

IMO MSC 111: Key Deliberations, Participation and Outcomes



IMO MSC 111 Session

The 111th Session of the Maritime Safety Committee (MSC 111) of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) was held at the IMO Headquarters, London, from 13th to 22nd May 2026. The session deliberated on key maritime safety issues including alternative fuels, maritime digitalisation, remote inspections, maritime security, dangerous goods transportation, lifeboat safety and future technologies supporting greenhouse gas reduction.

Participation

The session was attended by delegates and representatives from various maritime administrations, classification societies, shipyards, maritime organisations and shipping companies through both physical and remote participation.

Delegates and Representatives from India physically attended:

Shri Praveen Nair – Deputy Chief Surveyor, Directorate General of Shipping – Head of Delegation

Shri Sunil Kumar – Vice President - IME(I) and CTO & Head (T&A) - Great Eastern Shipping

Shri Lokanath Prasad Tripathy – Head QHSE, DPA and CSO, Greatship India Limited

Participants who attended remotely are:

1. **Capt. Tapesh Ghosh** – Nautical Surveyor, Mercantile Marine Department
2. **Cdr. Sandeep Kumar** – Senior Principal Surveyor, Indian Register of Shipping

3. **Shri Bhagatsingh Geda** – Surveyor, Indian Register of Shipping
4. **Shri Jathesh Chandra Gopinathan** – General Manager, Cochin Shipyard Limited
5. **Shri Harikrishnan Usha Ratnakaran** – Senior Manager, Cochin Shipyard Limited
6. **Shri Sreeram Kesava Sarma** – Manager, Cochin Shipyard Limited
7. **Shri Nebu Oommen** – Ship Surveyor / Deputy Director General (Technical), Directorate General of Shipping
8. **Shri Pradeep Sudhakar** – Chief Ship Surveyor, Directorate General of Shipping

Shri Harsh Kumar, IFS, First Secretary (Political & IMO), High Commission of India, London also participated





in the deliberations and shared his views during the session, reflecting the active engagement of Indian maritime stakeholders in the Committee's proceedings. The participation reflected active involvement from Indian maritime stakeholders in the deliberations of the Committee.

3. Key Outcomes of MSC 111

Alternative Fuels and Future Safety Framework

MSC 111 made significant progress towards the development of safety regulations and frameworks for hydrogen, ammonia, Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS) and other low-flashpoint fuels. The Committee continued discussions on the "One Ship – One Code"

principle and development of interim guidelines for hydrogen and ammonia-fuelled ships. The discussions emphasised the growing importance of risk assessments, safety studies, early engagement with Flag Administrations and Classification Societies and future crew competency requirements for alternative fuel projects.

Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS)

The Committee further advanced the regulatory framework for Battery Energy Storage Systems, with further technical work being referred to the SDC Sub-Committee. The discussions highlighted the need for stricter fire safety measures, thermal runaway protection, improved emergency response procedures and enhanced



MASSA Maritime Academy, CHENNAI

New Courses @ CHENNAI

IGF Basic & IGF Advanced (DGS Approved)

Value-added:-

Methanol Bunkering - ME Engines - WIN-GD Engines - RT Flex Engines - EEE Workshop - SCR (Selective Catalytic Reduction)- E-ORB

Mob: 8807025336/7200055336
Email: mmachennai@massa.net.in
Website: <http://massa-academy-chennai.com>

crew familiarisation for battery-related incidents onboard hybrid and battery-supported vessels.

SOLAS Amendments and Mandatory Codes

MSC 111 adopted several amendments to SOLAS and mandatory Codes, which are expected to enter into force on 1 January 2028. Key amendments included the introduction of the VHF Data Exchange System (VDES), Remote Inspection Techniques (RIT) under the ESP Code, IMDG Code amendments (43-26), amendments related to lifeboats and life-saving appliances, and amendments to Load Line requirements concerning guard rails. These developments are expected to require updates to Safety Management Systems (SMS), technical manuals, digital communication systems and crew training procedures.

Remote Inspection Techniques (RIT)

The Committee formally adopted amendments permitting the use of Remote Inspection Techniques under the ESP Code. This development is expected to increase the use of drones, digital inspection methods and remote survey procedures, thereby reducing survey downtime and improving inspection efficiency. Ship operators may need to enhance onboard digital connectivity and recordkeeping systems to support future remote inspections.

IMDG Code Amendments

MSC 111 adopted amendments to the IMDG Code with voluntary implementation from 1 January 2027 and mandatory implementation from 1 January 2028. The amendments are expected to impact dangerous goods documentation, cargo handling procedures, crew training and onboard reference materials. Coordination between shipowners, charterers, shippers and terminals will become increasingly important for compliance.

Maritime Security – Strait of Hormuz

The Committee discussed the maritime security situation in the Arabian Sea, Sea of Oman and Strait of Hormuz and adopted a resolution concerning the safety and security of navigation and protection of seafarers. The discussions emphasised the continued operational and insurance risks in the Gulf region and highlighted the importance of voyage planning, threat assessment, crew welfare and emergency preparedness.

Guidance on Training and Certification of Seafarers

MSC 111 approved guidance concerning training and certification of seafarers affected by the regional situation in the Arabian Sea

and Gulf region. The guidance focused on certification flexibility, support to affected crew members, facilitation of crew changes, fatigue management and coordination with Flag States, Manning Offices and training providers.

LRIT Financial Changes

The Committee also discussed proposed changes to the LRIT financial architecture, including proposals to make certain coastal State reports free of charge. Although no major operational impact is expected immediately, the changes may support wider LRIT usage and improved maritime domain awareness.

Lifeboat and Life-Saving Appliance (LSA) Amendments

MSC 111 adopted amendments related to free-fall lifeboat testing and associated maintenance requirements. The amendments are expected to improve safety during drills and maintenance operations while requiring updates to shipboard maintenance procedures, planned maintenance systems and operational manuals before the amendments enter into force in 2028.

4. Overall Observations

MSC 111 reflected the IMO's increasing focus on safer energy transition, alternative fuels, maritime digitalisation, smart inspections, maritime security and risk-based regulation. While most amendments are scheduled to enter into force from 2028, the discussions emphasised the importance of early preparation, proactive compliance planning, enhanced crew competency, digital readiness and stronger risk management systems across the maritime industry.

