P&I Clubs covers approximately 90% of tankers under 29 548 gross tonnage.

3.4 The combined data of ITOPF and the Funds also supports the conclusion that vessels falling outside the ambit of the International Group of P&I Clubs are not more likely to be involved in pollution incidents than vessels within the ambit of the International Group of P&I Clubs and should not therefore be the primary focus of the Working Group's attention as regards the issue of quality shipping.

3.5 Whilst the ITOPF and IOPC Funds data does not include information on vessels' classification societies, it is understood that very few vessels entered with P&I insurers belonging to the International Group of P&I Clubs are classed by non-IACS members (document 92FUND/A.11/28, paragraph 7.3.8). It can therefore be inferred that vessels falling outside the ambit of IACS are not more likely to be involved in pollution incidents than vessels within the ambit of IACS and should not therefore be the primary focus of the Working Group's attention.

4 Action to be taken by the Working Group

The Working Group is invited to take note of the information contained in this document.