

FACILITATION COMMITTEE
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**REPORT OF THE FACILITATION COMMITTEE
ON ITS FORTY-EIGHTH SESSION**

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1 INTRODUCTION – ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

1.1 The forty-eighth session of the Facilitation Committee was held from 8 to 12 April 2024, chaired by Mr. Watchara Chiemanukulkit (Thailand). The Vice-Chair of the Committee, Mr. Mohamed AlKaabi (United Arab Emirates), was also present.

1.2 The session was attended by Member States and Associate Members, representatives from specialized agencies, observers from intergovernmental organizations with agreements of cooperation, and observers from non-governmental organizations in consultative status, as listed in document FAL 48/INF.1.

Opening address of the Secretary-General

1.3 The Secretary-General welcomed participants and delivered his opening address, the full text of which can be downloaded from the IMO website at the following link: <https://www.imo.org/en/MediaCentre/SecretaryGeneral/Pages/Secretary-GeneralsSpeechesToMeetings.aspx>.

Chair's remarks

1.4 In responding, the Chair thanked the Secretary-General for his opening address and acknowledged that his advice and requests would be given every consideration in the deliberations of the Committee.

Expressions of condolences

1.5 The Committee noted with great sadness the loss of six workers caused by the collision of the Singapore-registered vessel, **Dali**, in Baltimore, Maryland, United States of America, on 26 March 2024 which had resulted in the collapse of the Francis Scott Key Bridge, and noted the condolences and sincere sympathy expressed by the Secretary-General. The Committee also noted with great sadness the loss of more than 90 people who died after the sinking of an overloaded fishing boat that was not licensed to transport people off the coast of Mozambique.

Use of hybrid meeting capabilities

1.6 The Committee noted that the plenary sessions would be conducted in hybrid mode, i.e. remote participation enabled, following the decision of C 129 to continue the trial period of the hybrid capabilities (C 129/D, paragraphs 18.3 and 18.4).

1.7 In this regard, the Committee noted that C 129 had:

- .1 agreed to extend the trial period to enable the assessment of the current planned enhancements introduced by the Secretariat;
- .2 deferred a final decision on the matter to C 132, scheduled for mid-2024; and
- .3 agreed not to request any further enhancements until the current planned enhancements had been implemented and assessed at C 132.

Adoption of the agenda

1.8 The Committee adopted the provisional agenda (FAL 48/1) and agreed to be guided in its work, in general, by the annotations contained in document FAL 48/1/1 and by the provisional timetable (FAL 48/1/1, annex, as revised).

Credentials

1.9 The Committee noted that the credentials of 93 delegations attending the session were in due and proper form.

Attacks on merchant ships in the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden

1.10 A large number of delegations expressed concern over the safety and welfare of seafarers, freedom of navigation, threats to the marine environment and stability of the global supply chain resulting from the attacks by Houthi rebels on commercial ships in the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden, in particular in the attacks on:

- .1 the Belize-flagged general cargo ship **Rubymar**, which had sustained severe damage following a missile attack by Houthi rebels on 18 February 2024 during its transit through the Bab-el-Mandeb Strait, had almost fully sunk and posed a sub-surface impact risk to other ships transiting or operating in the area, as the bow of the ship was still above the sea surface while the stern rested on the seabed;
- .2 the Barbados registered dry bulk carrier **True Confidence**, where three seafarers – two from the Philippines and one from Vietnam – had been killed in an assault involving anti-ship missiles launched by Houthi rebels on 6 March 2024, and other crew members had been injured, some of them seriously; and
- .3 the Bahamas registered car-carrier **Galaxy Leader**, with its 25 crew members (17 from the Philippines, and other crew members from Bulgaria (including the captain and first mate), Ukraine, Mexico, and Romania) had been held hostage since the ship's hijacking by Houthi rebels on 19 November 2023.

1.11 Delegations that took the floor offered their condolences to the families of the lost seafarers, extended their support to those injured and impacted by the incident, and conveyed their sympathy to the delegations directly affected, in particular those of the Philippines and Viet Nam. These delegations strongly condemned the heinous acts against commercial ships which threatened the lives and livelihoods of seafarers, maritime security and the marine environment, and called for their immediate cessation.

1.12 Many delegations highlighted the adoption by the United Nations Security Council of resolution 2722 (2024), underscoring the importance of the exercise of navigational rights and freedom of vessels of all States in the Red Sea in accordance with international law, condemning the attacks on commercial ships, and demanding their cessation and calling for early release of the **Galaxy Leader** and its crew, and of United Nations Security Council resolution 2216 (2015), on the arms embargo on the Houthis.

1.13 In the context of negative consequences to the environment, many delegations also noted that, owing to the security situation in the Red Sea, many ships were being forced to navigate significantly longer routes in order to guarantee the safety of seafarers and to maintain the global distribution of essential goods, thereby increasing fuel consumption and harmful emissions.

1.14 In addition to the attacks originating from the territory of Yemen, a number of delegations condemned the hijacking of the Bangladesh-flagged **Abdullah**, while en route from Mozambique to the United Arab Emirates, by Somali pirates on 11 March 2024, with all 23 crew members being taken hostage, and expressed grave concern for the crew and called for their immediate and unconditional release.

1.15 Having condemned the attacks on commercial ships, which constituted unacceptable violations of international law and the IMO Convention, many delegations commended the actions being taken to protect freedom of navigation and the safety of seafarers through an increased number of naval patrols and other assistance to merchant ships. In this connection, several delegations mentioned the EUNAVFOR ASPIDES defensive operation to restore maritime security in the region.

1.16 The delegation of the Philippines informed that, following Houthi attacks on ships and the tragic death of two Philippine seafarers, the Philippine authorities and manning agencies were going to further limit the deployment of Philippine seafarers to ships sailing through known global hotspots. Philippine seafarers had the option to refuse to sail in warlike and high-risk areas, with provision for repatriation and compensation at company cost.

1.17 In commending the Secretary-General's initiatives in relation to the ongoing threats to commercial shipping in the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden, in particular his communication with all relevant parties and his emphasis on the well-being of seafarers, the Committee invited the Secretary-General to continue his efforts in this regard.

1.18 Statements on the matter were made by the delegations of Australia, Bahamas, Belgium (on behalf of the Member States of the European Union), Canada, Finland, France, Germany, Japan, Malta, Panama, the Philippines, Poland, Singapore, Slovenia, Ukraine, the United Kingdom and the United States, the full texts of which are set out in annex 9. Statements were also made by the delegations of Bangladesh, Denmark, Egypt, Ghana, Greece, Ireland, Islamic Republic of Iran, Italy, Kenya, Latvia, Kingdom of the Netherlands, Portugal, the Republic of Korea, Romania, Spain, Sweden and by the observer from EC.

2 DECISIONS OF OTHER IMO BODIES

2.1 The Committee noted the information provided in documents FAL 48/2 and FAL 48/2/1 (Secretariat), in relation to the outcome of A 33, C 129, C 130, MEPC 80, MSC 107, LEG 110, TC 73, NCSR 10 and III 9, on matters of relevance to its work, and decided to consider the various issues which warranted action by the Committee under the relevant agenda items.

Maritime Service 8 – Vessel shore reporting

2.2 The Committee recalled that FAL 46 and FAL 47 had reviewed the descriptions of Maritime Services from the FAL perspective, and FAL 47 had invited the Maritime Safety Committee to approve a revised version of MSC.1/Circ.1610, on *Initial descriptions of Maritime Services in the context of e-navigation*.

2.3 The Committee noted that NCSR 10, having agreed to the draft MSC.1/Circ.1610/Rev.1 on descriptions of Maritime Services in the context of e-navigation, had invited the FAL Committee to consider and endorse the proposed modifications to the description of Maritime Service 8 (Vessel shore reporting) and invited further the Maritime Safety Committee to approve the draft revision of MSC.1/Circ.1610, taking into account the outcome of the deliberations of the FAL Committee.

Establishment of the Working Group on Electronic Business

2.4 Having considered the above-mentioned matter, the Committee established the Working Group on Electronic Business and instructed it to review the proposed modifications to the description of Maritime Service 8 (Vessel shore reporting) proposed in document NCSR 10/22/Add.1 annex 3.

Consideration of the report of the Working Group

2.5 Having considered the report of the Working Group (FAL 48/WP.7), the Committee approved the description of Maritime Service 8 (Vessel Shore Reporting), as set out in annex 1, and invited MSC 108 to approve a revised version of MSC.1/Circ.1610 on *Initial descriptions of Maritime Services in the context of e-navigation*.

Guidelines on the use of electronic certificates

2.6 The Committee recalled that FAL 40 had approved the revised *Guidelines on electronic certificates* (FAL.5/Circ.39/Rev.2), and that FAL 47, having noted that HTW 9 had submitted the draft guidelines on the use of electronic certificates of seafarers to MSC 107 for approval, and following the invitation of MSC 106 to consider possible discrepancies between the draft guidelines on the use of electronic certificates of seafarers and the *Guidelines on electronic certificates*, agreed that:

- .1 there were no discrepancies in general in the common sections and that different wording was used at times;
- .2 the terminology of the draft guidelines on the use of electronic certificates of seafarers was more up to date since the FAL guidelines had been developed much earlier;
- .3 the draft guidelines on the use of electronic certificates of seafarers had additional sections on security assurance, data form, physical location and privacy, owing to the nature of seafarers' certificates and the requirements of the STCW Convention; and
- .4 the requirement for shipowners, operators and crew on ships to control all electronic certificates through the safety management system (ISM Code) had not been included in the draft guidelines on the use of electronic certificates of seafarers, despite the fact that the company was also responsible for the correct manning of its ships.

2.7 The Committee also recalled that FAL 47 had agreed that the Organization would benefit from having one single set of guidelines for all certificates which would be easier to maintain and update, and further agreed to propose to the Maritime Safety Committee the development of a joint MSC-FAL circular on guidelines for the use of electronic certificates, and requested the Secretariat to prepare the draft text of a relevant joint circular, to be considered at FAL 48 and by the Maritime Safety Committee at a future session, subject to the concurrence of the Maritime Safety Committee.

2.8 The Committee noted that MSC 107 had approved the *Guidelines on the use of electronic certificates of seafarers* (MSC.1/Circ.1665), and:

- .1 agreed that any guidelines to be developed should address electronic certificates and documents comprehensively; and
- .2 invited MEPC and LEG to consider what certificates and documents provided in the instruments under their respective purviews could be addressed in future joint guidelines and advise MSC and the FAL Committee accordingly.

2.9 The Committee noted that MEPC 81 had agreed that:

- .1 the guidance to be developed should be issued as a joint FAL-LEG-MEPC-MSC circular; and
- .2 the joint circular should only address certificates at this stage, namely those listed in the *List of certificates and documents required to be carried on board ships, 2022* (FAL.2/Circ.133-MEPC.1/Circ.902-MS.C.1/Circ.1646-LEG.2/Circ.4), and in this connection, the Committee recognized that further work would be required if documents such as electronic record books and electronic bunker delivery notes were to be included in the scope of this joint guidance at a later stage.

2.10 Having noted that the Secretariat, based on the decision of MSC 107, had postponed the submission of the draft text of the joint circular to FAL 49 to include the decisions of MEPC 81 and LEG 111 on this regard, the Committee agreed to postpone the discussion to FAL 49.

Instructions to the Working Group on Electronic Business

2.11 Subsequently, the Committee requested the Working Group on Electronic Business to prepare a justification for a new output to develop joint FAL-LEG-MEPC-MSC guidelines on electronic certificates.

Consideration of the report of the Working Group

2.12 Having considered the relevant part of the Working Group's report (FAL 48/WP.7), the Committee approved the new output "Development of joint FAL-LEG-MEPC-MSC guidelines on electronic certificates" in the 2024-2025 biennial agenda of the FAL Committee and the provisional agenda for FAL 49, with a target completion year of 2026, and invited the LEG, MSC and MEPC Committees to become associated organs.

2.13 The Committee noted that the IMO Compendium included a data set on ship and company certificates but that crew certificates had not been included. The Committee invited Member States and interested organizations to submit a proposal to EGDH.

Proposal of new output "Digitization of all certifications required under all IMO conventions as well as all commercial maritime documents in joint collaboration with the relevant international organizations and industry"

2.14 The Committee noted that C 129, having considered document C 129/4(a)/3 (India), proposing a new output on "Digitization of all certifications required under all IMO conventions, as well as all commercial maritime documents in joint collaboration with the relevant international organizations and industry", had invited the committees, in particular MSC, MEPC, LEG and FAL, to consider the proposal.

2.15 Having recalled that the ongoing discussion on the *Guidelines on the use of electronic certificates* already covered part of the proposal in document C 129/4(a)/3 and recalling that China et al. had submitted a request for a new output to this session in document FAL 48/17 to develop an overarching IMO Strategy on digitalization to ensure standardization and harmonization, the Committee noted the proposal of document C 129/4(a)/3, but did not consider it in detail to avoid duplication of work of the Organization on digitalization.

Electronic Ballast Water Record Books

2.16 The Committee noted that MEPC 80 had adopted resolution MEPC.372(80) on *Guidelines for the use of electronic record books under the BWM Convention*.

Update on the work of relevant UN bodies on organized crime in the maritime sector

2.17 The Committee noted the information provided in document FAL 48/2/2 (Secretariat) containing an update on the actions taken by the Organization and other relevant bodies and agencies to mitigate organized crime in the maritime sector.

Greater public access to information

2.18 The Committee recalled the decisions of FAL 43 concerning measures to allow greater public access to information at IMO (FAL 43/20, paragraph 2.3).

2.19 In this regard, the Committee also recalled the decision of FAL 47 that all Secretariat documents for that session would be made publicly available prior to the meeting, and agreed to revisit the matter when considering the items to be included in the agenda for FAL 49 (see paragraph 17.25).

Ongoing military conflict between the Russian Federation and Ukraine and its effects on international shipping and seafarers

2.20 The Committee recalled the Assembly resolution on *Impact of the Russian armed invasion of Ukraine on international shipping* (resolution A.1183(33)), adopted by A 33.

2.21 The delegation of Ukraine made a statement describing the negative consequences on the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov after more than two years of continuous military conflict and calling on the international community to unequivocally condemn the actions of the Russian Federation and demand the immediate cessation of hostilities. Specific points made by the delegation of Ukraine included, inter alia:

- .1 the Russian Federation's full-scaled armed invasion of Ukraine had created a wide range of fundamental challenges to the rules-based international order in clear violation of international maritime law, and had created additional ferocious threats to the freedom and safety of navigation worldwide;
- .2 following the disruption of the Grain initiative by Russia in mid-2023, Ukraine had successfully established a special maritime corridor in its sovereign waters in the Black Sea for commercial vessels heading to and from Ukrainian ports. Over the seven months of its 24/7 functioning, the corridor had made it possible to export more than 36 million tons of cargo. Ukraine had increased the turnover of goods through its seaports to 75% of the pre-war level;
- .3 the Russian Federation had launched 1,000 missiles, about 2,800 Shahed drones and almost 7,000 guided bombs since the beginning of 2024 alone, and had applied the tactics of distant mining of sea routes leading to the Danube River and ports of Greater Odesa using guided aviation bombs;
- .4 the Russian Federation continued to promulgate navigation warnings about the closures of the marine areas within Ukraine's sovereign waters in the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov for shipping under different pretext with a view to creating obstacles for the free merchant shipping; and
- .5 the Russian Federation had still failed to disassemble the illegally-built Kerch bridge that, since the time it was constructed, limited the ability of certain types of merchant vessels to reach Ukrainian ports in the Sea of Azov.

The delegation of Ukraine proposed to replace the heading "Ongoing military conflict between the Russian Federation and Ukraine and its effects on international shipping and seafarers" with "Impact of the Russian Federation armed invasion of Ukraine", in accordance with documents adopted under the auspices of the UN system, including IMO.

2.22 As requested, the full text of the statement by the delegation of Ukraine is set out in annex 9.

2.23 In supporting the intervention made by the delegation of Ukraine, many delegations expressed the following views:

- .1 the Russian Federation's unprovoked and illegal war of aggression against Ukraine should be condemned in the strongest possible terms;
- .2 the Russian Federation must cease all military operations in Ukraine and immediately withdraw its military from Ukrainian territory that threatens the safety and welfare of seafarers, the security of international shipping, and the marine environment;
- .3 the Russian Federation's armed aggression against Ukraine was a violation of the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Ukraine, extending to its territorial waters. It was inconsistent with the principles of the UN Charter as well as the purposes of the Organization as set forth in Article 1 of the IMO Convention;

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- .4 Ukraine's exports through the Black Sea ports were crucial to global food security;
 - .5 the commitment to Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity, and solidarity with Ukraine and the Ukrainian people, whose lives had been affected by Russia's war of aggression, would continue for as long as it took for Ukraine to regain full sovereignty; and
 - .6 Assembly resolution A.1183(33), concerning the impact of the Russian armed invasion of Ukraine on international shipping, endorsed similar decisions previously taken by this Committee.

2.24 The full text of the statements made by the delegation of Australia, Belgium, Canada, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Spain, the United Kingdom and the United States is set out in annex 9. The intervention by Belgium speaking on behalf of the EU was also supported by Cyprus, Denmark, Finland, Greece, Latvia, Kingdom of the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Sweden and EC.

2.25 In response to these statements, the delegation of the Russian Federation dismissed the standard accusations as baseless and misleading to the Member States of IMO and requested that the following views be reflected in the report:

- .1 the issues raised by Ukraine and the Western countries were artificial and political in nature and lay outside of the mandate of the Committee or the Organization as a whole;
- .2 being dragged in this political debate, the Russian delegation highlighted the situation with Ukraine's open and deliberate involvement in terrorist activities on the territory of the Russian Federation. The reference was made available to public statements by Ukraine's higher officials confirming such involvement on many occasions, the most outrageous of them being the despicable terrorist attack on the Crocus City Hall in Krasnogorsk, where more than 550 people had been killed or injured;
- .3 the Russian delegation indicated that more evidence was emerging in the course of ongoing investigations as to a direct link between this terrorist attack and the Kiev regime, with the curators, organizers and accomplices being located in Kiev; and
- .4 specifically the Russian side stressed that any attacks on the Kerch bridge, which Ukraine dared to characterize as a legitimate military target, were the acts of terrorism and should be condemned.

2.26 The full text of the statement made by the delegation of the Russian Federation is set out in annex 9.

2.27 In response to the statement made by the delegation of the Russian Federation, the delegation of Ukraine made an additional statement, inter alia:

- .1 dispelling the allegations of the Russian delegation about the "Ukrainian trace" in the terrorist attack on Crocus City Hall as unfounded and deliberately false;

- .2 reiterating that, by accusing Ukraine of terrorism, the Russian delegation was trying to hide its own terrorist nature and distract the world from the mass atrocities it committed against the civilian population of Ukraine; and
 - .3 drawing the attention that the organization "Islamic State-Khorasan" had claimed responsibility for the terrorist attack in Moscow on 22 March.
- 2.28 The full text of the statement made by the delegation of Ukraine is set out in annex 9.
- 2.29 Following consideration, the Committee:
- .1 condemned in the strongest possible terms the Russian Federation's armed aggression against Ukraine that had started in 2014 and took the form of a full-scale invasion on 24 February 2022, which was a violation of the territorial integrity and the sovereignty of a UN Member State, extending to its territorial waters, and inconsistent with the principles and purposes of IMO, as well as of the 1965 Convention on Facilitation of International Maritime Traffic;
 - .2 expressed grave concern over the impact of the Russian Federation's armed invasion of Ukraine on the freedom of international navigation in the northern part of the Black Sea, the Sea of Azov and the Kerch Strait, and on the safety and well-being of seafarers and commercial vessels;
 - .3 expressed concern that the aforementioned armed invasion by the Russian Federation and its attacks against commercial vessels compromised the implementation of the FAL Convention in the maritime areas of the Black Sea, the Sea of Azov and the Kerch Strait;
 - .4 demanded that the Russian Federation immediately cease the use of force against Ukraine, withdraw all of its troops from Ukraine and abide by its obligations under relevant international treaties and conventions, to ensure navigation rights and freedom of the vessels in the northern part of the Black Sea, the Sea of Azov and the Kerch Strait, in accordance with international law;
 - .5 commended the efforts of Ukraine in restoring free navigation for commercial vessels heading to and from Ukrainian ports via the special maritime corridor, established in its sovereign waters in the Black Sea;
 - .6 requested the Secretary-General to provide updates on developments and the implementation of resolution A.1183 (33); and
 - .7 agreed to keep this matter under review and invited Member States concerned to provide relevant reports to the Committee.
- 2.30 The Committee also agreed to keep the heading "Ongoing military conflict between the Russian Federation and Ukraine and its effects on international shipping and seafarers", which would be reported to the Council for its consideration.

Condemnation of terrorist attacks

2.31 The delegation of the Russian Federation, having reminded the Committee of the terrorist attack at Crocus City Hall in Krasnogorsk in the evening of 22 March 2024, in which more than 550 people had been killed or injured:

- .1 recalled that the UN Security Council had condemned this terrorist attack, and that the UN had called on all States to actively cooperate with the Russian Federation to bring to justice all those involved in this terrible tragedy; and
- .2 invited the Committee to condemn any actions and manifestations of terrorism in any corner of the world (including terrorist acts such as those committed on Crocus City Hall and the ones directed against the Kerch Bridge), as well as to condemn all those involved in perpetrating, organizing and financing acts of terrorism.

2.32 In this regard, the Committee decided to align itself with the United Nations Security Council press statement released on 22 March 2024 concerning the terrorist attack on Crocus City Hall¹.

3 CONSIDERATION AND ADOPTION OF PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE CONVENTION

3.1 The Committee, having recalled that FAL 47 had invited comments on the proposed amendment to the annex to the Convention on Facilitation of International Maritime Traffic, 1965 (the FAL Convention) developed by the Working Group on FAL MASS, as set out in annex 7 of document FAL 47/22/Add.1, for consideration at FAL 48, agreed to defer the consideration of the amendments to the FAL Convention to accommodate maritime autonomous surface ships (MASS) to a next session, in accordance with the revised road map for MASS agreed by the Committee (see paragraph 8.12 and annex 4).

3.2 The Committee noted that no amendments to the annex to the FAL Convention had been proposed for consideration or formal adoption at this session.

4 REVIEW AND UPDATE OF THE EXPLANATORY MANUAL TO THE FAL CONVENTION

4.1 The Committee recalled that FAL 43 had approved a new version of the Explanatory Manual to the FAL Convention by FAL.3/Circ.215, including the amendments adopted by resolution FAL.12(40) to the annex to the FAL Convention.

4.2 The Committee also recalled that FAL 46 had adopted, by resolution FAL.14(46), amendments to the annex to the FAL Convention in accordance with the provisions of article VII(2)(a) of the FAL Convention.

4.3 The Committee further recalled that FAL 47 had considered the outcome of the Working Group on Facilitation Instruments, endorsed the report of the Working Group (FAL 47/WP.5) as the basis for further work, and established the Correspondence Group on the Review of the Explanatory Manual to the FAL Convention, under the coordination of France.

¹ <https://press.un.org/en/2024/sc15640.doc.htm>

Consideration of the report of the Correspondence Group

4.4 The Committee noted with appreciation the report of the aforementioned Correspondence Group (FAL 48/4), acknowledging the work done on reviewing the Explanatory Manual, in particular the work carried out by its coordinator, Mr. Fabien Joret (France).

4.5 In relation to the error detected by the Group in the footnote to Standard 1.6*bis*, the Secretariat informed the Committee that it had already issued a corrigendum to the report of FAL 46 (document FAL 46/24/Add.1/Corr.1) to resolve the error, and the correct footnote was also included in the IMO publication of the FAL Convention.

4.6 The Committee agreed on the proposal of the Correspondence Group to include the declarations "Delivery bill for mail consignment as described in the Acts of the Universal Postal Union, the Universal Postal Convention and its Regulations currently in force" and the "Ship Sanitation Control Exemption Certificate or Ship Sanitation Control Certificate or extension as set forth by the International Health Regulations" in the IMO Compendium. Consequently, the Committee instructed the Working Group on Electronic Business to include them in the priority list of data sets and invited UPU, WHO and Member States and interested organizations to prepare the related submissions to EGDH with the data sets (see paragraph 6.17).

Establishment of the Working Group on Facilitation Instruments

4.7 Having considered the above-mentioned matters, the Committee established the Working Group on Facilitation Instruments and instructed it, taking into account resolution FAL.14(46), FAL.3/Circ.215 and document FAL 48/4, and the comments and decisions made in plenary, to finalize the Explanatory Manual to the FAL Convention.

Consideration of the report of the Working Group

4.8 Having considered the report of the Working Group (FAL 48/WP.6), the Committee approved it in general and approved FAL.3/Circ.220 on *Explanatory Manual to the FAL Convention*.

4.9 The Committee noted the inconsistency between Recommended Practice 4.3.2.6 and Standard 4.7.1. Both provisions had a similar purpose but provided two different measures, generating some confusion and impacting the good understanding of the FAL Convention as well as in the reporting process. The Committee agreed that this inconsistency in the reporting process to IMO on stowaway incidents should be addressed in a future revision of the annex to the FAL Convention.

4.10 Subsequently, the Committee agreed to include the existing output "Review and Update of the Explanatory Manual to the FAL Convention" on the post-biennial agenda of the Committee, in order to review this instrument in future upon the completion of new amendments to the annex to the FAL Convention.

5 APPLICATION OF SINGLE WINDOW CONCEPT

5.1 The Committee recalled that the application of the single window concept to ship reporting in the context of the FAL Convention had been mandatory since January 2024, according to Standard 1.3*quin*.

5.2 The Committee also recalled that FAL 47 had adopted resolution FAL.16(47) on *Recommended actions to accelerate the implementation of a maritime single window*, to assist Contracting Governments to the FAL Convention in fulfilling their obligations to implement mandatory single window systems by 1 January 2024, and approved a revised version of the *Guidelines for setting up a maritime single window* (MSW Guidelines) (FAL.5/Circ.42/Rev.3).

5.3 Having recalled that a GISIS module was available to collect updated information on MSW and other related single windows implemented by Member States, the Committee noted that only 24 countries had completed the information in the module and encouraged Member States to complete the information in the GISIS module.

E-learning course on implementation of the maritime single window

5.4 The Committee noted the launch in September 2023 of the new free-to-access e-learning course on "Implementation of the maritime single window" on IMO's e-learning platform.²

Implementation of the MSW system under the SWIFT project in Angola

5.5 The Committee considered document FAL 48/5/1 (Angola and Singapore) with information on the implementation of the MSW system under the SWiFT Project in the Port of Lobito, Angola. This project had been launched in 2021 by Singapore together with IMO, seeking to assist IMO Member States with implementing MSW systems in their ports. The pilot phase of SWiFT was scoped to support the establishment of a digitalized system for electronic exchange of information for clearance of ships entering or leaving a medium-sized port. The pilot phase was supported by in-kind contributions under the Singapore-IMO Third Country Training Programme (TCTP) and the IMO Integrated Technical Cooperation Programme (ITCP).

5.6 The Committee, having considered the proposals of EGDH 9 (EGDH 9/14, paragraphs 47 to 52), noted the outcome of the SWiFT project and the experience of using the IMO Compendium for the development of a generic MSW, and invited Member States to evaluate and consider the adoption of the SWiFT platform, when appropriate, to fulfil the reporting requirements of the FAL Convention.

5.7 The Committee expressed deep appreciation to Singapore for assisting fellow IMO Member States with implementing MSW systems in their ports.

Summary report of survey on digitalization

5.8 The Committee considered document FAL 48/5/3 (BIMCO et al.) with information about the outcome of an industry survey on the current state of digitalization within ports³ and the six recommendations outlined in the document, based on the outcome of the survey.

5.9 The Committee noted the following highlights of the outcome of the survey, with 488 valid responses received, coming from shipmasters and agents worldwide:

- .1 40% of respondents were unaware of the IMO resolution mandating national port authorities to establish a single window reporting system for data exchange in ports worldwide;

² Details on the e-Learning course can be found in Circular Letter No.4773, of 11 September 2023.

³ www.bimco.org/digitalsurvey24

- .2 in 64% of the port calls made by the respondents, the port authorities were still requiring either paper submissions or a mix of paper and digital submissions; and
- .3 the survey also revealed that the process of collecting and submitting port call documentation was laborious and time-consuming. On average, respondents spent more than three hours (191 minutes) preparing and submitting the necessary documents required at every single port call.

5.10 During the consideration of the recommendations of document FAL 48/5/3, the Committee noted the following views:

- .1 the survey highlighted the diversity of interfaces and national regulations regarding document formats at port calls that create significant problems for the sector, often making smooth data exchange between different stakeholders difficult or even impossible;
- .2 many ships lack adequate IT infrastructure to facilitate efficient data exchange with ports and optimal information management; and
- .3 some delegations expressed concerns on the proposal of global digital platform to streamline the process of port call.

5.11 The Committee supported the outcome of the survey in document FAL 48/5/3 and agreed to refer document FAL 48/5/3 to the Working Group on Electronic Business with a view to identifying possible actions to be taken by the Committee.

Application programming interfaces (APIs)

5.12 The Committee considered document FAL 48/5 (ISO) proposing definitions and explanatory text to clarify certain concepts related to application programming interfaces (APIs) in the IMO Compendium and in the *Guidelines on authentication, integrity and confidentiality of information exchanges via maritime single windows and related services* (FAL.5/Circ.46).

5.13 During consideration of the proposals, the Committee noted the following views:

- .1 the definitions and explanatory text on APIs had a positive impact on the efficiency of maritime information exchanges; and
- .2 the integration of APIs offered more flexible and scalable communication between systems, simplifies integration between different applications and systems, enabled real-time data transmission, and enhanced the security of information exchanges.

5.14 The Committee supported, in general, document FAL 48/5 and agreed to refer it to the Working Group on Electronic Business for detailed consideration and, if deemed appropriate, prepare a revised version of the *Guidelines on authentication, integrity and confidentiality of information exchanges via maritime single windows and related services* (FAL.5/Circ.46).

Guidelines on Cooperation between Customs and Port Authorities

5.15 The Committee considered document FAL 48/5/2 (IAPH and WCO) informing the Committee about the publication of the WCO-IAPH Guidelines on Cooperation between Customs and Port Authorities⁴ developed in the framework of the collaboration established between IAPH and WCO.

5.16 The Committee welcomed the WCO-IAPH Guidelines on Cooperation between Customs and Port Authorities and invited IAPH and WCO to keep the Committee informed on the experience of the implementation of the Guidelines.

Safeguarding the cybersecurity of the Maritime Single Window

5.17 The Committee, when considering document FAL 48/5/5 (IAPH) drawing the Committee's attention to the issue of cybersecurity and resilience of the MSW and calling for Member States to develop and operate their MSWs in a cybersecure and resilient way, noted the following views:

- .1 there was a need to establish mandatory cybersecurity measures when developing mandatory Maritime Single Windows; and
- .2 the proposal of new output should take into account the revised *Guidelines on maritime cyber risk management* currently being discussed discussion by MSC and the FAL Committee to amend MSC-FAL.1/Circ.3/Rev.2.

5.18 Following consideration, the Committee:

- .1 invited interested Member States and international organizations to contact IAPH to prepare the proposal of a new output for FAL 49 which could include the proposed amendment to the FAL Convention and the development of a model law on cybersecurity with an explanatory note, to facilitate Contracting Governments in need of such a legal framework, to get their MSW systems managed and operated in a cybersecure way;
- .2 invited Contracting Governments that had not yet done so to establish a national legal framework for safeguarding the cybersecurity of their MSW systems and to share their experiences with other Member States; and
- .3 requested the Secretariat to include due attention to cybersecurity in its capacity-building programme related to the implementation of MSW systems.

Implementation of the maritime single window in Togo

5.19 The Committee noted the information provided in document FAL 48/5/4 (Togo) on the ongoing activities related to the implementation of the MSW in the Port of Lomé, in accordance with the requirements of the FAL Convention and the request to the Committee to consider capacity-building initiatives, including knowledge sharing at the regional level on the implementation of the MSW.

⁴ [wco-iaph-guidelines-on-cooperation-between-customs-and-port-authorities_en.pdf \(wcoomd.org\)](#)

5.20 The Director of the Technical Cooperation and Implementation Division informed the Committee that the demand for technical cooperation activities related to establishing MSW had recently increased. The Director encouraged knowledge sharing at regional level between interested Member States, as suggested by Togo in document FAL 48/5/4, and the Secretariat would be happy to explore any such opportunities to facilitate and support such information sharing at regional level. The Director, having expressed gratitude to the donors who supported MSW projects, encouraged donor partners to expand their funding support to this area since it would be challenging to identify resources from the TC fund to meet all these needs.

Implementation of the maritime single window (MSW) system using the IMO Generic Maritime Single Window System

5.21 The Committee noted the information provided in document FAL 48/5/6 (Antigua and Barbuda) on the implementation of the IMO Generic MSW System in Antigua and Barbuda and the consequential effect on the CARICOM IMPACS Joint Regional Coordination Centre's Advance Passenger Information System.

Paper-Free Port – The Brazilian Maritime Single Window

5.22 The Committee noted the information provided by Brazil in document FAL 48/INF.3 on the implementation of the Brazilian MSW and the impact on port operational processes and the improvements and positive results obtained for the port sector.

Indonesia National Single Window Implementation to Support National Logistic ecosystem

5.23 The Committee noted the information provided by Indonesia in document FAL 48/INF.4 on its experience in optimizing the existence of the National Single Window.

Instructions to the Working Group on Electronic Business

5.24 The Committee instructed the Working Group on Electronic Business, taking into account the decisions taken and comments made in plenary, to:

- .1 consider document FAL 48/5 and, if deemed appropriate, prepare a revised version of the *Guidelines on authentication, integrity and confidentiality of information exchanges via maritime single windows and related services* (FAL.5/Circ.46); and
- .2 consider document FAL 48/5/3 with a view to identifying possible actions to be taken by the Committee.

Report of the Working Group

Application programme interface (API) information (document FAL 48/5)

5.25 Having considered the relevant part of the Working Group's report (FAL 48/WP.7), the Committee approved it in general, and in relation to document FAL 48/5, the Committee noted that the Group had agreed that:

- .1 document FAL 48/5 provided useful information on the concept of session context needed to link several application programme interface (API) calls;

- .2 the *Guidelines on authentication, integrity and confidentiality of information exchanges via maritime single windows and related services* (FAL.5/Circ.46) provided guidance on the description of the message header which is used in the IMO Compendium; and
- .3 that the explanatory text proposed in document FAL 48/5 was relevant guidance for the use of the IMO Compendium; and

the Committee instructed EGDH to consider including API information as provided in document FAL 48/5 in the IMO Compendium under its existing term of reference five, taking into account the *Guidelines on authentication, integrity and confidentiality of information exchanges via maritime single windows and related services* (FAL.5/Circ.46).

Future amendments of the set of guidelines in relation to MSW using existing output Application of Single Window Concept

5.26 The Committee having noted that the set of guidelines developed by the FAL Committee in relation to maritime single window and to electronic data exchange may need frequent updating, agreed that the Committee could consider minor reviews or updates to the guidelines related to MSW and electronic data exchange, under the continuous output on "application of the single window concept" (5.1) instead of requesting a new output.

Industry survey on digitalization (document FAL 48/5/3)

5.27 In relation to document FAL 48/5/3, the Committee having noted that the information provided in the document was very broad and could also be discussed in other IMO bodies, agreed to defer the consideration of document FAL 48/5/3 to FAL 49, under the new output approved by the Committee on the "Development of a comprehensive strategy on maritime digitalization" (see paragraph 17.3), and invited Member States and interested organizations to prepare proposals to address the challenges identified by the industry survey.

5.28 The Committee expressed appreciation to the industry for the survey and encouraged Member States and international organizations to review the report of the survey and consider the call for actions in document FAL 48/5/3.

6 REVIEW AND REVISION OF THE IMO COMPENDIUM ON FACILITATION AND ELECTRONIC BUSINESS, INCLUDING ADDITIONAL E-BUSINESS SOLUTIONS

Funding of the IMO Compendium on Facilitation and Electronic Business

6.1 When considering the sustainability of the IMO Compendium, the Committee recalled that:

- .1 FAL 47 had approved a new version of the IMO Compendium (FAL.5/Circ.51) and that the costs of the IMO Compendium in 2023, which amounted to €50,660, had been covered by Finland (€15,000), Germany (€15,000) and the IMO TCD Maritime Development and Blue Economy global programme (\$33,000); and

- .2 the funds for the project on the IMO Compendium for 2024 were provided by Finland (€35,000), Germany (€15,000), the Kingdom of the Netherlands and the Port of Rotterdam (€2,500 each), and by the IMO TCD Maritime Development and Blue Economy global programme (\$8,000); the funds would support the various costs associated with the maintenance and extension of the IMO Compendium, which included the use of specialized software to manage data models, modelling work to update the data model, and the maintenance and update of the HTML and MS Excel versions of the IMO Compendium.

6.2 The Committee expressed deep appreciation to Finland, Germany, the Kingdom of the Netherlands and the Port of Rotterdam for providing funds for 2024 to support the project on the IMO Compendium and encouraged Member States and international organizations to provide funds for the period 2025-2026, in order to guarantee its sustainability. After this period, the IMO Compendium would be mature and the Committee would be in a good position to assess the benefits of the IMO Compendium and decide on the way forward in terms of the resources needed.

Reports of the Expert Group on Data Harmonization (EGDH)

6.3 The Committee noted that EGDH 8 had met from 20 to 23 March 2023 and EGDH 9 had met from 23 to 27 October 2023.

6.4 The Committee recalled further that FAL 47 had approved:

- .1 an updated priority list of data sets to prioritize the work of the IMO Expert Group on Data Harmonization; and
- .2 the Terms of Reference of the IMO Expert Group on Data Harmonization.

6.5 The Committee noted with appreciation the reports of EGDH (FAL 48/6), and in particular the work carried out by its Chair, Mr. Mikael Renz (Sweden), and the participants of the Group.

6.6 Having considered document FAL 48/6 and the actions requested, the Committee approved the reports of EGDH 8 and EGDH 9 in general, and agreed on the following actions grouped by topics.

Collaboration between EGDH and IHO

6.7 The Committee, in relation to the ongoing work with IHO in EGDH on the coordination and alignment between IHO and IMO models, noted:

- .1 the way forward agreed with IHO on the coordination and alignment between IHO and IMO models (EGDH 8/13, paragraphs 9 to 11);
- .2 the ongoing collaboration between IMO and IHO to harmonize the overlap between IHO S-100 and the IMO Compendium (EGDG 9/14, paragraphs 10 to 16); and

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- .3 that producing S-100 compliant product specification(s) based on the IMO Compendium would be feasible, but required a substantial amount of work and that questions regarding IMO S-100 domain ownership and production resources would, in such cases, have to be further considered (EGDG 9/14, paragraphs 10 to 16).

Further guidance on the use of the IMO Compendium

6.8 The Committee, having recalled that EGDH had been instructed to provide further guidance on the use and purpose of the IMO Compendium, noted:

- .1 the Group's discussion on the introduction of a reference between the IMO Compendium and the IMO instrument from where it originated (EGDH 8/13, paragraphs 29 to 31); and
- .2 the additional guidance on the terminology, purpose and use of the IMO Compendium (EGDG 9/14, paragraphs 41 to 46 and annexes 6 and 7).

Progress on IMO data sets

6.9 The Committee noted:

- .1 the progress made in the draft IMO data set on Container Inspection Programme (EGDH 8/13, paragraphs 5 and 6 and annex 1);
- .2 the progress on the API and BRI data sets and the proposals to WCO for further consideration at EGDH 9 (EGDH 8/13, paragraphs 13 to 20 and annexes 2 and 3);
- .3 the work of the Group on the data set on "noon data reporting" to support future reporting needs in the context of GHG emissions reduction in maritime shipping (EGDG 9/14, paragraphs 5 to 8 and annex 1);
- .4 the update of the IMO data set on "ballast water arrival reporting" according to the new guidance BWM.2/Circ.80 approved by MEPC and the code lists (EGDG 9/14, paragraphs 26 and 27 and annexes 2 and 3); and
- .5 the progress on the development of Advance Passenger Information and Booking Reservation Information/Passenger Name Record standards for maritime transport (EGDG 9/14, paragraphs 17 to 19).

SWIFT platform and the use of the IMO Compendium

6.10 The Committee recalled its decision when it considered agenda item 5, Application of single window concept (see paragraphs 5.5 to 5.7).

Work of the standards organizations

6.11 Regarding the work of the standards organizations, partners of IMO, the Committee:

- .1 noted the ongoing work on the implementation of the IMO Compendium based on ISO 28005-1 and ISO 28005-3 Standards Development (EGDG 9/14, paragraphs 30 to 40);

- .2 noted the Group's intention to create new business rules to identify the codes to be used in IMO data elements IMO0305 "Message function code" and IMO0192 "Message type, coded" (EGDH 8/13, paragraphs 22 and 23 and annex 4); and
- .3 expressed appreciation to the standards organizations UNECE, WCO and ISO for their contribution to the maintenance and implementation of the IMO Compendium and to digitalization and interoperability in maritime.

Digitalization developments

6.12 Regarding the developments in digitalization, the Committee noted:

- .1 the Group's discussion on the various subjects related to digitalization being covered within the Organization and that a specific IMO strategy on maritime digitalization could be developed which would send a strong signal concerning the priorities of the Organization and also regarding the importance of digitalization externally, such as for industry stakeholders (EGDG 9/14, paragraph 21); and
- .2 the results of the impact assessment of the IMO ship identification number format extension and encouraged Member States and interested organizations to continue providing input and being actively involved in the process (EGDG 9/14, paragraphs 22 to 25).

6.13 The Committee further agreed to forward document FAL 48/6 to the Working Group on Electronic Business for detailed consideration, in particular for the issues referred to in paragraph 4 of this document.

New version of the IMO Compendium on Facilitation and Electronic Business

6.14 The Committee noted that a number of data sets had been finalized by EGDH and would be included in the new version of the IMO Compendium if agreed:

- .1 an updated IMO data set on "Ballast water report" (FAL 48/6/1) aligned with the new *Guidance on ballast water record-keeping and reporting* BWM.2/Circ.80 approved by MEPC;
- .2 an expanded IMO data set on "Advance Passenger Information (API)" with crew and passengers' vehicle information (FAL 48/6/2);
- .3 a reviewed "Just In Time (JIT) sub-model" (FAL 48/6/3);
- .4 an updated IMO data set on the "Maritime Declaration of Health" with an additional coded data element and related code list (FAL 48/6/4);
- .5 amendments to the existing data set and data model to improve consistency in the naming and definitions of IMO data elements (FAL 48/6/4); and
- .6 a new IMO data set on "noon data reporting": (FAL 48/6/5/Rev.1).

6.15 The Committee also noted that, to facilitate its review, the Secretariat had prepared document FAL 48/WP.9, based on the outcome of the EGDH and of the modelling teamwork, which provided the new draft version of the IMO Compendium in both HTML and MS Excel publication formats.

6.16 The Committee agreed to forward documents FAL 48/6/1, FAL 48/6/2, FAL 48/6/3, FAL 48/6/4, FAL 48/6/5/Rev.1 and FAL 48/WP.9 to the Working Group on Electronic Business for detailed review with a view to approving a new version of the IMO Compendium.

New data sets identified by the Correspondence Group on the Review of the Explanatory Manual

6.17 The Committee recalled its decision when it considered the report of the Correspondence Group on the Review of the Explanatory Manual to include in the priority list of data sets of the IMO Compendium the declarations "delivery bill for mail consignment as described in the Acts of the Universal Postal Union, the Universal Postal Convention and its Regulations currently in force" and the "Ship Sanitation Control Exemption Certificate or Ship Sanitation Control Certificate or extension as set forth by the International Health Regulations", and the invitation to UPU, WHO and Member States and interested organizations to prepare the related submissions to EGDH with the data sets (see paragraph 4.6).

Instructions to the Working Group on Electronic Business

6.18 The Committee instructed the Working Group on Electronic Business, taking into account the comments made and decisions taken in plenary and documents FAL 48/6, FAL 48/6/1, FAL 48/6/2, FAL 48/6/3, FAL 48/6/4, FAL 48/6/5/Rev.1 and FAL48/WP.9, to:

- .1 finalize the new version of the IMO Compendium on Facilitation and Electronic Business;
- .2 review the priority list of data sets to facilitate the identification of further needs of data sets in the Organization; and
- .3 prepare new terms of reference for EGDH.

Report of the Working Group

Collaboration with IHO

6.19 Having considered the relevant part of the Working Group's report (FAL 48/WP.7), the Committee, having noted that some terminology associated with the ship voyage (e.g. Voyage leg) could be aligned with IHO, agreed to request EGDH to:

- .1 continue the collaboration with IHO to align the organizations' respective models S-100 and the IMO Compendium; and
- .2 produce a user guide for the data set on Noon Data Report taking as a basis existing industry guidance and to include it in the IMO Compendium.

IMO Compendium

6.20 The Committee, having considered the work of the Group, approved FAL.5/Circ.53 on *IMO Compendium on Facilitation and Electronic Business*.

Priority list of data sets

6.21 The Committee agreed to the revised priority list of data sets, as set out in annex 2.

Terms of reference of EGDH

6.22 The Committee agreed to the terms of reference of EGDH, as set out in annex 3.

7 DEVELOPMENT OF GUIDELINES ON PORT COMMUNITY SYSTEMS

7.1 The Committee recalled that FAL 46 had agreed to include in the 2022-2023 biennial agenda of the FAL Committee and the provisional agenda for FAL 47 an output on "Development of guidelines on Port Community Systems", with a target completion year of 2024.

7.2 The Committee also recalled that FAL 47 had established the Correspondence Group on the Development of Guidelines on Port Community Systems, under the coordination of Morocco, with terms of reference as set out in paragraph 10.7 of document FAL 47/22.

Consideration of the report of the Correspondence Group

7.3 The Committee noted with appreciation the work of the Correspondence Group on the Development of Guidelines on Port Community Systems (FAL 48/7) and gave special recognition to the work of its coordinator, Mr. Tarik Naciri (Morocco).

7.4 The Committee had for its consideration documents:

- .1 FAL 48/7 (Morocco) providing the report of the Correspondence Group and the draft guidelines on Port Community Systems in annex 1;
- .2 FAL 48/7/2 (China), commenting on the report of the Correspondence Group; and
- .3 FAL 48/7/1 (IAPH and World Bank) providing information on the report published in November 2023 on Port Community Systems - Lessons from Global Experience.

7.5 In the ensuing discussion, the Committee noted, inter alia, the following views:

- .1 that the PCS guidelines should not duplicate IMO's work on MSW but focus on the added value of the implementation of a PCS ;
- .2 that PCS were very important for facilitation of trade and transport and for seamless movement of cargo; and
- .3 that the data collected from automated terminals could be processed, exchanged, and integrated through PCS, improving the tracking of the status of goods and logistics; that data security and cybersecurity play a crucial role in PCS; that risks such as cybersecurity brought by digitalization and automation should be addressed in a holistic manner by collaborating with all stakeholders, including all the relevant international organizations, PCS service providers, terminal operators as well as equipment manufacturers. The full text made by the delegation of China is set out in annex 9.

7.6 Following the discussion, the Committee agreed to refer document FAL 48/7, in particular annex 1, to the Working Group on Electronic Business with the view to finalizing the draft guidelines on PCS and, when doing so, to take into consideration document FAL 48/7/2 (China) and the comments and decisions made in plenary.

Instructions to the Working Group on Electronic Business

7.7 The Committee instructed the Working Group on Electronic Business, taking as a basis document FAL 48/7 and taking into consideration document FAL 48/7/2, and the decisions and comments made in plenary, to finalize the Guidelines on Port Community Systems.

Consideration of the report of the Working Group

7.8 Having considered the relevant part of the Working Group's report (FAL 48/WP.7), the Committee approved FAL.5/Circ.54 on *Guidelines on Port Community Systems*.

8 MEASURES TO ADDRESS MARITIME AUTONOMOUS SURFACE SHIPS (MASS) IN THE INSTRUMENTS UNDER THE PURVIEW OF THE FACILITATION COMMITTEE

8.1 Having recalled that FAL 46 had approved FAL.5/Circ.49 on *Outcome of the regulatory scoping exercise and gap analysis of the FAL Convention with respect to MASS*, the Committee noted that in doing so, among other things, the amendments to the FAL Convention approved by FAL 45 had not been considered since they had not yet entered into force.

8.2 The Committee also recalled that MSC 106, LEG 110 and FAL 47 had approved, and C 128 had endorsed, the holding of a hybrid five-day meeting of the MASS-JWG from 17 to 21 April 2023.

8.3 The Committee further recalled that MSC 106, LEG 110 and FAL 47 had agreed that the MASS-JWG could meet before all three Committees had considered its report(s) and had authorized the MASS-JWG to meet twice in each calendar year until decided otherwise, subject to endorsement by C 129 (July 2023).

Progress in the work of other bodies with respect to MASS

8.4 The Committee considered document FAL 48/8/2 (Secretariat), providing information relating to the work of different IMO bodies with respect to MASS since FAL 47, i.e. the Joint MSC-LEG-FAL Working Group on MASS, the outcome of LEG 107, the MSC 107 Working Group on MASS and the MSC Intersessional Working Group on MASS.

8.5 The Committee noted:

- .1 the action taken on matters related to MASS and the report of the second session of the Joint MSC-LEG-FAL Working Group on MASS (MASS-JWG 2), including the approval of an updated road map;
- .2 the agreement to postpone the third meeting of the Joint MSC-LEG-FAL Working Group on MASS, originally scheduled to take place in September 2023, to take place after LEG 111 and FAL 48, but before MSC 108, and concurrently endorsed the terms of reference approved by MSC 107; and

- .3 that the planned seminar on implications, challenges and opportunities of MASS operations for ports and public authorities, originally scheduled to take place in September 2023, had been scheduled to be held in conjunction with FAL 48.

8.6 The Committee was informed that the seminar on implications, challenges and opportunities of MASS operations for ports and public authorities was going to be held on Thursday, 11 April 2024⁵.

Report of the Joint MSC-LEG-FAL Working Group on Maritime Autonomous Surface Ships (MASS)

8.7 The Committee, having considered document FAL 48/8 (Secretariat), with the report of the second meeting of the Joint MSC-LEG-FAL Working Group on Maritime Autonomous Surface Ships (MASS-JWG), which was held from 17 to 21 April 2023, noted with appreciation the work of Prof. Gen Goto (Japan) for chairing the Group and for the work done by the Joint Working Group.

8.8 The Committee approved the report in general and, in particular:

- .1 noted that a seminar on legal issues relating to MASS, including UNCLOS, had been held on 17 April 2023, prior to MASS-JWG 2;
- .2 concurred, in principle, that:
 - .1 there should be a human master responsible for a MASS, regardless of mode of operation or degree/level of autonomy;
 - .2 the master may not need to be on board, depending on the technology used in the MASS and the human presence on board, if any; and
 - .3 regardless of mode of operation or degree or level of autonomy, the master of a MASS should have the means to intervene when necessary;
- .3 noted that the Group had requested the Secretariat to compile a list of the roles and responsibilities of a master in existing IMO instruments and UNCLOS in order to identify which of those roles could be delegated or entrusted to some other party, and invited submissions on related provisions concerning the master, including instruments not under the purview of IMO;
- .4 concurred, in principle, that a detailed discussion of the circumstances where a master of a MASS could be responsible for several MASS was needed, and that it was for the relevant Committee(s) to further consider what those conditions were;
- .5 concurred, in principle, that several masters could be responsible for a MASS on a single voyage, under certain conditions, and that it was for the relevant Committee(s) to further consider what those conditions were;

⁵ More information about the seminar can be found in this weblink: <https://www.imo.org/en/About/Events/Pages/IMO-Seminar-on-MASS.aspx?ref=marineregulations.news>

- .6 concurred, in principle, that only a single master should be responsible for a MASS at any one time;
- .7 noted information provided by the Secretariat on possible ways forward in bringing developments relating to MASS to the attention of the International Labour Organization (ILO);
- .8 noted that the Group had agreed that it was premature to discuss the roles of the crew of a MASS before having considered the role of the master of a MASS in detail and decided to add this matter to the work plan for MASS-JWG 3;
- .9 concurred, in principle, with the term "remote operations centre" (ROC) and its definition;
- .10 concurred, in principle, to not exclude the possibility that one or more ROCs may be responsible for a MASS on a single voyage, under certain conditions, which would need to be further considered by the appropriate committee(s);
- .11 concurred, in principle, that, however, only a single ROC must be responsible for a MASS at any one time; and that this was a matter solely for MSC to consider and thus there was no need for this to be discussed further by the MASS-JWG;
- .12 noted that the Group had agreed to further consider the conditions that may allow for the handover of responsibility for a MASS from one ROC to another ROC, and the issues that would arise if the ROC was located outside of the flag State of a MASS;
- .13 concurred, in principle, that a person (a master) at the ROC may be responsible for multiple MASS at the same time, under certain conditions, which would need to be further considered by the appropriate committee(s);
- .14 noted that the requirements for the ROC (MSC 107/5/1, annex 1) were a matter to be further discussed by MSC when developing the MASS Code;
- .15 concurred, in principle, with the definition for "remote operator";
- .16 noted that the requirements for a remote operator (MSC 107/5/1, annex 1, table 4) should be further discussed by MSC when developing the MASS Code;
- .17 noted the discussion on the designation of a master of a MASS in a ROC, but agreed that this was a matter solely for MSC and thus there was no need for this to be considered further by the MASS-JWG;
- .18 noted that further discussion within the Group and the relevant Committee(s) was required regarding the need for a master to be on board when there were persons or crew on board;
- .19 noted that the Group had agreed that the matter of jurisdiction, including the conditions for having a ROC outside the territorial jurisdiction of the flag State, was a matter for consideration by the Legal Committee;

- .20 noted that the Group had agreed that the interpretation of UNCLOS pertained to its States Parties, but that this did not preclude IMO, as the competent body for global shipping, from facilitating arrival at practical and legally feasible solutions when dealing with MASS;
- .21 noted that the Group had also agreed that relevant proposals, such as to consider a similar framework to that of the ISM Code, should be considered by the relevant Committee(s);
- .22 noted the recommendation for MSC to further consider the application of the ISM Code to MASS;
- .23 noted the recommendation for MSC to take into account, at the appropriate time, the proposal in document LEG 110/11/3 (paragraph 25.3) concerning the inclusion of a subsection or paragraph in the introduction section of the MASS Code reflecting on the legal framework of the Code;
- .24 concurred, in principle, to continue to use the acronym MASS as "maritime autonomous surface ships", and its current definition, noting that this may change in the future, and that definitions and terminology regarding MASS should be further discussed by MSC when developing the MASS Code;
- .25 noted that the Group had agreed that the modes of operation or degrees/levels of autonomy should be discussed by MSC;
- .26 endorsed the updated work plan for MASS-JWG 3 (MSC 105/5/1, annex 2), which might need further updating, taking into account the outcome and decisions of this session of the Committee;
- .27 noted that MASS-JWG 3 had been scheduled to take place from 11 to 15 September 2023, together with a seminar on implications, challenges and opportunities of MASS operations for ports and public authorities, on the first day of the meeting;
- .28 approved the following revised terms of reference for MASS-JWG 3:
- "MASS-JWG 3, following the outcome of the regulatory scoping exercises conducted by the three Committees (MSC.1/Circ.1638, LEG.1/Circ.11 and FAL.5/Circ.49) and the discussions during MASS-JWG 2, is instructed to:
- .1 further address the common issues, taking into account the discussions at and outcome of FAL 47, LEG 110 and MSC 107, including:
- .1 the role and responsibilities of the MASS master and MASS crew;
- .2 certificates and other documents;
- .3 sharing of information as part of the obligation to communicate with coastal and port States, port authorities, etc.; and

- .4 issues relating to connectivity, cybersecurity and remotely controlled operations, based on annex 1 to document MASS-JWG 2/WP.1, as appropriate;
- .2 consider the following, as and when requested by the Committees:
 - .1 definitions and terminology regarding MASS; and
 - .2 issues associated with the "remote operations centre" and "remote operator", including situations when the ROC is located outside of the flag State;
 - .3 update the work plan; and
 - .4 provide a written report to the Committees"; and
- .29 noted that the Group had supported a proposal to hold a seminar or seminars on technological developments relating to MASS, with a view to providing relevant information to Member States, in particular developing States, and encourage their participation in the work on MASS in the Organization.

Documents submitted by Member States under this agenda item

8.9 The Committee had for its consideration the following documents:

- .1 document FAL 48/8/1 (Russian Federation and United Arab Emirates), providing deliberations on issues identified by the FAL Committee as related to MASS regulation and consideration of possible options for a way forward;
- .2 document FAL 48/8/3 (United Arab Emirates), proposing to revise and update the FAL road map for maritime autonomous surface ships (MASS) and to keep the proposed amendments to the annex to the FAL Convention developed by the Working Group on FAL MASS, as set out in annex 7 to document FAL 47/22/Add.1, in abeyance until FAL 50;
- .3 document FAL 48/8/4 (Russian Federation), providing information on recent developments on MASS legal regulation in the Russian Federation; and
- .4 document FAL 48/8/5 (Liberia and United Arab Emirates), presenting the work of the Maritime Safety Committee to ensure proper network governance for MASS for consideration by the Committee.

8.10 In the ensuing discussion, the following views were expressed:

- .1 the road map should be revised, and harmonized with the MSC and LEG Committees;
- .2 the work of the FAL Committee should not delay the approval process at MSC 108 of the non-mandatory Code for the Safety of MASS;

- .3 while some delegations expressed the wish to keep on hold until FAL 50 the proposed amendments to the annex to the FAL Convention developed by the Working Group on FAL MASS (as established in annex 7 to document FAL 47/22/Add.1), because these amendments should be based on the new mandatory MASS Code, other delegations were of the opinion that the amendments should be adopted by FAL 50, with the aim that the amendments to the FAL Convention would come into force at the same time as the mandatory MASS Code;
- .4 connectivity was one of the priority issues for remote operations of MASS and a matter of interest for the FAL Committee, but further discussion at the FAL Committee and the MASS-JWG should be postponed until NCSR and MSC considered it in detail, to avoid duplication of work;
- .5 issue of use of MSW communication channels, especially through radio, fell under the purview of the FAL Committee, and should not overlap with MASS operation channels;
- .6 certification and authentication of persons involved in mass operations was essential; and
- .7 principles of integrity, confidentiality and authentication were essential within the MASS Code.

Establishment of the Working Group on Other Facilitation Subjects

8.11 Having considered the above-mentioned matters, the Committee established the Working Group on Other Facilitation Subjects and instructed it, taking into account documents FAL 48/8/3 and FAL 47/22/Add.1, annex 6, and the comments made and decisions taken in plenary, to revise the road map on addressing MASS issues related to the FAL Convention.

Consideration of the report of the Working Group

8.12 Having considered the relevant part of the Working Group's report (FAL 48/WP.8), the Committee approved the road map on addressing MASS issues related to the FAL Convention, as set out in annex 4.

9 DEVELOPMENT OF GUIDELINES FOR THE PREVENTION AND SUPPRESSION OF THE SMUGGLING OF WILDLIFE ON SHIPS ENGAGED IN INTERNATIONAL MARITIME TRAFFIC

9.1 The Committee recalled that FAL 46 had approved FAL.5/Circ.50 on *Guidelines for the prevention and suppression of the smuggling of wildlife on ships engaged in international maritime traffic*, had agreed to extend the target completion year of output number 5.14 on "Development of guidelines for the prevention and suppression of the smuggling of wildlife on ships engaged in international maritime traffic", and had reinstated it on the agenda of the Committee for its next session.

9.2 The Committee also recalled that FAL 47 had considered document FAL 47/21/1 (Kenya et al.), containing a summary of the Maritime Stakeholder Workshop to Detect and Investigate Wildlife Trafficking in International Maritime Supply Chains, organized by Thailand on 6 and 7 December 2022 and had noted that a number of the recommendations in the document could have an effect on the Guidelines.

9.3 When considering document FAL 48/9 (Belgium et al.) providing information on the joint industry guidelines on illegal wildlife trafficking, the Committee noted general support for including the industry guidelines in the Guidelines. One delegation expressed the preference for including a link to the industry guidelines, to avoid amendments to the Guidelines to reflect the amendments to the industry guidelines.

9.4 The delegation of Kenya expressed concerns that some paragraphs of the industry guidelines, such as "Links between an Africa-based shipper and one or more parties in known transit or destination countries in Asia could be a risk factor" and "Do the commodities shipped involve high-risk countries and routes? Much of the most trafficked wildlife originates in just a small number of countries in Africa, while several locations in Asia consistently appear as key transit and destination hotspots", may adversely affect the growth of African businesses, trade and investments, its competitiveness and insurance premiums, and have negative economic implications, particularly when Africa was not the ultimate consumer of the illicit activities.

9.5 When considering document FAL 48/9/1 (Belgium et al.), with the proposal to amend the *Guidelines for the prevention and suppression of the smuggling of wildlife on ships engaged in international maritime traffic* and by means of a resolution, to approve the revised guidelines, the Committee noted the following views:

- .1 the effective implementation and uptake of the Guidelines would require collaboration among Member States and international maritime stakeholders, hence the need for bilateral or multilateral cooperation;
- .2 the Guidelines served as an additional tool to prevent and combat the smuggling of wildlife by enhancing the awareness and involvement of all stakeholders concerned; and
- .3 the reference to IMO Assembly resolution 1190(33) should be included in the resolution in an additional preambular paragraph.

Instructions to the Working Group on Other Facilitation Subjects

9.6 The Committee instructed the Working Group on Other Facilitation Subjects taking into account documents FAL 48/9 and FAL 48/9/1, and the comments made and decisions taken in plenary, to review in detail the amendments proposed and to finalize the draft resolution.

Consideration of the report of the Working Group

9.7 Having received the relevant part of the Working Group's report (FAL 48/WP.8), the Committee noted the concerns expressed during the discussion of the Group when referring to the joint industry guidelines in the revised Guidelines because the industry guidelines contained statements on specific regions that adversely affect the growth of the region's businesses, trade and investments, their competitiveness and insurance premiums, and had negative economic implications, particularly when Africa was not the ultimate consumer of the illicit activities. The statements from the industry guidelines that raised the concerns were the following:

- .1 "Links between an Africa-based shipper and one or more parties in known transit or destination countries in Asia could be a risk factor"; and
- .2 "Do the commodities shipped involve high-risk countries and routes? Much of the most trafficked wildlife originates in just a small number of countries in Africa, while several locations in Asia consistently appear as key transit and destination hotspots"; and

the delegation that expressed these concerns had requested in the Working Group to revise these statements in the joint industry guidelines prior to their inclusion in the IMO Guidelines.

9.8 The Committee also noted the following views expressed in the discussion of the Group:

- .1 the original material in the document was taken from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP);
- .2 the co-sponsors of document FAL 48/9 had no intention to affect a region's economy when preparing the document; and
- .3 these guidelines were developed, amended and updated by the industry and therefore it was not for IMO to consider amending industry guidelines.

9.9 Subsequently, the Committee adopted resolution FAL.17(48) on *Revised Guidelines for the prevention and suppression of the smuggling of wildlife on ships engaged in international maritime traffic*, as set out in annex 5.

9.10 After the Committee adopted the said resolution, the delegation of Kenya informed the Committee that, following the discussions held in the Group, Kenya had approached UNDP which had confirmed that the statements mentioned in paragraph 9.7 did not originate from UNPD's material, and that these statements had had some alterations from the original version obtained from NGO reports. These altered statements had the propensity to adversely affect the growth of African businesses, trade and investments, its competitiveness, insurance premiums and have negative economic implications, particularly when Africa was not the ultimate consumer of these activities. These statements perceived that wildlife trafficking was limited to these locations whereas various reports indicated wildlife trafficking incidents were sourced in various parts of the world. The delegation of Kenya had requested the author of the document to review these statements, based on its implications, before the Committee session and during the discussions of the Working Group. In addition, the CITES Secretariat had not published hot-spots or risk factors, and the delegation of Kenya expressed the view that IMO should not be seen to accept the categorization of businesses or regions as risk factors or hot-spot areas.

9.11 The observer from WSC informed the Committee that the joint industry guidelines were carefully developed in close collaboration with many organizations over several months with UNDP as supporter of the document. The intention of the industry guidelines was to help those in the maritime supply chain to identify shipments of illicit wildlife trafficking and, thus, help protect wildlife species. These guidelines were built on material published by UNDP and the references used were found verbatim in UNDP and government-approved material, and WSC had removed in good faith the names of specific countries that were indeed mentioned in the UNDP and government-approved materials. Finally, the observer from WSC indicated that they would inform the co-sponsors of the joint industry guidelines of the points raised in this Committee.

E-learning course on "Introduction to counter wildlife trafficking in the maritime supply chains"

9.12 The Committee noted that the new free-to-access e-learning course on "Introduction to counter wildlife trafficking in the maritime supply chains" would be available as from 20 May 2024 on the IMO e-learning platform.

10 INTRODUCTION OF THE API/PNR CONCEPT IN MARITIME TRANSPORT

10.1 The Committee recalled that FAL 45 had agreed to include an output in the 2022-2023 biennial agenda and the provisional agenda for FAL 46 on "Introduction of the API/PNR concept in maritime transport", with a target completion year of 2023.

10.2 The Committee also recalled that FAL 46 had agreed to include the Advance Passenger Information (API) and Passenger Name Record (PNR) data sets proposed by WCO in the priority list of data sets for EGDH.

10.3 The Committee further recalled that FAL 47:

- .1 had agreed to include the IMO data set on API in the IMO Compendium (FAL 5/Circ. 51);
- .2 had noted that EGDH had not finalized the draft BRI/PNR data set and therefore it would not be included in the IMO Compendium yet and had extended the output to 2024; and
- .3 had agreed that amending the requirements of the FAL Convention regarding crew and passenger information with additional API and BRI/PNR data required a new output.

10.4 The Committee also recalled that Australia and WCO had submitted a request for a new output to this session in document FAL 48/17/1 to include API and BRI/PNR declarations in the FAL Convention and that this would be discussed under agenda item 17.

10.5 The Committee noted that EGDH 8 and EGDH 9:

- .1 had finalized the additional IMO data elements related to crew information and passengers' vehicle details to be included in the IMO data set on API (EGDH 8/13, annex 2) for review at this session and submitted under document FAL 48/6/2; and
- .2 had finalized the BRI data set (EGDH 8/13, annex 3) and had agreed to recommend postponing its inclusion in the IMO Compendium until experience had been gained through the pilots currently being carried out by WCO and CLIA and until progress had been made in the discussions on API and BRI in the Facilitation Committee on the proposal for a new output to amend the FAL Convention to include API and PNR declarations (EGDH 9/14, paragraph 19).

10.6 In relation to the additional IMO data elements related to crew information and passengers' vehicle details to be included in the IMO data set on API, the Committee recalled its decision to submit document FAL 48/6/2 to the Working Group on Electronic Business (see paragraph 6.16) to look in detail into the EGDH proposal and recommend the way forward to the Committee.

10.7 The Committee, taking into consideration the advice of EGDH, agreed to postpone the inclusion of the BRI data set in the IMO Compendium to a later stage, when experience was gained through the pilots underway by WCO and CLIA.

10.8 The Committee requested the Secretariat to continue attending the relevant WCO meetings and encouraged Member States to consider attending the meetings as well and to share their national interests and practices.

UN Countering Terrorist Travel Programme – Maritime Module

10.9 The Committee noted the information provided in document FAL 48/10 (UN Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT)) on the recent work of the UN Countering Terrorist Travel Programme, a flagship global initiative of UNOCT regarding the collection of traveller data from maritime operators.

10.10 During the consideration, the Committee noted the following views:

- .1 building on the experience of air transport, there was an opportunity to use maritime passenger data to allow States to detect and counter terrorism and serious criminals;
- .2 global standard data sets would ensure that the industry was not subject to different requests in different formats from different States, reducing the burden on carriers; and
- .3 an international standard for the collection of passengers' booking information from maritime operators limited the burden on carriers and facilitated the automation of processing of data by national authorities but required careful consideration of data protection.

11 ANALYSIS OF POSSIBLE MEANS OF AUDITING COMPLIANCE WITH THE CONVENTION ON FACILITATION OF INTERNATIONAL MARITIME TRAFFIC

11.1 The Committee recalled that FAL 44 had agreed to include in its post-biennial agenda an output on "Analysis of possible means of auditing compliance with the Convention on Facilitation of International Maritime Traffic", with two sessions needed to complete the item.

11.2 The Committee also recalled the decision of the Committee not to include the FAL Convention in IMSAS but to find alternative means of auditing compliance with the FAL Convention.

11.3 The Committee further recalled that FAL 47 had invited Member States and international organizations to submit proposals and related documents to FAL 48, otherwise the Committee would delete this output.

11.4 The Committee, taking into account that no documents had been submitted to this session, decided to delete this output of the agenda.

12 UNSAFE MIXED MIGRATION BY SEA

12.1 The Committee recalled that in 2021, UNHCR had launched an initiative to reconstitute the Inter-Agency Group on Safety of Life at Sea, to discuss, plan and execute coordinated joint action and advocacy to support the prevention of dangerous journeys at sea, SAR activities, and safe disembarkation. EOSG, ICS, ILO, IMO, IOM, OHCHR, OLA and UNODC had been invited to participate in the Group.

12.2 The Committee also recalled that this group had been renamed as "Inter-agency group on protection of refugees and migrants moving by sea", to avoid confusion regarding the SOLAS Convention.

12.3 The Committee further recalled that MSC 106 had adopted resolution MSC.528(106) on *Recommended cooperation to ensure the safety of life at sea, the rescue of persons in distress at sea and the safe disembarkation of survivors*.

12.4 The Committee noted that 11 meetings of the Inter-agency group on protection of refugees and migrants moving by sea had been convened. The last three sessions had been held on 12 July 2023, 30 October 2023 and 11 March 2024; the meeting on 12 July 2023 had been dedicated to the Western Indian Ocean; the meeting on 30 October 2023 had been dedicated to the "Multi-stakeholder Pledge on Protection at Sea" and the IOM-UNHCR e-learning course on protection at sea; and the last meeting on 11 March 2024 had focused on the presentation of the Centre for Humanitarian Action at Sea, and the group had been informed on the progress on revision of the third version of the joint publication UNHCR-IMO-ICS "Rescue at sea: A guide to principles and practice as applied to refugees and migrants".

12.5 The Committee noted that MSC 107 had considered the proposal to develop guidelines to assist shipmasters and regional coordination centres (RCCs) in handling cases of deceased persons found in migrant boats and of death after recovery, to complement the guidance provided in resolution MSC.528(106), and agreed with the proposal to develop such guidance, either as an amendment to resolution MSC.528(106) or as a separate set of guidelines.

12.6 The delegation of Liberia informed the Committee on document MSC 108/9/1 (Liberia and United Arab Emirates), proposing a joint MSC-FAL circular on the handling of deceased persons among rescued migrants. The outcome of the consideration of the proposal by MSC 108 would be considered by the Committee at its next session.

13 CONSIDERATION AND ANALYSIS OF REPORTS AND INFORMATION ON PERSONS RESCUED AT SEA AND STOWAWAYS

Consideration and analysis of reports and information on stowaways

13.1 The Committee noted that, in 2023, 53 stowaway cases had been reported to the Organization and the number of stowaways reported was 148.

13.2 In terms of numbers of stowaways, the cases reported to the Organization are set out in the following table:

Year	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Number of incidents	61	28	55	63	48	55	54	50	64	53
Number of stowaways	120	80	163	157	182	138	55	96	131	148

13.3 The Committee recalled the information provided by the International Group of P&I Clubs on their statistics on stowaway incidents to previous sessions of the Committee, as below:

Data collection exercises analysed data	2007/2008	2011/2012	2014/2015	2017/2018	2018/2019	2019/2020	2020/2021	2021/2022
No of incidents	842	774	503	432	364	418	364	345
No of stowaways	1,955	1,640	1,274	1,320	919	1,234	1,050	892
Total cost (US\$ million)	14.3	15.3	9.3	9.5	8.0	7.8	8.9	5.9
Cost/incident (US\$ thousand)	17.0	19.8	18.5	22.0	22.0	18.6	24.4	17.1
Cost/stowaway (US\$ thousand)	7.3	9.3	7.3	6.7	8.7	6.3	8.4	6.6

13.4 The Committee recalled resolution A.1074(28) on *Notification and circulation through the Global Integrated Shipping Information System (GISIS)* and urged Member States and international organizations to provide timely and accurate information on stowaway cases to the Organization, making use of the GISIS module⁶ in accordance with Standard 4.7.1 of the FAL Convention.

Consideration and analysis of reports and information on persons rescued at sea

13.5 The Committee noted that, since the date of the launch of the Inter-agency platform for information-sharing on migrant smuggling by sea in GISIS⁷ on 6 July 2015, only 34 incidents had been entered in the database.

13.6 Having noted the low level of reporting of migrant incidents at sea and on suspected smugglers and vessels, as requested by the *Interim measures for combating unsafe practices associated with the trafficking, smuggling or transport of migrants by sea* (MSC.1/Circ.896/Rev.2), the Committee encouraged Member States to provide and update the information included in the appendix via the Inter-agency platform for information-sharing on migrant smuggling by sea in GISIS.

14 TECHNICAL COOPERATION ACTIVITIES RELATED TO FACILITATION OF MARITIME TRAFFIC

14.1 The Committee considered document FAL 48/14 (Secretariat), reporting on the status of activities relevant to the implementation of the FAL Convention, conducted under the ITCP in the period from December 2022 to December 2023, and noted the following activities:

- .1 Four national seminars organized in Albania, the Cook Islands, Kazakhstan and Samoa, to promote accession to the FAL Convention and to encourage better implementation of the FAL Convention. These national seminars offered a better understanding of the FAL Convention, electronic means for the clearance of ships and the use of the single window.

⁶ Refer to *Global Integrated Shipping Information System (GISIS) – FAL module database (FALD) and Contact Addresses for FAL Database (CAFALD)* (Circular Letter No.3281).

⁷ Refer to *Global Integrated Shipping Information System (GISIS) – Inter-agency platform for information-sharing on migrant smuggling by sea* (Circular Letter No.3569).

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- .2 A regional seminar on facilitation of international maritime traffic held in Fiji, with representatives from customs, maritime administrations and port authorities from 13 Pacific Island nations (the Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, the Marshall Islands, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu).
 - .3 A needs assessment mission in December 2023 to support Togo's efforts to implement a maritime single window in the port of Cotonou. The mission identified specific related needs and provided recommendations to address any gaps related to organization, legislation, security and technical and operational aspects for the implementation of an MSW in the port of Cotonou.
 - .4 In the Latin American region, IMO conducted a new study in 2023 to assess the level of implementation of measures to facilitate international maritime transport and, in particular, digital solutions to the ship/port interface to facilitate clearance processes and port calls in Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Paraguay, Peru and Uruguay. The study was concluded in March 2024, and IMO and the countries of Central America and Latin America have available a study on their situation of single window level of implementation, and a follow up exercise would be implemented afterwards. This work is in line with the decisions of the IMO Assembly in resolutions A.1166(32) and A.1167(32).
 - .5 In the Central American region, IMO conducted a follow-up on the consultancy carried out in the region in 2021 in Honduras and Costa Rica. The outcome of the follow-up has identified the current situation of the recommendations and gaps identified in 2021, and new recommendations have been presented to these countries.
 - .6 With respect to the maritime single window project of Fiji implemented with the World Bank, the "Port Logistics Gap Analysis" study prepared by the consultants, the World Bank and IMO, was validated by Fiji stakeholders in August 2023, as a preparatory step to implement an MSW in Fiji. To continue with the project, a letter of commitment and readiness has been requested from Fiji. The Committee noted with appreciation the engagement of Norway and Antigua and Barbuda in the implementation of the project.
 - .7 The Single Window for Facilitation of Trade (SWiFT) project, with the financial and technical support of Singapore. The Committee recalled that this project had been considered in detail under agenda item 5, when considering document FAL 48/5/1 (see paragraphs 5.5 to 5.7).

14.2 The Committee noted the launch of two e-learning courses on Facilitation since FAL 47:

- .1 the introductory e-learning course on the "Implementation of the maritime single window", in September 2023; further details in Circular Letter No.4773, of 11 September 2023; and
- .2 the e-learning course on "Introduction to counter wildlife trafficking in the maritime supply chains", expected to be available on 20 May 2024.

14.3 The Committee urged Member States and the maritime industry to contribute to the Organization's technical cooperation programme.

15 RELATIONS WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

15.1 In considering document FAL 48/15 (Secretariat), the Committee noted the relevant decisions of C 129 and C 130 with regard to relations with non-governmental organizations, applications for consultative status and related matters.

16 APPLICATION OF THE COMMITTEE'S PROCEDURES ON ORGANIZATION AND METHOD OF WORK

Document on Organization and method of work of the Facilitation Committee

16.1 The Committee recalled that FAL 47 had approved the amendments to the *Organization and method of work of the Facilitation Committee* (FAL.3/Circ.217/Rev.1) (hereinafter the Committee's method of work):

- .1 to include the revised checklist for considering and addressing human element issues;
- .2 to include the five working day period for commenting on the draft report by correspondence introduced for remote meetings and that comments submitted during the five-day period should be limited to editorial matters and statements by delegations; and
- .3 not to introduce documents in plenary with the flexibility to allow submitters to introduce additional context and information not included in the submitted document, such as relevant updates or necessary clarifications, and that such information would be provided at the start of the relevant discussion.

16.2 The Committee noted that LEG 110 had approved LEG.1/Circ.14, with the amendments to the *Organization and method of work of the Legal Committee*, to include the five working day period and not to introduce documents in plenary.

16.3 The Committee also noted that MSC 107 and MEPC 80 had concurrently approved amendments to the revised document on *Organization and method of work of the Maritime Safety Committee and the Marine Environment Protection Committee and their subsidiary bodies*, as MSC-MEPC.1/Circ.5/Rev.5, which reflected the decision of the Committees to introduce a new paragraph on the Meeting Document Submission Portal on IMODOCS in the section "Preparation of documents" of the Committees' method of work. The Committee further noted that MSC 107 had recommended to the Facilitation, Legal and Technical Cooperation Committees the inclusion of the portal in their respective guidelines on the method of work.

16.4 The Committee also noted the decision of MSC 107 to discontinue the practice of taking decisions by correspondence.

16.5 The Committee further noted that TC 73 had approved TC.1/Circ.77, with amendments to the *Organization and method of work of the Technical Cooperation Committee*, to include the five working day period and not to introduce documents in plenary.

16.6 The Committee, having considered the amendments approved by MSC 107 and MEPC 80, agreed to replace paragraph 6.2 in the section "Preparation of documents" of the Committee's method of work, with the following text:

"6.2 To facilitate processing, meeting documents should be submitted through the Meeting Document Submission Portal, available on the IMODOCS home page (<https://docs.imo.org>) under the "Submissions" tab.⁸ All submissions through the Portal will be confirmed via notification to the submitter and their status can be checked on the Portal. For any queries relating to the Portal, please email the Secretariat at team@imo.org."

16.7 In addition, the Committee, taking into account the adoption by A 33 of resolution A.1174(33), on the Application of the Strategic Plan of the Organization, revoking resolution A.1130(30), agreed to make this replacement in the Committee's method of work.

16.8 Subsequently, the Committee approved the amendments to the *Organization and method of work of the Facilitation Committee* (FAL.3/Circ.217/Rev.1) referred to in paragraphs 16.6 and 16.7, and requested the Secretariat to issue the revised method of work as FAL.3/Circ.217/Rev.2.

Rules of Procedure of the Committee

16.9 The Committee recalled that FAL 42 had adopted the revised Rules of Procedure of the Facilitation Committee.

16.10 The Committee recalled that C 129 had:

- .1 requested the committees to inform C 132 of the outcome of the task undertaken with regard to the review of their respective rules of procedure;
- .2 also requested the Secretariat to provide information, at C 132, on the possible areas of convergence and/or divergence among the existing rules of procedures; and
- .3 agreed that at C 132 it would instruct the Working Group on Council Reform to proceed with the review and harmonization of the rules of procedure, if necessary.

16.11 With regard to the harmonization of the rules of procedure, including the integration of rules relating to the use of hybrid meeting capabilities, the Committee noted that MEPC 81 had agreed to inform C 132 that no comments had been made at that session on the matter and had noted that any comments could be submitted directly to C 132, to be taken into account in the work of the Council Working Group on Council Reform.

16.12 Considering the MEPC 81 decision on this matter and that no comments had been raised on this subject, the Committee decided to invite Member States to submit their comments directly to C 132, to be taken into account in the work of the Council Working Group on Council Reform.

⁸ Refer to Circular Letter No.4662 of 16 December 2022.

17 WORK PROGRAMME

Proposals for new outputs

Proposal for a new output to develop an overarching IMO strategy on digitalization to ensure standardization and harmonization

17.1 The Committee considered document FAL 48/17 (China et al.) proposing to develop an IMO strategy on digitalization for the Organization to create a more integrated approach to maritime digitalization in the Organization and across the maritime industry.

17.2 The Committee noted the following views:

- .1 the need to create a cross committee joint working group in the Organization, and to coordinate with other international organizations as needed;
- .2 digitalization was not an entity in itself but rather a means to realize a number of central goals in this Organization; this included decarbonization of shipping, paperless maritime future and improving safety and efficiency, and the strategy was cross cutting, encompassing the work of all committees and sub-committees, and the document should be considered by the Council for consideration or orientation;
- .3 the strategy should take into account the overall maritime supply chain, and should also include the requirements of cargo owners and shippers in terms of visibility, predictability, security and sustainability, and include the critical importance of cybersecurity; and
- .4 the target completion year proposed, 2026, was insufficient because it required the coordination of work of different IMO bodies.

17.3 The Committee agreed to include, in the 2024- 2025 biennial agenda of the FAL Committee and the provisional agenda for FAL 49, an output on "Development of a comprehensive strategy on maritime digitalization", with a target completion year of 2027, inviting MSC and MEPC Committees to become associated organs.

Proposal to add a new output in the work programme to include Advance Passenger Information (API) and Booking and Reservation Information (BRI)/Passenger Name Record (PNR) declarations in the FAL Convention

17.4 The Committee considered document FAL 48/17/1 (Australia and WCO) proposing to include, in the FAL Convention, the declarations for Advance Passenger Information (API) and Booking and Reservation Information (BRI)/Passenger Name Record (PNR) for cruise ships and other maritime means of transport.

17.5 Following consideration of the proposal, the Committee agreed to include, in the 2024-2025 biennial agenda of the FAL Committee and the provisional agenda for FAL 49, an output on "Amendments to the FAL Convention to introduce mandatory reporting of API and BRI/PNR for maritime transport", with a target completion year of 2025.

Proposal of new output to revise the Revised guidelines for the prevention and suppression of the smuggling of drugs, psychotropic substances and precursor chemicals on ships engaged in international maritime traffic

17.6 The Committee considered document FAL 48/17/2 (Dominica et al.) proposing to revise the *Revised guidelines for the prevention and suppression of the smuggling of drugs, psychotropic substances and precursor chemicals on ships engaged in international maritime traffic*.

17.7 Following consideration of the proposal, the Committee agreed to include, in the 2024-2025 biennial agenda of the FAL Committee and the provisional agenda for FAL 49, an output on "Development of amendments to the *Revised guidelines for the prevention and suppression of the smuggling of drugs, psychotropic substances and precursor chemicals on ships engaged in international maritime traffic* (resolutions FAL.9(34) and MSC.228(82))", with a target completion year of 2027, inviting MSC to become an associated organ.

Proposal for a new output to modify the definition of "key workers" and relevant amendments in the FAL Convention

17.8 The Committee considered document FAL 48/17/3 (Bangladesh et al.) proposing to review the provisions of the "key worker" in the FAL Convention.

17.9 The following views were expressed:

- .1 national administrations do design, adopt and implement legislative policies regarding travel immigration procedures, vaccination programmes and medical resource allocation, taking into account unique and respective national circumstances, and the work on the new output should take into account the domestic considerations surrounding such policies, and the work should be undertaken with other IMO relevant bodies and ILO;
- .2 safeguarding the substantive benefits of "key workers" was more practical than broadening the scope of their definition. However, if the scope of "key workers" was broadened, it should be aligned with IMO and ILO documents to avoid discrepancies. Additionally, the capacity of Member States for dealing with public health crisis should be taken into consideration and international assistance and cooperation should be encouraged accordingly; and
- .3 the scope of work should include consideration of the list of "other marine personnel" contained in the footnote of Circular Letter No.4204/Add.35/Rev.3, specifically marine surveyors of recognized organizations.

17.10 Following consideration of the proposal, the Committee agreed to include, in the 2024- 2025 biennial agenda of the FAL Committee and the provisional agenda for FAL 49, an output on "Amendments to the FAL Convention to review the provisions of a key worker during a public health emergency of international concern", with a target completion year of 2026. The Committee invited interested Member States and international organizations to contact the Republic of Korea to prepare a proposal for the consideration of FAL 49.

Development of joint FAL-LEG-MEPC-MSC guidelines on electronic certificates

17.11 The Committee recalled the decision to include a new output on "Development of joint FAL-LEG-MEPC-MSC guidelines on electronic certificates" (see paragraph 2.12).

Revision of the Guidelines on minimum training and education for mooring personnel (FAL.6/Circ.11/Rev.1)

17.12 The Committee recalled the decision to include a new output on "Revision of the *Guidelines on minimum training and education for mooring personnel* (FAL.6/Circ.11/Rev.1)" (see paragraph 19.4).

Decisions of other IMO bodies that affect the work programme of the FAL Committee***Revision of the Guidelines on maritime cyber risk management***

17.13 The Committee, having noted the decision of MSC 107 to include in its biennial agenda an output on "Revision of the *Guidelines on maritime cyber risk management* (MSC-FAL.1/Circ.3/Rev.2) and identification of next steps to enhance maritime cybersecurity", agreed to include, in the 2024-2025 biennial agenda of the FAL Committee and the provisional agenda for FAL 49, the output "Revision of the *Guidelines on maritime cyber risk management* (MSC-FAL.1/Circ.3/Rev.2) and identification of next steps to enhance maritime cybersecurity" as an associated organ, with a target completion year of 2025.

Development of guidelines for harmonizing the date format of various certificates issued under IMO instruments

17.14 The Committee, having noted the decision of MSC 107 to include in its post-biennial agenda an output on "Development of guidelines for harmonizing the date format of various certificates issued under IMO instruments", agreed to include in its post-biennial agenda an output on "Development of guidelines for harmonizing the date format of various certificates issued under IMO instruments" as an associated organ.

Consideration of descriptions of Maritime Services in the context of e-navigation

17.15 The Committee noted the decision of MSC 107 to relocate output 2.11 on "Consideration of descriptions of Maritime Services in the context of e-navigation" to its post-biennial agenda, to have the possibility of revisiting it at a future session, as necessary, to review existing Maritime Services and/or include new ones.

Consideration for the enhancement and improvement of multilingualism and language services at IMO

17.16 The Committee noted the decision of C 129 to include in its list of outputs for the 2022-2023 biennium an output on "Consideration for the enhancement and improvement of multilingualism and the language services at IMO" under strategic direction 8, as a continuous output, and assigned MSC/MEPC/FAL/LEG/TCC as associated organs.

Endorsement of new outputs

17.17 In accordance with the relevant provisions of the *Application of the Strategic Plan of the Organization* (resolution A.1174(33)), the Committee invited the Council to note that the following six new outputs had been included in the biennial agenda for 2024-2025:

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- .1 Development of joint FAL-LEG-MEPC-MSC guidelines on electronic certificates (see paragraph 2.12).
 - .2 Development of a comprehensive strategy on maritime digitalization (see paragraph 17.3).
 - .3 Amendments to the FAL Convention to introduce mandatory reporting of the API and BRI/PNR for maritime transport (see paragraph 17.5).
 - .4 Development of amendments to the *Revised guidelines for the prevention and suppression of the smuggling of drugs, psychotropic substances and precursor chemicals on ships engaged in international maritime traffic* (resolutions FAL.9(34) and MSC.228(82)) (see paragraph 17.7).
 - .5 Amendments to the FAL Convention to review the provisions of a key worker during a public health emergency of international concern (see paragraph 17.10).
 - .6 Revision of the *Guidelines on minimum training and education for mooring personnel* (FAL.6/Circ.11/Rev.1) (see paragraph 19.4).

Biennial status report of the Facilitation Committee

17.18 The Committee endorsed the status of outputs for the 2024-2025 biennium which had been prepared by the Secretariat in consultation with the Chair, and accordingly invited C 132 to note the report on the status of outputs of the Facilitation Committee, as set out in annex 6.

Post-biennial agenda of the Committee

17.19 The Committee endorsed the status of outputs accepted for inclusion in the post-biennial agenda which had been prepared by the Secretariat in consultation with the Chair, and accordingly invited C 132 to note its post-biennial agenda, as set out in annex 7.

Proposals for meeting weeks for the biennium 2026-2027

17.20 The Committee recalled that FAL 40 had agreed to meet in future in regular sessions once a year, and to reduce the meeting days of the Committee to four days with eight associated interpretation sessions, applicable from FAL 41 and to subsequent sessions of the Committee, and that the duration of the sessions would be reviewed periodically, taking into account the workload of the Committee.

17.21 The Committee recalled further that FAL 42, noting that the arrangement of four-day meetings did not give enough time for working groups to complete their work, and taking into account that the provisional agenda for FAL 43 had included four additional new outputs, agreed that subsequent meetings of the Committee should last five days with eight associated interpretation sessions. This decision would be applicable to FAL 43 and subsequent sessions of the Committee, and the duration of the sessions would be reviewed periodically taking into account the workload of the Committee.

17.22 The Committee agreed to hold one meeting in 2026 and one meeting in 2027 (five days with eight associated interpretation sessions for each meeting), and invited the Secretary-General to take this into account when preparing relevant budgetary proposals for the 2026-2027 biennium for consideration by the Council, with a view to approval by the thirty-fourth regular session of the Assembly in November 2025.

Intersessional meetings

17.23 The Committee recalled that FAL 47 had approved the holding of the following intersessional meetings in 2024 which had been endorsed by C 129:

- .1 the tenth meeting of EGDH to be held immediately after FAL 48; and
- .2 the eleventh meeting of EGDH to be held in the second half of 2024;

and noted that EGDH 11 had been scheduled to take place from 14 to 18 October 2024.

17.24 In addition, the Committee approved the following intersessional meetings of the Expert Group on Data Harmonization to be held in 2025, one of them immediately after FAL 49, if possible, subject to endorsement by C 132:

- .1 the twelfth meeting of EGDH to be held in the first half of 2025; and
- .2 the thirteenth meeting of EGDH to be held in the second half of 2025.

Substantive items for inclusion in the agenda of FAL 49

17.25 Having considered the proposals in document FAL 48/WP.3, the Committee agreed to the substantive items to be included in the agenda of its forty-ninth session, as set out in annex 8. In this connection, the Committee also agreed that all Secretariat documents for that session would be made publicly available prior to the meeting (see also paragraph 2.19).

Establishment of working groups at FAL 49

17.26 The Committee, taking into account the decisions made under the various agenda items, anticipated that working and drafting groups on the following subjects could be established at FAL 49:

- .1 electronic business;
- .2 facilitation instruments; and
- .3 other facilitation subjects.

17.27 The Committee further agreed that, should the need arise, FAL 49 could consider establishing any other working or drafting groups when considering the various agenda items and requested the Secretariat, in consultation with the Chair, to prepare and circulate well in time before the meeting the provisional timetable for FAL 49 and a list of the likely working or drafting groups to be established.

Date and venue of the next session

17.28 The Committee noted that FAL 49 was scheduled to take place from 10 to 14 March 2025, at IMO Headquarters in London.

18 ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR FOR 2025

18.1 In accordance with its Rules of Procedure, the Committee unanimously elected Mr. Watchara Chiemanukulkit (Thailand) as Chair and Mr. Mohamed AlKaabi (United Arab Emirates) as Vice-Chair, both for 2025.

19 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Updating the guidelines on minimum training and education for mooring personnel

19.1 The Committee considered document FAL 48/19/1 (Italy, Spain and United Arab Emirates) proposing to update FAL.6/Circ.11/Rev.1 on *Guidelines on minimum training and education for mooring personnel* by means of a resolution, to approve the revised guidelines.

19.2 The Committee, having noted the overwhelming support for the proposal to amend the guidelines, agreed that a new output was required to make this work. Therefore the Committee, noting the urgency of the matter, decided to instruct the Working Group on Other Facilitation Subjects to prepare the justification of a new output in this regard, with the view to including the output in the provisional agenda of FAL 49.

Instructions to the Working Group on Other Facilitation Subjects

19.3 The Committee instructed the Working Group on Other Facilitation Subjects, taking into account documents FAL 48/19/1 and FAL.6/Circ.11/Rev.1 and the comments made and decisions taken in plenary, to prepare a justification for a new output to develop a FAL resolution on revised guidelines on minimum training and education for mooring personnel.

Consideration of the report of the Working Group

19.4 Having received the relevant part of the Working Group's report (FAL 48/WP.8), the Committee approved the new output "revision of the *Guidelines on minimum training and education for mooring personnel* (FAL.6/Circ.11/Rev.1)" in the 2024-2025 biennial agenda of the FAL Committee and the provisional agenda for FAL 49, with a target completion year of 2025.

International Health Regulations (2005) (IHR)

19.5 The Committee noted document FAL 48/19 (Cyprus, Greece and Malta) providing information on the ongoing Member State-led process at the World Health Organization to amend the International Health Regulations (2005) (IHR), which might potentially require future amendments to the annex to the FAL Convention.

E-learning module on "Safe Transport of Class 7 by Sea"

19.6 The Committee recalled that FAL 42 had invited CCC 5 to consider whether any training materials for the safe and efficient transport of radioactive materials were needed.

19.7 The Committee also recalled that FAL 45 had noted that CCC 6 had instructed the Secretariat to consult IAEA with a view to developing an e-learning model for sea transport, and the Committee noted that the e-learning model for sea transport was being considered by the Transport Safety Standards Committee (TRANSSC) of IAEA.

19.8 The Committee noted document FAL 48/19/2 (IAEA) providing information on the E-Learning Platform for Safe Transport of Radioactive Material (V2.0) established by IAEA, which aimed to enhance knowledge and awareness among professionals (regulators, industry) involved in this sector. To address the delays in and denials of shipments, IAEA was planning to develop a module on "Safe Transport of Class 7 by Sea" in coordination with IMO, which would be available on IAEA's platform.

19.9 The Committee noted the favourable support expressed by some delegations for IAEA to work on the preparation of a module on "Safe Transport of Class-7 by Sea". The Committee invited CCC 10 to consider the outcome of the discussions regarding IAEA's request in connection with the preparation of the module on "Safe Transport of Class-7 by Sea", and take action as they deem appropriate. The Committee also invited IAEA to keep the Committee informed about the development and implementation of the new E-Learning Platform.

Addressing unjustified criminalization of seafarers in the context of drug trafficking on ships

19.10 The Committee noted document FAL 48/INF.2 (Dominica et al.) providing information on the outcomes of the "Symposium on Drug smuggling in ships: Fostering law enforcement/trade collaboration" held in Houston on 9 January 2024 with suggestions for future consideration.

COVID-19 related matters

19.11 The Committee noted that A 33 had adopted resolution A.1189(33), *Recommendations emanating from the Joint Action Group to review the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the world's transport workers and the global supply chain*.

Possible measures to prevent acts of endangering the safety of navigation

19.12 The Committee noted that MSC 107, following an invitation by C 128 to consider possible measures to address the threats to maritime safety and the international community caused by repeated missile launches by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), had adopted resolution MSC.531(107) on *Strengthening measures for ensuring the safety of international shipping*.

Expressions of appreciation

19.13 The Committee expressed its appreciation to the following delegates who were going to retire or relinquish their duties immediately after the forty-eighth session of the Committee for their invaluable contribution to its work:

- Ms. Fernanda Millicay (Argentina) (on transfer); and
- Mr. Antti Arkima (Finland) (on retirement).

20 CONSIDERATION OF THE REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON ITS FORTY-EIGHTH SESSION

Procedures for facilitating remote sessions

20.1 The draft report of the session (FAL 48/WP.1) was prepared by the Secretariat for consideration by the Committee.

20.2 In this context, during the meeting held on Friday, 12 April 2024, delegations were given an opportunity to provide comments on the draft report (FAL 48/WP.1), and the Secretariat then prepared the revised draft report (FAL 48/WP.1/Rev.1), incorporating the comments made. Member States and international organizations wishing to provide further editorial corrections and improvements, including finalizing individual statements, were given a deadline of Wednesday, 25 April 2024, 23.59 (UTC+1) to do so by correspondence in accordance with paragraphs 4.27 and 4.28 of the Committees' method of work (FAL.3/Circ.217/Rev.1).

Action requested of other IMO organs

20.3 The Assembly, at its thirty-fourth session, is invited to:

- .1 note the comments made and decisions taken on matters related to the ongoing military conflict between the Russian Federation and Ukraine and its effects on international shipping and seafarers and on condemnation of terrorist attacks (paragraphs 2.20 to 2.32);
- .2 note the action taken on matters related to MASS (section 8 and annex 4);
- .3 note that the Committee adopted resolution FAL.17(48) on *Revised guidelines for the prevention and suppression of the smuggling of wildlife on ships engaged in international maritime traffic* (paragraph 9.9 and annex 5);
- .4 note the decision taken with regard to the harmonization of the rules of procedure (paragraph 16.12); and
- .5 note the new output to develop an overarching IMO strategy on digitalization to ensure standardization and harmonization (paragraphs 17.1 to 17.3).

20.4 The Council, at its 132nd session, is invited to:

- .1 consider the report of the forty-eighth session of the Facilitation Committee and, in accordance with Article 21(b) of the IMO Convention, transmit it, with its comments and recommendations, to the thirty-fourth session of the Assembly;
- .2 note the decisions taken regarding measures for greater public access to information (paragraphs 2.19 and 17.25);
- .3 note the comments made and decisions taken on matters related to the ongoing military conflict between the Russian Federation and Ukraine and its effects on international shipping and seafarers and on condemnation of terrorist attacks (paragraphs 2.20 to 2.32);
- .4 note the developments regarding the IMO Compendium on Facilitation and Electronic Business, including the approval of a revised version (section 6);
- .5 note the action taken on matters related to MASS (section 8 and annex 4);
- .6 note that the Committee adopted resolution FAL.17(48) on *Revised guidelines for the prevention and suppression of the smuggling of wildlife on ships engaged in international maritime traffic* (paragraph 9.9 and annex 5);
- .7 note the decision taken with regard to the harmonization of the rules of procedure (paragraph 16.12);
- .8 endorse the new outputs approved by the Committee for the 2024-2025 biennium (paragraphs 2.12, 17.3, 17.5, 17.7, 17.10 and 19.4);
- .9 note the status report of the outputs for the 2024-2025 biennium (paragraph 17.18 and annex 6);

- .10 note the post-biennial agenda of the Committee (paragraph 17.19 and annex 7);
- .11 endorse the decision of the Committee to hold one meeting during 2026 and one meeting during 2027 (five days with eight associated interpretation sessions for each meeting) (paragraph 17.22);
- .12 endorse the intersessional meetings of EGDH approved by the Committee for 2025 (paragraph 17.24);
- .13 note the approval of the following circulars:
 - .1 FAL.3/Circ.220 on *Explanatory Manual to the FAL Convention* (paragraph 4.8);
 - .2 FAL.5/Circ.53 on *IMO Compendium on Facilitation and Electronic Business* (paragraph 6.20);
 - .2 FAL.5/Circ.54 on *Guidelines on Port Community Systems* (paragraph 7.8); and
 - .4 FAL.3/Circ.217/Rev.2 on *Organization and method of work of the Facilitation Committee* (paragraph 16.8).

20.5 The Maritime Safety Committee, at its 108th session, is invited to note the report of the Committee and, in particular, to:

- .1 in relation to Maritime Services, note the approval of the revised description of Maritime Service 8 (Vessel shore reporting) and to approve a revised version of MSC.1/Circ.1610 on *Initial descriptions of Maritime Services in the context of e-navigation* (paragraph 2.5 and annex 1);
- .2 note the approval of the new output "Development of joint FAL-LEG-MEPC-MS-C guidelines on electronic certificates" and consider becoming an associated organ to this output (paragraph 2.12);
- .3 note the decision taken on the update on the actions taken by the Organization and other relevant bodies and agencies to mitigate organized crime in the maritime sector (paragraph 2.17);
- .4 note the comments made and decisions taken on matters related to the ongoing military conflict between the Russian Federation and Ukraine and its effects on international shipping and seafarers and on condemnation of terrorist attacks (paragraphs 2.20 to 2.32);
- .5 note the discussions on safeguarding the cybersecurity of the Maritime Single Window (paragraphs 5.17 and 5.18);
- .6 note the approval of a revised version of the IMO Compendium on Facilitation and Electronic Business (section 6);
- .7 note the instruction to EGDH to continue the collaboration with IHO to align the Organizations' respective models S-100 and the IMO Compendium (paragraph 6.19);
- .8 note that the FAL Committee, with regard to MASS:

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- .1 was informed that the seminar on implications, challenges and opportunities of MASS operations for ports and public authorities was held on 11 April 2024 (paragraph 8.6);
 - .2 approved the report of the second meeting of the Joint MSC-LEG-FAL Working Group on Maritime Autonomous Surface Ships (MASS-JWG) (paragraph 8.8);
 - .3 approved the road map on addressing MASS issues related to the FAL Convention (paragraph 8.12 and annex 4);
 - .9 note the adoption by the Committee of resolution FAL.17(48) on *Revised Guidelines for the prevention and suppression of the smuggling of wildlife on ships engaged in international maritime traffic* (paragraph 9.9 and annex 5)
 - .10 on API and BRI/PNR, note that the Committee requested the Secretariat to continue attending relevant meetings of the WCO and approved a new output to include API and BRI/PNR declarations in the FAL Convention (paragraphs 10.8 and 17.5, respectively);
 - .11 note the approval of the revised *Organization and method of work of the Facilitation Committee* (FAL.3/Circ.217/Rev.2) (paragraph 16.8);
 - .12 note the decision taken with regard to the harmonization of the rules of procedure (paragraph 16.12);
 - .13 note the approval of a new output to develop an overarching IMO strategy on digitalization to ensure standardization and harmonization and consider becoming an associated organ to this output (paragraphs 17.1 to 17.3);
 - .14 note the approval of a new output on "Development of amendments to the *Revised guidelines for the prevention and suppression of the smuggling of drugs, psychotropic substances and precursor chemicals on ships engaged in international maritime traffic* (resolutions FAL.9(34) and MSC.228(82))" and consider becoming an associated organ to this output (paragraph 17.7);
 - .15 note the approval of a new output on "Amendments to the FAL Convention to review the provisions of a key worker during a public health emergency of international concern" (paragraph 17.10);
 - .16 note that the Committee agreed to include the item on "Revision of the Guidelines on maritime cyber risk management (MSC-FAL.1/Circ.3/Rev.2) in the provisional agenda of FAL 49 (paragraph 17.13); and
 - .17 note the approval of a new output on "revision of the *Guidelines on minimum training and education for mooring personnel* (FAL.6/Circ.11/Rev.1)" (paragraph 19.4).

20.6 The Marine Environment Protection Committee, at its eighty-second session, is invited to note the report of the Committee and, in particular, to:

- .1 note the approval of the new output "Development of joint FAL-LEG-MEPC-MSC guidelines on electronic certificates" and consider becoming an associated organ to this output (paragraph 2.12);

- .2 note the comments made and decisions taken on matters related to the ongoing military conflict between the Russian Federation and Ukraine and its effects on international shipping and seafarers and on condemnation of terrorist attacks (paragraphs 2.20 to 2.32);
- .3 note the approval of a revised version of the IMO Compendium on Facilitation and Electronic Business (section 6);
- .4 note that the Committee, with regard to MASS, took action as set out in section 8; and
- .5 note the approval of the revised *Organization and method of work of the Facilitation Committee* (FAL.3/Circ.217/Rev.2) (paragraph 16.8);
- .6 note the decision taken with regard to the harmonization of the rules of procedure (paragraph 16.12); and
- .7 note the approval of a new output to develop an overarching IMO strategy on digitalization to ensure standardization and harmonization and consider becoming an associated organ to this output (paragraphs 17.1 to 17.3).

20.7 The Technical Cooperation Committee, at its seventy-fourth session, is invited to note the report of the Committee and, in particular, to:

- .1 note the comments made and decisions taken on matters related to the ongoing military conflict between the Russian Federation and Ukraine and its effects on international shipping and seafarers and on condemnation of terrorist attacks (paragraphs 2.20 to 2.32);
- .2 note the technical cooperation initiatives implemented on FAL matters during 2023, and the launch of two e-learning courses on Facilitation since FAL 47 (section 14);
- .3 note the approval of the revised *Organization and method of work of the Facilitation Committee* (FAL.3/Circ.217/Rev.2) (paragraph 16.8); and
- .4 note the decision taken with regard to the harmonization of the rules of procedure (paragraph 16.12).

20.8 The Legal Committee, at its 112th session, is invited to note the report of the Committee and, in particular, to:

- .1 note the approval of the new output "Development of joint FAL-LEG-MEPC-MSC guidelines on electronic certificates" and consider becoming an associated organ to this output (paragraph 2.12);
- .2 note the comments made and decisions taken on matters related to the ongoing military conflict between the Russian Federation and Ukraine and its effects on international shipping and seafarers and on condemnation of terrorist attacks (paragraphs 2.20 to 2.32);
- .3 note that the FAL Committee, with regard to MASS:

- .1 was informed that the seminar on implications, challenges and opportunities of MASS operations for ports and public authorities was held on 11 April 2024 (paragraph 8.6);
- .2 approved the report of the second meeting of the Joint MSC-LEG-FAL Working Group on Maritime Autonomous Surface Ships (MASS-JWG) (paragraph 8.8);
- .3 approved the road map on addressing MASS issues related to the FAL Convention (paragraph 8.12 and annex 4); and
- .4 note the approval of the revised *Organization and method of work of the Facilitation Committee* (FAL.3/Circ.217/Rev.2) (paragraph 16.8); and
- .5 note the decision taken with regard to the harmonization of the rules of procedure (paragraph 16.12).

20.9 The NCSR Sub-Committee, at its eleventh session, is invited:

- .1 in relation to Maritime Services, to note the approval of the revised description of Maritime Service 8 (Vessel shore reporting) (paragraph 2.5 and annex 1);
- .2 to note the instruction to EGDH to continue the collaboration with IHO to align the organizations' respective models S-100 and the IMO Compendium (paragraph 6.19); and
- .3 note the approval of a new output to develop an overarching IMO strategy on digitalization to ensure standardization and harmonization and consider becoming an associated organ to this output (paragraphs 17.1 to 17.3).

20.10 The Sub-Committee on Carriage of Cargoes and Containers, at its tenth session, is invited to consider the outcome of the discussions regarding IAEA's request in connection with the preparation of the module on "Safe Transport of Class-7 by Sea" (paragraphs 19.6 to 19.9).

(The annexes will be issued as an addendum to this report.)
