

3rd Technical Committee Meeting Summary

The 3rd Technical Committee meeting convened at 3:00 pm, with the Chairman opening by welcoming attendees and underscoring the importance of competition law compliance within the SSA framework.

The first presentation, led by BW's Rajesh Divakaran, focused on the crew challenges associated with alternative fuels. It was noted that seafarers must adopt safety practices akin to those in the tanker and gas fleets, particularly in emergency preparedness, first aid, fire detection, and firefighting. A strong emphasis was placed on gas testing and atmosphere monitoring to mitigate risks effectively.

Rajesh also discussed the need for digital and automation skills aligned with standards like the STCW and IGF Code. He raised concerns about the slow pace of regulatory development, which hinders investments in seafarer training. The discussion highlighted the necessity for upgrading training facilities with modern equipment, such as simulators, to meet the demands of alternative fuels.

Additionally, there was a conversation on seafarer attrition and recruitment. It was proposed that attracting a new generation of seafarers should involve initiatives like shorter contract durations, better working conditions, and enhanced inclusivity.

Key questions from the members addressed:

- Retention of experienced seafarers during the transition to alternative fuels
- Consideration of maritime institutes for alternative fuel training
- Ensuring core competencies alongside new fuel training
- Incorporating training into technical specifications for new technologies
- Starting training initiatives at earlier stages, potentially in schools

The committee agreed on actionable steps, including retaining experienced seafarers through knowledge transfer, exploring maritime training institutes, and integrating training requirements into supplier selection. There was also consensus on launching earlier training initiatives to build a strong foundation for future seafarers.

Captain Kamal Hossain from Hong Lam Marine provided an update on the preparation for a methanol bunkering operation. This involved collaboration with key stakeholders and meticulous planning through HAZOP assessments, drills, and exercises to ensure operational safety.

Methanol, while widely used, poses serious health risks if ingested. The discussion emphasized recognizing symptoms like vision loss and the use of antidotes such as Fomepizole and Ethanol in case of accidental exposure. Methanol's low vapor pressure and environmental effects were explored, noting its minimal contribution to CO₂ emissions but potential for vapor persistence. Mitigation strategies, such as rainfall removal of methanol vapors, were discussed.

The operational details were reviewed, including safety protocols involving mooring compatibility, use of personal protective equipment (PPE), and critical technical procedures

like line clearing and manifold valve operations. Additionally, the significance of thermal cameras, methanol detectors, and other safety tools was underscored to detect risks early.

Managing vapour during the bunkering process was a key focus. The actual rate of vapour growth exceeded expectations, necessitating adaptive measures like using backup tanks. The importance of feedback mechanisms and dialogue with authorities to address vapour challenges was highlighted.

Key action items included further exploration of vapour management solutions, ongoing engagement with relevant authorities, and refinement of vapour containment protocols during operations.

The next agenda items covered updates on a variety of topics, including alternative anchorages, the LCA report, the COMPASS system, and maritime security in the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden. Discussions emphasized the need for improvements in Singapore's COMPASS system, noting its complexity and impact on workforce retention. Suggestions were made to engage the MPA to address operational discrepancies and maintain Singapore's prominence as a maritime hub.

With no further matters, the Chairman thanked participants and invited further input for future meetings. The session concluded at 4:50 pm.

Singapore, 7 Nov 2023

Singapore Shipping Association

The Association was first formed as Singapore National Shipping Association (SNSA) on 29 January 1985 to represent its Members, who are basically shipowners and operators, shipmanagers, ship agents and shipbrokers. The Association will take the view of the shipping industry as a whole. It will play its due role to promote the interests of shipping in Singapore, ASEAN, Asia and the world. The Association will cooperate with governmental and non-governmental organisations to promote freedom of the sea, safety at sea and to protect the marine environment.