Preliminary Survey Responses Regarding Implementation of IMO Polar Code

National Antarctic Programme vessels

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Summary

This paper presents preliminary responses from a COMNAP survey on National Antarctic Programme vessels and their implementation of the IMO International Code for Ships Operating in Polar Waters (Polar Code). Completion of the survey was disrupted due to challenges related to the global pandemic, so this paper presents only preliminary results.

Background

COMNAP has been discussing the IMO Polar Code since before its adoption in 2014. The Polar Code came into force on 1 January 2017. Generally, the main requirements are related to safety, protection of the environment and seafarer competence.

In order to inform COMNAP discussions and assist our Members to share best practice related to these requirements, and also to inform the ATCM session to “share views on the IMO Polar Code”, COMNAP prepared a survey of its Member National Antarctic Programmes and asked for responses in regards to the 63 vessels that were listed as “in service” in the COMNAP Quickbase Database as at 1 February 2020.

The survey was opened on 15 February 2020, suspended through February 2023, and is now open for new responses. This paper presents preliminary responses received to date for fourteen vessels. COMNAP will continue this work through our Marine Platforms Expert Group and intends to bring back complete results to a future ATCM.

Preliminary responses

A COMNAP survey of National Antarctic Programmes that operate, manage or use at least one of the vessels listed as “in service” in the COMNAP Quickbase Database was developed by the Leader of the COMNAP Marine Platforms Expert Group, Miguel A. Ojeda (CPE).

The survey consisted of 23 questions in total presented in four parts (see Attachment 1):

1. Survey Respondent Details
2. General Vessel Information
3. IMO Polar Code Compliance
4. Finalise Submission

Of the 63 vessels in the dropdown list [Q4] of the survey, responses relating to 14 (22%) of those vessels were entered and recorded before the suspension of the survey.

Preliminary results from these responses indicate that:

* Fifty percent (50%) of these vessels are considered “Government, Military (Navy, Coast Guard, etc.) [Q6].
* The oldest vessel of the fourteen was “Year of build/launch” of 1981; with the average age of the fourteen vessels being 20.7 years [Q8].
* Eight of the eleven vessels (73%) that indicated that the IMO Polar Code applied to the vessel [Q13] answered “yes” that the vessel held a Polar Code Certificate [Q18].

Although the results are not complete, preliminary responses show the commitment of the National Antarctic Programmes in complying with the maritime regulations and, in particular, in the application of the IMO Polar Code. This is no small task especially in a vessel fleet with an average age of more than 20 years.

Attachment 1: COMNAP survey questions on IMO Polar Code implementation for National Antarctic Programmes’ vessels

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Survey Respondent Details** | |
| **Q1** Your full name: | *Textbox* |
| **Q2** Your national Antarctic program (NAP): | *Dropdown list in Qualtrics taken from the COMNAP database* |
| **Q3** Your e-mail address: | *Textbox* |
| **General Vessel Information** | |
| **Q4** Name of the vessel:  If "Other", please specify the name of the vessel | *Dropdown list in Qualtrics taken from the COMNAP database*  *Textbox* |
| **Q5** Is this vessel an: | *Choose one of the following options:*   * *Icebreaker* * *Ice-strengthened* * *Not ice-strengthened or Icebreaker* |
| **Q6** Is this vessel operated by: | *Choose one of the following options:*   * *Government, Military (Navy, Coast Guard, etc.)* * *Non-Governmental Contractor* * *Your own NAP* * *Other* |
| **Q7** Year of build/launch: | *Dropdown list including all other years between 1900 and 2030.* |
| **Q8** Tonnage: | *Textbox* |
| **Q9** Length: | *Textbox* |
| **Q10** Beam: | *Textbox* |
| **Q11** Estimate percentage of the operations time used: | *Percentage range slider 0-100%* |
| **Q12** What is this vessel’s usual region of Antarctic operations: | *Choose as many of the following options:*   * *Antarctic Peninsula* * *East Antarctica* * *West Antarctica* * *Ross Sea region* * *Circum-Antarctic* |
| **Q13** Does the IMO Polar Code apply to this vessel? | *If Yes (Continue to Q14)*  *If No (End of Survey)* |
| **IMO Polar Code Compliance** | |
| **Q14** What Polar Class is this vessel: | *Choose one of the following options:*   * *PC 1 Year-round operation in all polar waters* * *PC 2 Year-round operation in moderate multi-year ice conditions* * *PC 3 Year-round operation in second-year ice, which may include multi-year ice inclusions* * *PC 4 Year-round operation in thick first-year ice, which may include old ice inclusions* * *PC 5 Year-round operation in medium first-year ice, which may include old ice inclusions* * *PC 6 Summer/autumn operation in medium first-year ice, which may include old ice inclusions* * *PC 7 Summer/autumn operation in thin first-year ice, which may include old ice inclusions* * *No Polar Class* |
| **Q15** What category from the IMO Polar Code have you applied for for this vessel? | *Choose one of the following options:*   * *Category A ship - a ship designed for operation in polar waters in at least medium first-year ice, which may include old ice inclusions* * *Category B ship - a ship not included in category A, designed for operation in polar waters in at least thin first-year ice, which may include old ice inclusions* * *Category C ship - a ship designed to operate in open water or in ice conditions less severe than those included in categories A and B* |
| **Q16** Which Polar Service Temperature (PST) has been determined for this vessel’s operations? | *Textbox* |
| **Q17** Has the introduction of the IMO Polar Code involved major shipyard works on this ship?  If yes, please describe major shipyard works. | *Yes*  *No*  *Textbox* |
| **Q18** Does this vessel hold an IMO Polar Ship Certificate? | *If Yes (Continue to Q19)*  *If No (End of Survey)* |
| **IMO Polar Ship Certificate** | |
| **Q19** Total approximate budget required to obtain the IMO Polar Ship Certificate.  (Please indicate currency, ie US$ or Euro) | *Textbox* |
| **Q20** Approximately, how long did the whole process take to obtain the IMO Polar Ship Certificate? | *Textbox* |
| **Q21** Which of these categories were the main impediments (if any) to certify this vessel? | *Choose as many of the following options:*   * *Fire safety and protection* * *Life saving gears* * *Machinery* * *Navigation systems* * *Ship structure* * *Ship stability* * *Training* * *Watertight integrity* |
| **Q22** Does your country offer the appropriate training courses/resources necessary to obtain the IMO Polar Ship Certificate? | *Yes*  *No* |
| **Finalize your submission** | |
| **Q23** Finalize your submission | *Submit this vessel data and end your survey* |
| **Thank you** for completing the on-line **IMO Polar Code implementation for NAPs vessels**.  If you would like to submit **another survey** for an additional vessel operated by/for your NAP, please click here.  If you have any additional questions and/or comments on IMO Polar Code topics not covered by this survey but relevant for your NAP, please contact sec@comnap.aq. | |