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**UNIFIED INTERPRETATION TO PROVISIONS OF IMO SAFETY, SECURITY, AND
ENVIRONMENT-RELATED CONVENTIONS**

Proposed interpretation of requirements for noise in workshops

Submitted by IACS

SUMMARY

Executive summary: This document proposes an interpretation of paragraph 4.2.1 of the Code on noise levels on board ships (resolution MSC.337(91))

Strategic direction, if applicable: 6

Output: 6.1

Action to be taken: Paragraph 9

Related document: MSC 91/3/14

Introduction

1 The Code on noise levels on board ships (the Code) was adopted by resolution MSC.337(91) to apply to new ships as defined in SOLAS regulation II-1/3-12.1.

Background

2 The main intention of the Code is to ensure a sustainable comfort level on board ships for the seafarers during their rest, to avoid hearing damage during their work, and by this reduce the risk of human fatigue.

3 Paragraph 4.2.1 of the Code restricts noise level of "Workshops other than those forming part of machinery spaces" to 85 dB(A).

4 The Code assigns the limits for noise levels to the workspaces as follows:

- .1 110 dB(A) to machinery spaces;
- .2 85 dB(A) to workshops other than those forming part of machinery spaces and non-specified workspaces; and
- .3 75 dB(A) to machinery control rooms.

Discussion

5 When a workshop is enclosed by bulkheads, although it is in an area adjacent to the machinery space, the workshop is considered as a "workshop other than those forming part of machinery spaces", i.e. with the noise criterion of 85 dB(A). For areas where tools and desks are located beside the engines (and within the engine-room), and where crew are intended to carry out work, such areas are considered as a "machinery space", i.e. with the noise criterion of 110 dB(A).

6 IACS had previously submitted document MSC 91/3/14 commenting on the draft Code and raising a similar issue regarding a potential ambiguity in the understanding of the term "workshops". It is understood that the intention of the expression "workshop other than those forming part of machinery spaces" is to differentiate between workshops inside the engine-room without any separating bulkheads, and workshops separated by bulkheads. This understanding is further supported by the definition of "duty stations" in paragraph 1.4.12 of the Code as follows.

"1.4.12 *Duty stations*: Those spaces in which the main navigating equipment, the ship's radio or the emergency source of power are located or where the fire recording or fire control equipment is centralized and also those spaces used for galleys, main pantries, stores (except isolated pantries and lockers), mail and specie rooms, workshops other than those forming part of the machinery spaces and similar such spaces."

7 Also, it should be mentioned that the noise criteria inside workshops were defined as 85 dB(A) since 1981 and, in principle, no significant effort is needed to comply with the noise criterion of 85 dB(A).

Proposal

8 To address the above considerations, IACS proposes an interpretation to clarify the application of the noise limit of 85 dB(A) to workshops other than those forming part of machinery spaces, as contained in the annex to this document.

Action requested of the Sub-Committee

9 The Sub-Committee is invited to consider the information, in particular the proposed interpretation set out in the annex, and to take action, as appropriate.

ANNEX

**DRAFT INTERPRETATION ON THE NOISE LEVEL LIMIT
IN WORKSHOPS ON BOARD SHIPS**

Interpretation of paragraph 4.2.1 of the annex of resolution MSC.337(91) on the Code on noise levels on board ships

Part of paragraph 4.2.1 reads as follows:

4.2 Noise level limits

Limits for noise levels (dB(A)) are specified for various spaces as follows:

Designation of rooms and spaces	Ship size	
	1,600 up to 10,000 GT	≥10,000 GT
4.2.1 Workspaces (see 5.1)		
Workshops other than those forming part of machinery spaces	85	85

Interpretation

For the purposes of applying provisions in the annex to resolution MSC.337(91) on the Code on noise levels on board ships, "workshops other than those forming part of machinery spaces" should be workshops which are separated from the engine-room with bulkheads extending from deck to deck, which may include access doors of the equivalent acoustic insulating properties as the bulkhead. Workbenches and workstations located inside the machinery space should not be considered as "workshops other than those forming part of machinery spaces".

The noise level limit for workshops, which are forming part of machinery space, should be as for the machinery space: 110 dB(A).