



SUB-COMMITTEE ON FLAG STATE  
IMPLEMENTATION  
7th session  
Agenda item 6

FSI 7/6/1  
12 January 1999  
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## CASUALTY STATISTICS AND INVESTIGATIONS

### Causes of maritime casualties

#### Note by ICFTU

##### SUMMARY

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| <b>Executive summary:</b>  | This document addresses the need for an agreed listing of causes of maritime casualties. |
| <b>Action to be taken:</b> | Paragraph 6  |
| <b>Related documents:</b>  | FSI 6/12, MSC 70/INF.3, MSC 70/23 and A.20/Res.849                                       |

1 At the seventieth session of the Maritime Safety Committee, during the discussion on the report of the sixth session of the FSI Sub-Committee (FSI 6/12), the ICFTU, supported by Vanuatu, concurred with the Secretary-General's comments made on the occasion of the 1998 World Maritime Day regarding the need to examine closely the categories of maritime accidents included in databases. This examination should aim to ascertain the underlying causes of accidents which are presently attributed to "adverse weather" or "disappearances". In response, the Chairman of the MSC suggested that it might be appropriate to make a suitable submission to FSI 7.

2 The ICFTU intervention was prompted by a paper submitted by INTERCARGO on bulk carrier casualty statistics between 1970 and 1997. Although INTERCARGO had sought to secure as much information as possible using information published by the Institute of London Underwriters and in Lloyd's List Casualty Reports, with additional help from Lloyd's Register of Shipping, the analysis contained two headings which clearly fail to address the underlying causes of the casualties. They were "Sinkings; Disappearances" and "Adverse weather". The ICFTU would wish to make clear that this paper is not in any way intended as a criticism of INTERCARGO as we are satisfied that they made every effort to secure the most reliable data. Indeed, their paper (MSC 70/INF.3) made clear that they were disappointed that the reports into many casualties remain unpublished leaving the exact chain of event unsubstantiated and often even unexplained.

3 During the discussion at MSC 70 the observer from the International Union of Marine Insurance (IUMI) advised the Committee that the insurance industry was currently examining the materials it produced on maritime casualties to ascertain whether they could provide greater detail.

4 As IMO progresses its work on Formal Safety Assessment, it is clear that greater information on maritime casualties will be required and that the work would benefit considerably if the various databases on casualty statistics were standardised in a manner which gave some greater insight into the underlying causes of the casualties. It should also be recalled that when the Code for the Investigation of Maritime

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Casualties and Incidents was adopted by the twentieth Assembly, it was acknowledged that the investigation and proper analysis of maritime casualties and incidents can lead to greater awareness of casualty causation and result in remedial measures, including better training, for the purpose of enhancing safety of life at sea and protection of the marine environment. The ICFTU is aware that this may, in some instances, require a higher standard of casualty investigations and that the reports be given a wider circulation. It is also accepted that many casualties are caused by a number of inter-related factors which come together and cause the final outcome.

5 The ICFTU considers that it would be beneficial for the maritime community if the Casualty Statistics Working Group could give some consideration to this issue and produce an agreed methodology for casualty analysis which would clearly identify the major causal reasons for the casualty and which would be used through out the maritime community. The ICFTU also suggests that it may also be appropriate if the Working Group could provide some feedback on the degree of implementation of the Code for the Investigation of Maritime Casualties and Incidents and whether it has improved the quality of casualty reports.

#### **Action requested of the Sub-Committee**

6 The Sub-Committee is invited to note the contents of this document and to request the Casualty Statistics Working Group to consider the matter.

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