

ROPME
SEA KAPS



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**MEMAC PLANNING MEETING
ON REGIONAL PORT STATE
CONTROL**



BAHRAIN, 7-9 JUNE 1999

INTRODUCTION

In cooperation with the GCC and with the support of the IMO, MEMAC organised a Legal/Technical Expert Planning Meeting which was held in Manama, Bahrain from 7-9 June 1999 on the Development of Port State Control (PSC) for the ROPME Sea Area. Delegates from Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and United Arab Emirates attended this meeting. Representatives from UNEP/ROWA were also attended as observers.



OPENING OF THE MEETING

The Meeting was opened by a welcome statement of H.E. Dr. Abdul Rahman Al-Awadi, Executive Secretary of ROPME delivered on his behalf by Captain A.M. Al-Janahi, Director of MEMAC. In his statement, he expressed that the purpose of the meeting was to prepare the first draft of the Regional Port State Control Memorandum of Understanding and the complementary training programs required to implement the procedure. He said that our concern is for this Region, as it is known to be one of the most sensitive and stressed ecological regions in the world, and that unfortunately it also attracts many sub-standard vessels, as one of the last refuges for their unwelcomed operations.



He also stated that MEMAC has consequently implemented the recent decisions of ROPME Council of Ministers in favour of developing Regional Port State Control procedures, in co-operation with the GCC Secretariat and the IMO, by convening this Meeting.

The Director of Environmental Protection Department, Dr. Fahmi H. A. Al-Ali, on behalf of the GCC Secretariat, welcomed the representatives of the participating countries and expressed his thanks to MEMAC for its support and organization of the Meeting. He stressed the importance of the Meeting which aimed at exchanging views regarding Port State Control in the Region, as an important issue which started in 1995 with the co-operation and co-ordination among GCC and ROPME Secretariates and Member States. He said that the first co-ordinating meeting had been held in the State of Kuwait in February 1996. In his view, the commitment, co-operation and co-ordination in this field as representatives of Member States or Regional and International Organizations would be a very important source in bringing about success in protecting the marine environment and ensuring safety of life at sea in this region.

The representative of the IMO, Mr. Fernando Plaza emphasized the importance of Port State Control in the elimination of sub-standard shipping and stressed that it should be seen also as a tool to help Maritime Administrations to comply with their own responsibilities as flag States.

He also stressed that the importance of both ratification and effective implementation of relevant international Conventions by the participating Administrations in the region could not be overstressed, since the effectiveness of any Port State Control initiative was totally dependent upon the majority of the participating countries having ratified and implemented those relevant instruments.

Mr. Plaza further gave a brief overview of the current operational Port State Control initiatives elsewhere in the world and stressed the importance of regional co-operation and co-ordination among the various Agreements, which would lead to an enhanced and harmonized global perspective of Port State Control. It was important for the different regions to work together and share information which would ultimately lead to a more proactive measure to ensure the achievement of IMO's twin objectives of safer shipping and cleaner oceans. Mr. Plaza went on to highlight the benefits of harmonized qualifications, entry requirements and profiles of port State control officers as well as of standardized Port State Control operations.

In his presentation on Port State Control and non-convention sized ships, the IMO Consultant Capt. B. Rial presented some of the main considerations which need to be taken into account. These included the development of regional standards for non-convention sized ships, bearing in mind the diverse range of





such ships. In addition, the need for effective legal and regulatory regimes, under which a structured maritime administration could operate, was highlighted. The importance of training was stressed. In addition, problem areas such as un-classed ships, the application of the Near Coastal voyage concept, and exemptions were addressed. It was also pointed out that an effective Secretariat and an efficient Information Centre were crucial to the success of the implementation of a Regional PSC programme.

In accordance with the Meeting Programme, the delegates gave an overview of their capabilities and experience to exercise Port State Control. After expressing their appreciation to MEMAC as the organizer for this important initiative, specific aspects which were formulated either in writing or orally relating to the length of coastlines, number of ports, average port-visits per year and information on vessels calling at other ports in the region, national capacity and experience to carry out port state control were highlighted. Some delegates also expressed their views as to the location of the Regional Information Centre.

In the second day of the Meeting, the participants were divided into two working groups (WG) as follows:

- 1. Draft Agreement of Co-operation (WG 1)**



The Chairman and the IMO representative drew the attention of the Meeting to the need for the establishment of the Working Group on the Draft Agreement of Co-operation to provide a suitable Draft Text of the intended Memorandum. This MOU should be developed along internationally accepted guidelines, which should also refer to the small vessel fleets, plying in the region, as well as to those vessels outside compliance with other regional/international requirements for which there are in existence Codes and Guidelines already adopted.

2. Training Programme (WG 2)

The need for training, highlighted by the majority of participating countries, calls for the development of a plan of action, including short-term and long-term phases, to cater for the requirements of the region and the Working Group was tasked with a preliminary study and related framework.

The Meeting instructed the two Working Groups to work taking into account documentation available and comments and proposals submitted at this session and to present their respective reports to the Plenary Session, on the last day of the Meeting.

The Meeting discussed the reports of the two Working Groups and approved them.

The Meeting adopted its General Report, and agreed that it would be editorially finalized based on the draft report submitted to the Plenary which was considered and approved, as amended, on 9 June 1999.

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

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