IMO Facilitation Committee Forty-Eighth Session (FAL 48)

Summary Report

Executive Summary

The following are some of the key agenda items discussed at FAL 48:

- **Maritime Single Window** (MSW)
  The FAL Committee continued discussions on the use of Maritime Single Window (MSW), which became mandatory for Contracting Governments to the FAL Convention on 1 January 2024. In addition, the Committee considered a proposed revision of FAL.5/Circ.46 on *Guidelines on authentication, integrity and confidentiality of information exchanges via maritime single windows and related services*.

- **Maritime Autonomous Surface Ships** (MASS)
  The FAL Committee continued discussions around regulating commercial vessels that can operate independently of human interaction (MASS) and approved the report of the MSC-LEG-FAL Joint Working Group on Maritime Autonomous Surface Ships (MASS-JWG). In addition, the road map on addressing MASS issues related to the Convention on Facilitation of International Maritime Traffic (FAL Convention) was updated.

- **Development of guidelines on Port Community Systems** (PCS)
  The FAL Committee approved new guidelines on Port Community Systems.

- **Digitalisation Initiatives**
  The FAL Committee considered recommendations and proposals stemming from a recent survey conducted by industry partners on digitalisation within ports. The survey indicated a need for standardised and harmonised digital systems across ports globally, given the wide range of different port call interfaces and documentation among Member States, as well as the lack of IT infrastructure on many ships that would enable more efficient data exchange with ports.

Introduction

FAL 48 took place 8 to 12 April 2024. This report summarises the discussions which are relevant to Lloyd's Register's work with our customers.

Additional Information
Lloyd's Register's FAL 47 Summary Report

The following working groups were established:

- WG 1 – Working Group on Facilitation Instruments.
- WG 2 – Working Group on Electronic Business.
- WG 3 – Working Group on Other Facilitation Subjects.

Decisions of other bodies

Additional Information
Lloyd's Register's Summary Reports for: MSC 107, MEPC 80 and NCSR 10

FAL noted the decisions taken by MSC 107, MEPC 80, NCSR 10, C 129 and LEG 110 in relation to the following agenda items specific to the content of this document:

- Agenda item 5 – Application of single window concept:
  - NCSR - Maritime Service 8 – Vessel shore reporting.
  - MSC - *Guidelines on the use of electronic certificates of seafarers* (MSC.1/Circ.1665).
  - MEPC - Guidance on ballast water record-keeping and reporting and adopted the *Guidelines for the use of electronic record books under the BWM Convention* (Resolution MEPC.372(80)).
- Agenda item 8 – LEG and MSC - Measures to address Maritime Autonomous Surface Ships (MASS) in the instruments under the purview of the Facilitation Committee.
- Agenda 17 – Work programme:
  - MSC - Revision of the *Guidelines on maritime cyber risk management*. 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 - Development of guidelines for harmonising the date format of various certificates issued under IMO instruments.
  - MSC - Consideration of descriptions of Maritime Services in the context of e-navigation.
  - Council - 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". The Council, did not agree to this on its biennial list of outputs for 2024-2025 a continuous output, and invited the committees, in particular MSC, MEPC, LEG and FAL, to consider this proposal, as the work that would be undertaken under this output mainly fell under their remit.

Review and update of the Explanatory Manual to the FAL Convention

The Committee approved the revised Explanatory Manual to the FAL Convention. This manual provides guidance on interpreting the legal text of the Convention and its provisions and gives examples of best practices for implementing Standards and Recommended Practices.

The review of the Manual commenced after amendments to the FAL Convention were adopted in May 2022 at FAL 46. A Correspondence Group was established at FAL 47 to carry out the review, focusing on the new or substantially amended provisions, harmonising some elements and terms and checking cross references; and reviewing comments from other organisations on the relevant sections of the Manual.

The Committee noted that there were inconsistencies in Recommended Practice 4.3.2.6 and Standard 4.7.1 on the reporting process to the IMO on stowaway incidents and agreed to address this at the next revision of the annex to the FAL Convention.

Maritime Single Window (MSW)

MSW aims to cut the current approach of multiple reporting by a ship to the port to just a single report that is then available to everyone (port security, customs, immigration, bunkering etc.) who needs the information. Several examples of single window reporting already exist, but each operates differently. Single window reporting is considered to be important to the progress of Maritime Autonomous Ship Systems (MASS).

The ongoing programme of work under FAL is complementary with other IMO initiatives in this area including:

1. The approval of the *Guidelines for setting up a maritime single window* (FAL.5/Circ.42/Rev.3);
2. The implementation of the GISIS (Global Integrated Shipping Information System) module to provide detailed information on the implementation of single window concepts by Member States;
3. The development of the IMO Compendium on Facilitation and Electronic Business (FAL.5/Circ.45) to support harmonisation and standardisation of ship reporting and MSWs across ports; and
4. The development of the *Guidelines on authentication, integrity, and confidentiality of information exchanges via maritime single windows and related services and associated circular* (FAL.5/Circ.46).

The Committee continued discussions on the use of MSW, which became mandatory for Contracting Governments to the FAL Convention on 1 January 2024, under resolution FAL.14(46).

All IMO Member States are now required to use a single, centralised digital platform or "Maritime Single Window" to collect and exchange information with ships when they call at ports. This will streamline procedures to clear the arrival, stay and departure of ships and greatly enhance the efficiency of shipping worldwide.

The Committee received reports from Member States describing their experiences to date with MSW implementation. Angola and Singapore shared their experience with the successful implementation of the SWiFT project in the port of Lobito. The SWiFT project was initiated in 2021 by Singapore, together with the IMO to assist IMO Member States to implement MSW systems in their ports.

In addition, the Committee considered a proposed revision of FAL.5/Circ.46 on *Guidelines on authentication, integrity and confidentiality of information exchanges via maritime single windows and related services*.

The Committee instructed the Expert Group on Data Harmonization (EGDH) to consider including API (Application Programming Interfaces) information as provided in document FAL 48/5 in the IMO Compendium on Facilitation and Electronic Business, taking into account circular FAL.5/Circ.46, and that this task could be done by EGDH under its existing terms of reference.

The Committee considered a request by IAPH to prepare a proposal for a new output to FAL 49 towards amending the annex to the FAL Convention to introduce mandatory cybersecurity requirements and invited interested Member States and international organisations to contact IAPH to prepare a proposal for new output to be submitted to FAL 49.

In addition, the Committee advised that a new e-learning course on Implementation of the MSW was launched in September 2023 on IMO e-Learning platform.

Decisions of other bodies (MSW related items)

With respect to the decisions and outcomes of NCSR 10 on "Maritime Service 8 – Vessel shore reporting", the Committee agreed several modifications to the description of Maritime Service 8 proposed by NCSR and to send the updated document to MSC 108 for approval (draft version of MSC.1/Circ.1610, on *Initial descriptions of Maritime Services in the context of e-navigation*).

With respect to the decisions and outcomes of MSC 107 on *Guidelines on the use of electronic certificates of seafarers* (MSC.1/Circ.1665), the Committee agreed to include a new output for the "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 2025, inviting LEG, MSC and MEPC Committees to become associated organs. In addition, it was noted that the IMO Compendium already included a dataset on ship and company certificates but that crew certificates had not been included yet. Subsequently, the Committee invited Member States and interested organisations to submit a proposal to EGDH.

Review and revision of the IMO Compendium on Facilitation and Electronic Business, including additional e-business solutions

The Committee approved a new version of the IMO Compendium on Facilitation and Electronic Business.

The IMO Compendium aims to harmonise the vast array of electronic data exchanged between ships, ports and other stakeholders. It includes IMO datasets and an IMO reference model which provide a common format and semantics for such data. This enables IT systems from different stakeholders to exchange data efficiently with shared meaning, while supporting the harmonisation of Maritime Single Windows (MSWs) and Port Community Systems (PCS).

The IMO Compendium (sixth version), includes the following new and updated datasets:

- IMO dataset on "Noon data report";
- Revised datasets on "Maritime Declaration of Health", "Ballast water report" "Advanced Passenger Information", and the updated Just In Time (JIT) sub-model; and
- Amendments to the IMO dataset to improve consistency in the naming and definition of IMO data elements.

With respect to the ongoing work of EGDH, the Committee:

- Noted 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;
- Requested EGDH to continue the collaboration with International Hydrographic Organization (IHO) to align the organisations' respective models S-100 and the IMO Compendium;
- Approved the priority list of datasets of EGDH; and
- Approved the terms of reference of EGDH for the next two meetings.

Development of guidelines on Port Community Systems (PCS)

Port Community Systems (PCS) serve as a complementary instrument to the Maritime Single Window (MSW) system. Both are digital IT platforms used to collect and exchange data between stakeholders, streamlining operations and enhancing competitiveness. PCS facilitates the exchange of information between public and private stakeholders involved in port and terminal operations.

The Committee considered the report of the Correspondence Group established at FAL 47, including the draft Guidelines on Port Community Systems, for approval at FAL 48. These will align with existing guidelines of the FAL Committee, particularly the *IMO Guidelines for setting up a maritime single window* (FAL.5/Circ.42/Rev.3).

The Committee approved new guidelines on Port Community Systems.

Maritime Autonomous Surface Ships (MASS)

The FAL Committee continued discussions around regulating commercial vessels that can operate independent of human interaction - Maritime Autonomous Surface Ships (MASS).

In the current phase of discussions on this subject, the IMO is developing a goal-based non-mandatory MASS Code which is expected to be finalised and adopted at MSC 109 (December 2024). The non-mandatory Code is an interim measure prior to the adoption of a mandatory MASS Code which is expected to be adopted at MSC 111 (2026) for entry into force, 1 January 2028. Application is expected to initially be limited to cargo vessels only, excluding passenger ships, which will be reviewed at a later stage.

The Committee approved the report of the Joint Working Group on Maritime Autonomous Surface Ships (MASS-JWG). The MSC-LEG-FAL Joint Working Group on Maritime Autonomous Surface Ships (MASS) met for the second session from 17 to 21 April 2023. MASS-JWG brings together the Maritime Safety Committee, Legal Committee and Facilitation Committee to address common issues related to MASS. The report on the second session of MASS-JWG includes recommendations pertaining to:

- The role and responsibilities of the MASS master, MASS crew;
- The role and responsibilities of the remote operator and remote operation centres;
- Certificates and other documents; and
- Information-sharing, connectivity and cybersecurity.

The Committee agreed the following updates to the roadmap on addressing MASS issues related to the Convention on Facilitation of International Maritime Traffic (FAL Convention):

1. at FAL 49 (Spring, 2025): assess the finalised non-mandatory MASS Code and consider the need for amendments to, and interpretation of, the annex to the FAL Convention based on the outcome of MASS-JWG as well as the outcome of MSC and LEG;
2. at FAL 50 (could be scheduled after MSC 111 in 2026): assess the adopted mandatory MASS Code and consider the need for further amendments to, and interpretation of, the annex to the FAL Convention;
3. at FAL 50: consider 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; and
4. at FAL 51 (2027): adopt amendments to the FAL Convention.

Alongside these discussions, an IMO MASS seminar focusing on the implications, challenges and opportunities of MASS for ports and public authorities took place on Thursday 11 April 2024, at the IMO Headquarters. A recording of this seminar can be found from the IMO channel here.

Decisions of other bodies (MASS related items)

With respect to the decisions and outcomes of LEG 110, the Committee noted that the Legal Committee concurred with the decisions of MSC 106 and FAL 47 with regard to MASS.

With respect to the decisions and outcomes of MSC 107, the Committee:

- Noted the action taken on matters related to maritime autonomous surface ships 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;
- Noted 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
- Noted 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, has been scheduled to be held in conjunction with FAL 48.

Introduction of the API/PNR concept in maritime transport

Included on the agenda of FAL 46 was "Introduction of the API/PNR concept in maritime transport", with a target completion year of 2023. FAL 46 agreed to include the Advance Passenger Information (API) and Passenger Name Record (PNR) datasets proposed by the World Customs Organization (WCO) in the priority list of data sets for EGDH. FAL 47 agreed to include the IMO dataset on API in the IMO Compendium, however, as EGDH had not finalised the draft Booking Reservation Information (BRI)/ PNR dataset, it would not be included in the IMO Compendium yet and extended the target completion year to 2024. In addition, FAL 47 agreed that amending the requirements of the FAL Convention regarding crew and passenger information with additional API and BRI/PNR data would require a new output.

The Committee considered a proposal to add a new output in the work programme to include Advance Passenger Information (API) and BRI/PNR declarations in the FAL Convention. Agreement was reached 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 the API and BRI/PNR for maritime transport", with a target completion year of 2025.

Digitalisation initiatives

The Committee considered recommendations and proposals stemming from a recent survey conducted by industry partners on digitalisation within ports. The survey indicated a need for standardised and harmonised digital systems across ports globally, given the wide range of different port call interfaces and documentation among member States, as well as the lack of IT infrastructure on many ships that would enable more efficient data exchange with ports.

In addition, the Committee considered a proposal for a new output to develop an overarching IMO Strategy on digitalisation to contribute to a more integrated approach to maritime digitalisation in the Organisation. Agreement was reached 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, and inviting MSC and MEPC to become associated organs.

Review of the provisions of "key workers" in the FAL Convention

The Committee considered a proposal to add a new output to modify the definition of "key workers" and relevant amendments in the FAL Convention. Agreement was reached 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.

Any Other Business

The following were amongst the topics discussed under "any other business":

- Update on the ongoing process to amend the International Health Regulations (2005) (IHR), including implications and benefits for alignment between IHR and the FAL Convention.
- A proposal to update the *Guidelines on minimum training and education for mooring personnel* (FAL.6/Circ.11/Rev.1) and approve the revised guidelines via a FAL resolution, thus revoking FAL.6/Circ.11/Rev.1. Included in the proposals are the following:
  - Ships' crew must always notify mooring personnel on location before arrival. A minimum notification time before arrival, departure and shifting berths, must be set.
  - It is essential to set a mooring watch and the mooring personnel must always be at the quay – prepared to carry out mooring operations when a ship arrives, departs and shifts its berth.
  - The condition of mooring lines, which must be tested and inspected regularly.

  The Committee agreed a new output to revise 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.
- E-learning Module on "Safe Transport of Class 7 by Sea". The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) has established the E-Learning Platform for Safe Transport of Radioactive Material (V2.0) which aims to enhance knowledge and awareness among professionals (regulators, industry) involved in this sector. However, to address the delays in and denials of shipments, the IAEA is planning to develop a module on "Safe Transport of Class-7 by Sea" in coordination with the IMO.

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