

*IMO – A Brief History, Part A***I. Pre-reading/First Reading Activities**

- A.** Read the first paragraph of the text and discuss what you already know about IMO.
- B.** Scan the text ignoring the details and try to find the following:
1. The year when IMO was established: . . . . .
  2. What its first name was: . . . . .
  3. When the IMO Convention entered into force: . . . . .
  4. What the acronym SOLAS stands for: . . . . .
  5. When the Torrey Canyon disaster happened: . . . . .

**Introduction to IMO**

IMO –the International Maritime Organization– is the United Nations specialized agency with responsibility for the safety and security of shipping and the prevention of marine pollution by ships. **4**

Shipping is perhaps the most international of the world’s industries, serving more than 90 per cent of global trade by carrying huge quantities of cargo cost effectively, cleanly and safely. **7**

The ownership and management chain surrounding any ship can embrace many countries and ships spend their economic life moving between different jurisdictions, often far from the country of registry. There is, therefore, a need for international standards to regulate shipping – which can be adopted and accepted by all. The first maritime treaties date back

to the 19th century. Later, the Titanic disaster of 1912 spawned the first International Safety of Life at Sea –SOLAS– convention, still the most important treaty addressing maritime safety. **15**

## Brief history of IMO

It has always been recognized that the best way of improving safety at sea is by developing international regulations that are followed by all shipping nations and from the mid-19th century onwards a number of such treaties were adopted. Several countries proposed that a permanent international body should be established to promote maritime safety more effectively, but it was not until the establishment of the United Nations itself that these hopes were realized. In 1948 an international conference in Geneva adopted a convention formally establishing IMO (the original name was the Inter-Governmental Maritime Consultative Organization, or IMCO, but the name was changed in 1982 to IMO). **26**

The IMO Convention entered into force in 1958 and the new Organization met for the first time the following year. **28**

The purposes of the Organization, as summarized by Article 1(a) of the Convention, are ‘to provide machinery for cooperation among Governments in the field of governmental regulation and practices relating to technical matters of all kinds affecting shipping engaged in international trade; to encourage and facilitate the general adoption of the highest practicable standards in matters concerning maritime safety, efficiency of navigation and prevention and control of marine pollution from ships’. The Organization is also empowered to deal with administrative and legal matters related to these purposes. **37**

IMO’s first task was to adopt a new version of the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS), the most important of all treaties dealing with maritime safety. This was achieved in 1960 and IMO then turned its attention to such matters as the facilitation of international maritime traffic, load lines and the carriage of dangerous goods, while the system of measuring the tonnage of ships was revised. But although safety was and remains IMO’s most important responsibility, a new problem began to emerge – pollution. The growth in the amount of oil being transported by sea and in the size of oil tankers was of particular

concern and the **Torrey Canyon** disaster of 1967, in which 120,000 tons of oil was spilled, demonstrated the scale of the problem. **48**

During the next few years IMO introduced a series of measures designed to prevent tanker accidents and to minimize their consequences. It also tackled the environmental threat caused by routine operations such as the cleaning of oil cargo tanks and the disposal of engine room wastes – in tonnage terms a bigger menace than accidental pollution. **53**

The most important of all these measures was the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships, 1973, as modified by the Protocol of 1978 relating thereto (MARPOL 73/78). It covers not only accidental and operational oil pollution but also pollution by chemicals, goods in packaged form, sewage, garbage and air pollution. **58**

IMO was also given the task of establishing a system for providing compensation to those who had suffered financially as a result of pollution. Two treaties were adopted, in 1969 and 1971, which enabled victims of oil pollution to obtain compensation much more simply and quickly than had been possible before. Both treaties were amended in 1992, and again in 2000, to increase the limits of compensation payable to victims of pollution. A number of other legal conventions have been developed since, most of which concern liability and compensation issues. **66**

## **II. Reading Comprehension Activities**

**A.** *Read the text more carefully and complete the following sentences so that they are correct according to the meaning of the text:*

1. The first international convention about safety of life at sea (SOLAS) was .....
2. The first international regulations about shipping were created .....
3. The IMO was established after .....
4. One of the purposes of IMO is to show different governments the way they can .....
5. The most important treaty about maritime safety .....
6. The first task of IMO from 1960 onwards was .....
7. Another concern of IMO following the Torrey Canyon tragedy is .....

8. The MARPOL 73/78 convention addresses the problems . . . . .  
 . . . . .

**B.** *Answer the following open questions:*

1. Why is shipping considered as the most international of the world's industries?  
 . . . . .  
 . . . . .
2. Why are international regulations for shipping essential?  
 . . . . .
3. When did international regulations start developing?  
 . . . . .
4. When did IMO meet for the first time?  
 . . . . .
5. When was SOLAS revised?  
 . . . . .
6. What was IMO's focus of attention after 1960?  
 . . . . .
7. What is considered to be more threatening than accidental pollution?  
 . . . . .
8. When were the two treaties that deal with the compensation of victims of oil pollution adopted?  
 . . . . .  
 . . . . .
9. When were they revised and for what reason?  
 . . . . .
10. What do other legal conventions deal with?  
 . . . . .

**III. Vocabulary Activities**

**A.** *Find words or expressions in the text that match the following definitions:*

1. Producing optimum results for the expenditure (lines 5-10)  
 . . . . .

2. To include; to contain (lines 6-10) . . . . .
3. The right power or authority to administer justice by hearing and determining controversies; the territory over which authority is exercised (lines 6-10) . . . . .
4. Country under whose maritime laws a ship is registered and whose flag it flies (lines 6-10) . . . . .
5. To produce; to give birth to (lines 11-15) . . . . .
6. Done in an adequate way to accomplish a purpose or so that it produces the intended or expected result (lines 21-25) . . . . .
7. A group of people or a system by which action is maintained or by which some result is obtained (lines 26-30) . . . . .
8. To give power or authority to (lines 36-40) . . . . .
9. The lines marked on the sides of a cargo vessel to indicate the depth to which a vessel may be immersed under certain conditions (also called: Plimsoll line named after Samuel Plimsoll, 1824-98, MP, who advocated its adoption) (lines 41-45) . . . . .
10. To come forth into view or notice (lines 41-45) . . . . .
11. To reduce to the smallest amount or degree (lines 46-50) . . . . .
12. To undertake; to handle; to solve (lines 51-55) . . . . .
13. Something that threatens to cause evil, harm or injury (lines 51-55) . . . . .
14. Waste matter from domestic or industrial establishments that is carried away in sewers or drains (lines 56-60) . . . . .
15. Altered; modified (lines 61-65) . . . . .

**B.** Use words from exercise A in an appropriate form to complete the following sentences:

1. His marriage with such an older woman . . . . . many rumors.
2. He has always been capable of . . . . . the most difficult problems.
3. The international regulations for removing wrecks have been designed in such a way as to . . . . . risks.
4. A thesaurus . . . . . a great variety of subjects.
5. My lawyer has been . . . . . to make the deal for me.

6. We soon saw a ship . . . . . from the fog.
7. The new measures are expected to cure unemployment . . . . .
8. The . . . . . of the new government has been effective in solving the problem of unemployment.
9. It is believed that the Congress may . . . . . the proposed tax bill.
10. All islands to the northwest are his . . . . .

**IV. Maritime Terms**

A. Match the following maritime terms with their definitions:

a. breakbulk vessel	b. bulk carrier	c. capesize
d. cable ship	e. chemical tanker	f. collier

1. Vessel used for transporting coal
2. A ship (usually dry or wet bulker) that is too large to transit the canals and as a consequence must travel via the ‘capes’ ( i.e Cape of Good Hope, Cape Horn).
3. Ship specially designed for the transport of chemicals.
4. A specially constructed ship for the laying and repairing of telegraph and telephone cables across channels, seas, lakes and oceans.
5. A general, multipurpose cargo ship that carries cargoes of non-uniform sizes, often on pallets, resulting in labour-intensive loading and unloading.
6. Ship specifically designed to transport large amounts of cargoes such as sugar, grain, wine, ore etc.

**V. Translation activities**

A. Which of the terms above correspond to the following Greek terms?

1. Πλοίο ποντίσεως καλωδίων: . . . . .

2. Δεξαμενόπλοιο μεταφοράς χημικών προϊόντων: .....
3. Πλοίο μεταφοράς ομοειδούς φορτίου χύμα: .....
4. Ανθρακοφόρο πλοίο: .....

**B.** *Translate the following text into Greek:*

The decision by a shipowner to invest in new tonnage is normally based on an evaluation of expected future freight market conditions for different trades and the cost of various inputs (capital, labour, energy, etc) needed in the production of shipping services. This evaluation will determine whether the shipowner will invest in new tonnage at all, and if so the type (e.g. bulk carrier, general cargo, tween-decker, etc.) and the size of ship to be chosen.

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