

International maritime organization

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Structure International Maritime Organization (IMO) is an agency in the United Nations that is responsible for the safety and security of shipping and the prevention of marine pollution. The IMO is broken up into an Assembly, a Council and five other committees: Maritime Safety Committee, Marine Environment Protection Committee, Legal Committee, Technical Co-operation Committee, and the Facilitation Committee. The Assembly is the overseer of the Organization, it consists of member states (countries that have adopted the IMO) and meets once every two years.

It is also responsible for voting the budget and determining the financial status of the Organization. The Council is elected by the Assembly for a two term period. It consists of ten countries with the largest interest in providing international shipping services, ten countries with the largest interest in international seaborne trade, and twenty countries which have special interests in maritime navigation. Their functions are to co-ordinate the activities of the Committees and receive reports and proposals from the Committees and submit them to the Assembly.

They also appoint the Secretary General of the IMO which currently is Koji Sekimizu (Japan) and enter into agreements about their connections with other Organizations. The Maritime Safety Committee's functions are to consider matter relating to aids of navigation, construction and equipment of vessels, rules of the road, handling of dangerous cargo, maritime safety procedures, marine casualty investigations, and more. The Marine Environment Protection Committee determines any matter that controls the prevention and pollution of ships. It especially makes regulations to ensure their enforcement.

The Legal Committee deals with all legal matters within the IMO. The Technical Co-operation Committee considers matters that implement the IMO as the executive Organization in the technical co-operation field. The Facilitation Committee eliminates unnecessary regulations in international shipping, by implementing all aspects of the Convention on Facilitation of International Maritime Traffic. History of the IMO When IMO was adopted in 1948 its first task was to make a new version of SOLAS. The first task was the biggest and so far most important the IMO has had to deal with.

After SOLAS, it focused on maritime traffic, load lines, and pollution. Pollution has recently become the major focus of the IMO and in response to the pollution issue created the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships. In 1988 GMDSS was adopted so now a ship in distress anywhere in the world can be guaranteed assistance. The International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping (STCW) improved standards and gave IMO power to check Government actions and record all of this information. Cite: www.imo.org