

SUMMARY

This quarterly report is the 56th in a series concerning safety and environmental protection matters related to ports and shipping. Highlights include:

1. The 81st session of the Legal Committee (LEG 81) of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) was held at IMO Headquarters in London from March 27-31, 2000. Significant actions taken at LEG 81 include: (a) conclusion of work on the draft bunkers convention and reaffirmation of the recommendation for a diplomatic conference in the 2000-2001 biennium to adopt the convention; (b) continued consideration of a protocol to amend the Athens Convention, which would mandate compulsory financial security and establish a right of direct action against the insurer in respect of passenger claims for personal injury and death; and (c) consideration of the report of the IMO/International Labor Organization (ILO) working group on liability and compensation regarding claims for death, personal injury, and abandonment of seafarers. (Item 1-A)
2. The 72nd session of the IMO Maritime Safety Committee (MSC 72) was held at IMO Headquarters in London from May 17-26, 2000. Significant actions taken at MSC 72 include: (a) adoption of amendments to chapter III of the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS Convention) regarding helicopter landing areas on ro-ro passenger ships; (b) approval for adoption at MSC 73 of amendments to SOLAS chapter V regarding the Ice Patrol Service, together with the associated rules for the management, operation, and financing of the North Atlantic Ice Patrol; and (c) approval of the reports of the IMO subcommittees followed by specific actions requested by the subcommittees. (Item 1-C)
3. On April 21, 2000, President Clinton signed Executive Order 13148 titled *Greening of Government Through Leadership in Environmental Management*. Under this Order, the head of each federal agency is responsible for ensuring that all necessary actions are taken to integrate environmental accountability into agency day-to-day decision-making and long-term planning processes, across all agency missions, activities, and functions. Consequently, environmental management considerations must be a fundamental and integral component of federal government policies, operations, planning, and management. (Item 2-A)
4. On May 26, 2000, President Clinton signed Executive Order 13158 titled *Marine Protected Areas*. The purpose of this Order is to, consistent with domestic and international law: (a) strengthen the management, protection, and conservation of existing marine protected areas (MPAs) and establish new or expanded MPAs; (b) develop a scientifically based, comprehensive national system of MPAs representing diverse U.S. marine ecosystems, and the Nation's natural and cultural resources; and (c) avoid causing harm to MPAs through federally conducted, approved, or funded activities. (Item 2-C)

5. The U.S. General Accounting Office (GAO) has published a report dated February 2000 and titled *Marine Pollution: Progress Made to Reduce Marine Pollution by Cruise Ships, but Important Issues Remain*. This report focuses on: (a) the nature and extent of reported illegal discharge cases for foreign-flagged cruise ships from 1993 through 1998; (b) the efforts of relevant federal agencies to prevent, detect, investigate, and prosecute illegal discharges from foreign-flagged cruise ships; (c) the actions taken by cruise ship companies with proven illegal discharge violations to prevent future illegal discharges; and (d) the views of relevant federal agencies and third-party interest groups regarding the actions that cruise ship companies have taken, and what issues, if any, require further attention. (Item 4-A)

6. The Office of the Inspector General (OIG), U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT), has issued a report dated March 10, 2000, and titled *Report on the Program for Scrapping Obsolete Vessels*. This report presents the results of the OIG audit of the program for scrapping obsolete vessels controlled by DOT's Maritime Administration (MARAD). The objectives of this review were to: (a) evaluate MARAD's progress in meeting its legislative mandate to dispose of obsolete vessels in the National Defense Reserve Fleet (NDRF) by September 30, 2001; (b) identify what action MARAD has taken toward meeting the mandate; and (c) identify potential alternatives to assist MARAD in achieving its goals. (Item 4-D)

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