

SUB-COMMITTEE ON IMPLEMENTATION
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Agenda item 5

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**MEASURES TO HARMONIZE PORT STATE CONTROL (PSC) ACTIVITIES AND
PROCEDURES WORLDWIDE**

Comments on document III 5/5/3

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SUMMARY

Executive summary: This submission comments on document III 5/5/3 regarding the EQUASIS information system, and draws attention to some industry concerns arising from duplicate entries of national port State control (PSC) inspection data, submitted by regional PSC regimes for inclusion on databases of PSC information systems

Strategic direction, if applicable: Other work

Output: OW 10

Action to be taken: Paragraph 9

Related document: III 5/5/3

Introduction

1 This document is submitted in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 6.12.5 of the *Organization and method of work of the Maritime Safety Committee and the Marine Environment Protection Committee and their subsidiary bodies* (MSC-MEPC.1/Circ.5/Rev.1) and comments on document III 5/5/3 (Secretariat) containing information on the recent developments concerning the EQUASIS information system, and draws attention to some industry concerns arising from duplicate entries on databases of port State control (PSC) information systems such as EQUASIS and GISIS.

2 In order to provide a global overview of the performance of the world merchant fleet and to help improve the safety and quality of ships, PSC information systems such as EQUASIS and GISIS disseminate PSC inspection data. This inspection data, which is provided by national PSC authorities to regional PSC regimes for inclusion on databases of PSC information systems, can be used, inter alia, for enforcement purposes (e.g. to target ships for inspection) and for various commercial purposes (e.g. by charterers).

Discussion

3 The co-sponsors have identified that, in cases where national PSC authorities are members of two or more regional PSC regimes, the entries of a single PSC inspection may be duplicated in the databases of PSC information systems (i.e. inserted more than once as separate entries), since the data is submitted by more than one regional PSC regime.

4 This has raised concerns within the industry, particularly in cases where an inspection has resulted in a detention. Given that a single PSC inspection can be listed as different separate entries in databases of PSC information systems, this can lead to an individual ship being perceived as having received two or more detentions when, in reality, it was only detained once. In some cases, the same inspection has been listed under different dates. As a result, this can provide the wrong impression regarding the performance of a particular ship and, therefore, lead to serious commercial consequences for shipowners and operators in all sectors and trades, while also negatively affecting the effective deployment of PSC resources.

5 EQUASIS is a good example of such a PSC information system, as it receives inspection data for the same incident from more than one regional PSC regime, and subsequently lists them as separate entries in its database. The role of EQUASIS is simply to present the data it receives, not to interpret it or to make assumptions about it. Therefore, finding a solution to help eliminate duplicate entries in EQUASIS would require a joint effort between the regional PSC regimes, EQUASIS and national PSC authorities, especially those that currently submit data to more than one regional PSC regime.

6 The co-sponsors consider that options exist to address these issues, for example, by improving the initial filtering processes of databases of PSC information systems to remove duplicate entries upon receipt from regional PSC regimes. In addition, lessons might be learned from other data systems which may also be faced with the risk of duplicate entries, e.g. casualty data in the aviation sector.

7 The co-sponsors consider that data about a single PSC inspection must be recorded only once in the databases of PSC information systems such as EQUASIS. This would ensure that PSC information systems accurately reflect the quality of an individual ship. Noting that the credibility of PSC information systems is based on the provision of accurate inspection data about ships, failure to address this situation risks undermining that credibility.

Proposal

8 Therefore, taking into account the issues highlighted in this document, the co-sponsors propose that the Sub-Committee should encourage the custodians of PSC information systems, regional PSC regimes and national PSC authorities to:

- .1 coordinate and jointly consider measures to eliminate duplicate entries on databases of PSC information systems, in cooperation with other relevant stakeholders, as appropriate (e.g. flag Administrations, and non-governmental organizations);
- .2 cooperate and coordinate to the best extent possible, in order to safeguard the quality and accuracy of the data made available by PSC information systems; and

- .3 coordinate and jointly explore, preferably under the auspices of the Organization for harmonization purposes, potential remedial mechanisms and possible lessons which might be learned from the aviation industry, as proposed in paragraph 6 of this document.

Action requested of the Sub-Committee

- 9 The Sub-Committee is invited to consider the comments and proposal in paragraph 8 of this document, and take action as appropriate.
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