

PERMANENT COOPERATION FRAMEWORK ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION

Salient point

11th meeting, 22 – 23 September 2021

Attendees

Due to the pandemic situation, the eleventh meeting of the Permanent Cooperation Framework (PCF) for the investigation of accidents in the maritime transport sector was held online on 22-23 September 2021.

Mr Jonas Bäckstrand (SHK - Sweden) chaired the meeting, assisted by Mr Ignatios Nikolaou (Greece – HBMCI), as Deputy Chairperson.

Thirty-four experts from 22 EU MS / EEA Countries attended the meeting. The European Commission (EC) was represented by DG – MOVE and assisted by EMSA. EMSA provided the Secretariat for the meeting.

Introduction

The agenda points included the following:

- **Adoption of PCF10 minutes and PCF10 Salient points;**
- **Updates by Member States, the European Commission and EMSA;**
- **Cooperation and exchange of best practices**
 - Feedback on tools facilitating cooperation between AIBs
- **Enhancing safety investigations**
 - Progress report of WG13 “Human element in AI”
 - Overview of the EMSA tools and services for Accident Investigation
 - Overview of Copernicus Maritime Services
 - Operational support to AIBs by EMSA - Underwater surveys in safety investigations
- **Accident Investigation Directive (AID) revision**
 - Working Group 10 progress report on AID revision
 - Impact assessment state-of-play
- **Investigation reports**
 - Publication of safety information other than safety reports
 - Misuse of data available in safety reports
 - References to published technical material in safety reports
 - Technical observations on final reports for improving their quality
- **Learning from accidents**
 - Maritime falls study
 - Safety Analysis of Data Reported in EMCIP - Analysis on Marine Casualties and Incidents involving navigational accidents
 - EMSA annual overview of marine casualties and incidents 2021
 - Briefing on SAFEMASS/RBAT projects
- **Training and qualification**
 - Training activities for accident investigators
- **EMCIP Governance**
 - Update on EMCIP
 - Improving reporting in EMCIP
 - Data quality
 - Feedback on data sharing
 - Use of EMCIP data for annual HELCOM reports on shipping accidents
 - Assessment of the BREXIT impact on EMCIP reporting
- **AOB**
- **Work Programme**
 - Update / Follow up
 - Input for inter-sessional PCF workshop

Summary of the main outcomes

Updates by the Member States, EMSA and COM

MS shared information on the safety investigations carried out after PCF10 (December 2020), safety topics of interest and the impact of COVID in the investigation process.

The Commission provided an update on the revision of the three safety Directives (AI, FS, PSC).

EMSA mentioned its commitment to provide operational support to AIB upon request as per the Agency's founding regulation and recalled the other topics in the EMSA safety agenda include MASS, batteries, alternative fuel vehicles, electric shipping.

PCF WG progress report

WG4 on training/qualification will continue its work to finalize the catalogue of training courses and draft report writing guidelines.

The Group agreed on the proposal from WG13 to adopt a methodology for AI embracing the systemic approach in safety investigations and instructed the WG13 to develop practical tools supporting the implementation of a systemic perspective in AI.

WG10 will continue being the interlocutor of the Commission for providing technical input in the context of the revision of the AID.

Cooperation and exchange of best practices

The Group took note of the updated version of the "List of web sources to gather information on marine casualties and incidents", "Practices/procedures on data confidentiality when external experts are contracted to support an investigation" and "Updated list of national resources".

Enhancing safety investigations

EMSA provided an overview of the tools and services managed by the Agency that could support AIBs in the context of accident investigation. Furthermore, the Agency provided an overview of Copernicus Maritime Services available to MS.

The Group discussed the added value and existing limitation of integrating underwater surveys in AI for evidence collection and damage assessment for sunken ships, particularly using ROVs. EMSA will circulate a questionnaire to assess the possible users' needs in this field.

AID revision

The contractor in charge of drafting the impact assessment supporting the AID Directive delivered a presentation on the current work, focussing on the background of the study, an overview of the problems identified, their possible solutions and the next steps.

Investigation reports

The Group discussed national transposition issues of the AID that may limit the possibility for some AIB to publish safety-related information other than safety reports.

The possible misuse of data concerning the identification of the ship or Company in safety reports by commercial entities and the potential added value of anonymising this information was debated.

AIB considered that the consultation phase is the appropriate step in the investigation process to ensure that the draft safety report quotes the updated technical material (e.g. technical publications of shipping associations).

EMSA will launch a pilot project with volunteer AIBs to test the agreed methodology to provide technical observations on final reports for improving their quality.

Learning from accidents

Three MS presented a joint study on maritime falls. The study encompassed a statistical analysis of data reported in EMCIP to identify some patterns of relevant occupational accidents. It also considered a systemic approach to explore the context of working onboard vessels on tasks related to the risk of falling.

The Group took note of the information provided and debated how to promote the findings of the study.

EMSA announced that will launch a new safety analysis on EMCIP data concerning navigational accidents. Some MS volunteered to participate in an expert consultation group to provide the Agency with technical input to enhance the analysis.

EMSA is drafting the annual overview 2021. Amongst others, it will include detailed safety indicators measuring the ratio of the number of accidents involving specific vessel types against the relevant ship population.

Training and qualification

EMSA recalled the training initiatives after PCF10 delivered in 2021 and mentioned the tentative plan for 2022, both for EU MS and 3rd Countries.

EMCIP Governance

EMSA informed the Group about the new functionalities available in EMCIP, the planned improvements and input from the UG. The incident reporting module for non-registered users will be shortly configured in production as per AIB's indication.

The Agency updated the GG on implementing the reporting schema when other entitled authorities (OEA) are involved and stressed the benefits of sharing the reporting burden between national authorities.

The Group agreed on the proposal to extend the systematic checks on data quality to various scenarios. This task, likewise other exercises already undertaken, will substantially increase the data quality, minimising MS's burden.

The Group validated the approach for accepting the reported safety investigations with workflow status "proposal" based on automatic checks. The methodology will be completed at a later stage by describing the manual checks to ensure consistency with the safety report. This methodology is a living document that may be adapted following consultation with the GG.

EMSA provided figures on the requests for EMCIP data received since PCF10, showing an increased interest in EMCIP data by various stakeholders.

HELCOM Secretariat gave a summary to the AIBs about the data provided within the EMSA-HELCOM MoU, the completeness of the dataset and its usage in the context of the annual reports prepared by HELCOM on shipping accidents.

EMSA introduced an assessment of the possible impact on the administrative burden for the EU-EEA MS in reporting to EMCIP following the withdrawal of the UK.

SAFEMASS/RBAT

EMSA delivered a presentation of the current status of SAFEMASS/RBAT projects concerning autonomous ships.

SAFEMODE project

The University of Strathclyde provided an update on the state-of-play of the SAFEMODE project and the expected deliverables, focusing on the new SHIELD taxonomy to encode the human element in accident investigation.