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Background

Annual HELCOM reports on shipping accidents in the Baltic Sea have been compiled by the Secretariat based on information received from the Baltic Sea countries. In recent years, there have been a number of changes in national databases and reporting around ship accidents, *inter alia*, due to recent developments such as the European Marine Casualty Information Platform (EMCIP) database. The changes in the reporting have raised questions on the validity of time series presentations of the HELCOM data as years may not be directly comparable due to non-quantified changes in the source database contents, and thus the content of the accident data.

The matter was discussed at SAFE NAV 7-2016 which requested the Secretariat to include data from EMCIP to produce the annual report on shipping accidents. Furthermore, the HELCOM Response work plan for 2017-2018 includes a provision that the Secretariat should establish a data flow with EMSA to have access to the EMCIP database. Currently, however, the HELCOM Secretariat does not have access to the EMCIP database and therefore has to request information from the Contracting Parties to compile the annual reports on shipping accidents.

Recent developments

In June 2018, the Secretariat initiated a discussion with EMSA in order to obtain access to the EMCIP database to produce the report for 2014-2017. This period was not covered in the previous annual reports due to limited resources at the Secretariat. It was not, however, possible to get access to the 2014-2017 EMCIP data in time to be able to report to Maritime 18-2018. The Secretariat, therefore, used the data reported from the countries using the existing template, as submitted in document 9-1.

If the Meeting agrees, and if the Secretariat obtains access to EMCIP, the Secretariat would use the data from EMCIP for future annual reports, whereby those Contracting Parties that are EU Member States will no longer be required to provide accident data to the HELCOM Secretariat. However, the Secretariat would continue requesting Russia to provide their accident data using the same template as for previous years.

The data template used in HELCOM accident reporting is somewhat broader than that of EMCIP. In order to amend the EMCIP dataset, it is understood that the Permanent Cooperation Framework (PCF) for the Investigation of Accidents in the Maritime Transport Sector would have to agree on the new provisions. Alternatively, HELCOM could use the EMCIP dataset, which is the format in which some Contracting Parties already have been reporting in recent years.

Action requested

The Meeting is invited to consider the information provided and decide on whether EMCIP should be used as the primary source for accident data in future annual reports. If so decided, the Meeting is invited to request the Secretariat to continue liaising with EMSA regarding obtaining access to EMCIP, and agree on whether HELCOM should use the current EMCIP dataset, or whether new provisions to the EMCIP dataset should be proposed through the PCF.