

Resolution A.713(17)
Adopted on 6 November 1991
(Agenda item 10)

SAFETY OF SHIPS CARRYING SOLID BULK CARGOES

THE ASSEMBLY,

RECALLING Article 15(j) of the Convention on the International Maritime Organization concerning the functions of the Assembly in relation to regulations and guidelines concerning maritime safety,

RECALLING FURTHER that by resolution A.434(XI), the Assembly adopted the Code of Safe Practice for Solid Bulk Cargoes (BC Code) to ensure the safe carriage of solid bulk cargoes,

NOTING that, by resolution MSC.33(59), the Maritime Safety Committee at its fifty-ninth session adopted amendments to the 1974 SOLAS Convention to include a revised chapter VI dealing with solid bulk cargoes and referring to the BC Code,

BEING CONCERNED at the continued loss of ships carrying solid bulk cargoes, sometimes without trace, and the heavy loss of life incurred,

RECOGNIZING that the nature of cargo and ballast operations can subject the structure of ships which carry solid bulk cargoes to more severe patterns of bending and shear forces and to significant wear,

TAKING INTO ACCOUNT that the speed and methods of loading and the equipment employed in unloading operations at solid bulk cargo terminals may contribute towards structural overstressing and damage,

BEING AWARE of the dangers posed by some solid bulk cargoes through their high density and propensity to shift,

CONSCIOUS of the need for continued and effective maintenance of ships for safety purposes,

BEING INFORMED of decisions made by the Maritime Safety Committee at its fifty-ninth session, in particular its decision to carry out a feasibility study on voyage data recorders with high priority,

BEING ALSO AWARE of work undertaken by Governments, classification societies and other segments of the private sector in this regard,

1. REQUESTS the Maritime Safety Committee to carry out its work with high priority on the safety of ships carrying solid bulk cargoes and to develop as soon as possible the requirements for the design, construction, operation, maintenance and survey of such ships and specify precautionary measures with respect to type of cargoes;
2. REQUESTS the International Association of Classification Societies to develop survey and maintenance requirements for ships carrying solid bulk cargoes as soon as possible and submit them to the Maritime Safety Committee for incorporation in the requirements mentioned above;
3. URGES Governments, classification societies, shipowners and shipmasters, pending the development of the above-mentioned requirements, to take immediate measures along the lines specified in the annex to the present resolution on an interim basis;

4. INVITES Governments to thoroughly investigate accidents occurring to ships carrying solid bulk cargoes entitled to fly their flag and submit to the Organization the conclusions arrived at and recommendations made so as to assist in the adoption of appropriate remedial measures;
5. REQUESTS ALSO classification societies, which are not already doing so, to submit to the Organization, as a matter of urgency, any information on structural problems or other problems found, which might assist in identifying the underlying cause of such accidents;
6. INVITES FURTHER Governments in whose territories solid bulk cargo loading or unloading terminals are situated to advise the Organization of any studies on cargo handling practices at such terminals for information purposes;
7. AUTHORIZES the Maritime Safety Committee to circulate the requirements developed in accordance with paragraph 1 above, which will supersede the provisions set out in the annex to the present resolution, to Governments, classification societies and others concerned, recommending their implementation;
8. REQUESTS the Maritime Safety Committee to keep this subject under continuous review and amend or extend the measures set out in the annex, as necessary.

Annex

INTERIM MEASURES TO BE TAKEN TO IMPROVE THE SAFETY OF SHIPS CARRYING SOLID BULK CARGOES

- 1 Governments, classification societies and shipowners should conduct a close-up survey of the welded attachment of the side shell frames in selected cargo holds including the forward and after cargo holds in way of transition areas in solid bulk carriers at their earliest availability and:
 - .1 ensure that the utmost care is taken during surveys and routine inspections by the personnel of ships which are to carry solid bulk cargoes and that close attention is paid to their structural integrity overall, particularly in way of forward cargo holds and ballast tanks as well as to the condition of protective coatings and the extent and effects of any corrosion;
 - .2 require at each special classification survey and at each intermediate survey following special classification survey number one, a close-up examination of the entire framing system of the number one cargo hold, plus an internal examination of all remaining cargo holds including a close-up examination of a minimum of twenty-five per cent of the framing system in each cargo hold;
 - .3 if special classification survey number two indicates severe deterioration of the hull structure, require the same close-up examination as a part of subsequent annual classification surveys of the hull;
 - .4 re-evaluate existing gauging requirements with a view to increasing the number of required gaugings for cargo hold framing;
 - .5 require that gaugings of shell plating, associated framing and end connections be mandatory at each special classification survey and intermediate survey;
 - .6 require access to the full height of the side shell frame to allow close-up examination during classification surveys;
 - .7 require that operation and loading manuals include permissible shear forces and bending moments during loading and unloading operations in port as well as the transit conditions;

- .8 require that the annual classification survey of the hull may be credited only if the above or alternative measures of equivalent effectiveness are accomplished, or, where a continuous hull survey scheme is applied, if no part of it is overdue.
- 2 Governments, shipowners, shipmasters and loading terminal operators should take all necessary measures to ensure that:
 - .1 cargo operations are conducted in a manner such as not to overstress or damage the structure of the ship;
 - .2 all recommendations of the Code of Safe Practice for Solid Bulk Cargoes are fully complied with, especially those concerning the moisture limits and trimming of solid bulk cargoes.
- 3 Governments should exercise control under regulation I/19 of SOLAS 1974 to pay particular attention to the structural integrity and seaworthiness of ships which are to load solid bulk cargoes.
- 4 Owners of ships which are to carry solid bulk cargoes should:
 - .1 consider fitting them voluntarily with equipment capable of continuously informing ships' personnel of the stresses being imposed on key parts of the ship's structure during loading and unloading and on voyage;
 - .2 fit them at the earliest possible time with elements of the equipment required for the global maritime distress and safety system under the provisions of chapter IV of SOLAS 74 as amended in 1988, especially the satellite EPIRB and the necessary equipment, i.e. NAVTEX and INMARSAT Enhanced Group Call SafetyNET receivers, for the reception of maritime safety information.
- 5 Owners of ships which are to carry solid bulk cargoes should ensure that all such ships participate in the Automatic Mutual-Assistance Vessel Rescue System (AMVER) and other reporting systems applicable to the area where such ships are to navigate.