



COUNCIL
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Agenda item 23

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CONSIDERATION OF THE ELECTRONIC ACCESS TO CERTAIN IMO PUBLICATIONS

Note by the Secretary-General

SUMMARY

Executive summary: This document provides background information to the Council concerning a proposal from the Secretariat in response to the Technical Co-operation Committee's request of free Internet access to certain IMO publications following an initiative of the Governments of Argentina, Germany and Ghana.

Action to be taken: Paragraph 6

Related documents: TC 51/6/1, TC 52/9 and TC 53/11

1 The Technical Co-operation Committee (TCC), at its 53rd session on 11 and 12 June 2003, will consider a proposal (document TC 53/11) from the Secretariat, to make available free Internet access to certain IMO publications and suggesting a ten-month model test period with a view to submitting an assessment of the test to the 92nd session of the Council in June 2004 for consideration.

2 The Council will recall that this proposal stems from the initiative of the Governments of Argentina, Ghana and Germany to make available access to certain electronic IMO publications free of charge (document TCC 51/6/1). At its 52nd session in November 2002, TCC considered document TC 52/9 submitted by the Secretariat. This document responded to the TCC's request for a description of a possible methodology for a model test and outlined the Organization's publishing policies, its copyright restrictions, pricing policies and arrangements for the dissemination of IMO books. The document recalled the Secretariat's concern that, in the long-term, providing IMO publications free of charge would adversely affect the financial status of the Organization.

3 However, in compliance with the request of the TCC, the Secretariat invited the Committee's approval to a trial scheme, under which the instruments required would be placed on the Organization's website, free of charge, for a test phase period of twelve months starting in April 2003.

4 Following extensive discussion, the Committee decided that the Secretariat should make a further assessment of the scheme including further details on how the pilot scheme would be tested, including the choice of the criteria for assessing the scheme's success.

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5 Accordingly, the Secretariat will provide to the 53rd session of the TCC the additional information sought concerning the pilot scheme, in order that the Committee can decide on the commencement of a trial test in July 2003.

Action requested of the Council

6 The Council is invited to take note of the information contained in this document and to comment and decide as appropriate, following the consideration of the TCC's views in this matter.
