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ORGANIZATIONAL REFORMS

Follow-up to the reports on: 1. Review of management and administration in the International Maritime Organization (JIU); and 2. ICT assessment (UNICC)

Note by the Secretary-General

SUMMARY

<i>Executive summary:</i>	This document reports on progress made with the implementation of the agreed recommendations in the JIU Review of Management and Administration in the International Maritime Organization (IMO) (JIU/REP/2007/7); and follow-up action taken in response to the UNICC ICT assessment.
<i>Strategic direction:</i>	4
<i>High-level action:</i>	4.5.1
<i>Planned output:</i>	Not applicable
<i>Action to be taken:</i>	Paragraph 15
<i>Related documents:</i>	C101/4; C 100/15(b)

JIU Report on Review of management and administration in the International Maritime Organization

1 In its report, the JIU made 11 recommendations, three of which (numbers 1, 2 and 7) were addressed to the legislative organs of the Organization. The Council, at its 100th session in June 2008, took decisions on those three recommendations and also noted the Secretary-General's comments on the remaining eight recommendations addressed to the Executive Head of the Organization. The Council, at its 101st session in November 2008, also noted information on follow-up action taken, including the drawing up of an action plan. An updated plan is attached at annex. The JIU has been advised of progress to date on the basis of this plan.

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United Nations International Computing Centre (UNICC) ICT assessment

2 The Council, at its 101st session, noted information provided by the Secretary-General that, as a further Organizational Reform initiative, a strategic review of the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) of the Organization had been commissioned by the Secretary-General. The review was undertaken by the United Nations International Computing Centre (UNICC) and aimed to provide an objective assessment of the capacity of the Organization's existing infrastructure, equipment, systems, applications and human resources to meet the emerging demands, opportunities and challenges for the Organization in information technology and information management; and to make recommendations for the future.

3 As the Council will appreciate, the Organization, in common with Governments and business, is ever-more reliant on its ICT systems for services, which are critical to its operations, including, but not limited to, its website, IMODOCS, e-mail and telephone services, file services, printing services, SAP ERP system, GISIS and delegate access to computing and network services in the meeting rooms. Many of these services have been developed economically in-house in response to the requirements of Member States; Council and Committee decisions; and the needs of internal users. Less positively, there have been, since the introduction of the above systems, a number of periods of downtime or unsatisfactory performance, which have affected both internal and external users of the services.

4 In its review, UNICC concluded that the Organization is exposed to risk of downtime reoccurrences through an ageing infrastructure; multiple single points of failure; insufficient levels of support; and lack of disaster recovery systems. As importantly, the staff of the IT and IS section are having to support more products than can reasonably be expected, which exacerbates the current situation. UNICC further concluded that it is necessary to reduce the exposure of the Organization to the risks associated with being dependent on single members of staff for key systems.

5 To address the problems, UNICC expressed the view that the Organization's ICT services require a significant and imminent investment in both time and money. That investment could be directed at either increasing the capability of IT and IS section staff to provide such services in-house or through targeted outsourcing to an external supplier. The recommendations in the report have provided options for both strategies and noted that these are not mutually exclusive: certain services could continue being provided in-house whilst others are outsourced.

6 On hardware and equipment, UNICC has noted the provision, in the Headquarters refurbishment, of two dedicated server rooms but also drew attention to the fact that no advantage had yet been taken of the resiliency they might provide. The Organization has standardized its servers on IBM hardware which, UNICC noted, has reduced the burden of hardware maintenance through a single point of contact and eases the tasks facing the in-house server administrators, some of whom had been trained to conduct certain repairs on the hardware. UNICC has further noted that, in accordance with its own policy and the industry standard for server replacement at four to five-yearly intervals, the Organization will shortly have to make a significant investment in replacing almost two-thirds of its server infrastructure (up to 40 machines). UNICC has, therefore, made recommendations aimed at improving the monitoring of performance of the servers, through the establishment of service levels and hardware monitoring tools; and has also made recommendations on the capacity of data storage arrangements; improving data back-up infrastructure and enhancing e-mail and file services.

7 At the time of the UNICC review, the Organization was experiencing difficulties with its internet access due to the limitations of the size of connection and had also experienced problems with e-mail. The recommendations made by UNICC mirrored the plans for improvements that had already been identified in-house and, since the issuance of the report in November 2008, action has been taken to increase (and duplicate) the size of the internet connection and to both update and move e-mail services to a new operating system.

8 Operationally, UNICC has expressed the view that the Organization's IT and IS section is at a difficult juncture with insufficient Professional staff to cover all services with the adequate specialization and skills required, yet with services which are too large and critical to be serviced by one person. In addition, business needs have not always been sufficiently clarified in terms of IT services, and projects have been embarked on before fully determining user needs and requirements. In the absence of clear and defined objectives for the provision of IT services, UNICC found it difficult to determine whether the correct level of investment or the correct purchasing decisions are being made. To counter this, UNICC recommended that a body should be set up within IMO, comprising the business users and IT to provide direction regarding the IT services. This body should not involve itself in technical decisions (e.g., whether to run Windows XP or Vista on the desktop PCs) but should remain focused on the business needs and priorities. UNICC also recommended a formal definition of each IT and IS service and its target availability in order to match IT investment to the required level of services.

9 In terms of risk to the Organization, UNICC identified the lack of sufficient in-house skills and the running of some critical systems on unsupported or old hardware and software as the main risks, allied to insufficiently robust disaster recovery arrangements. In making its recommendations, UNICC noted that the IT infrastructure is relatively well-managed but that action should be taken to:

- .1 undertake a business continuity and disaster recovery assessment;
- .2 invest in internet connectivity; operating system platforms (file services, e-mail and desktop management); equipment (servers and data storage); and
- .3 upgrade the existing infrastructure.

10 In addition, in view of the lack of sufficient in-house skills, the Organization should consider implementing strategies which would alleviate the potential burden on its staff. Such strategies include:

- .1 increasing the technical capability and/or numbers of staff/consultants;
- .2 bringing in external consultants to manage and/or run upgrade projects; and
- .3 outsourcing a number of services to an external supplier.

Follow-up action

11 In response to the UNICC review report, action is being taken to address the issues raised and the associated recommendations in relation to both in-house services and equipment and those that are targets for possible outsourcing, taking fully into account the risks involved; the impact to the Organization's operations in case of taking no action; and the total cost of implementation as well as related maintenance and upgrade costs.

12 Follow-up action has been completed on all 21 general recommendations, which were of a short-term nature, and, in addition, 4 out of 5 recommendations, which were of a medium term nature, have also been implemented. The action taken has included: improved monitoring of servers and services; increased capacity and reliability of the internet connection; increased data storage capacity; improved data backup arrangements; securing computer rooms; and a reduction of the number of supported operating systems by migrating e-mail and file services from Novell to Windows. The one, still on-going, medium-term recommendation relates to the SAP/Payroll system, detailed information on the outsourcing of which is given in document C 102/4/1.

13 In respect of the 9 specific recommendations for retaining services in-house, all the 6 short-term recommendations have been implemented, as have 2 of the 3 medium term recommendations. The one, still on-going, recommendation relates to the virtualization of servers to reduce capital investment, operating costs and carbon footprint. The enhancement of the in-house ICT services brings the current system up to recognized industry standards. All of this work has been implemented in-house within existing resources and at the minimum practicable cost. A Zodiac Environmental Study has also been carried out by IBM on the ICT infrastructure with special emphasis on achieving the Climate Neutral UN objectives.

14 The Council should, however, be aware that, despite the work done to date and the innovative solutions to the issues confronting the Organization, the increasing costs associated with providing the scope, level and type of ICT services that are now expected by the Membership are unlikely to lessen in the coming years.

Action requested of the Council

15 The Council is invited to note the information provided in this document and to take action as it deems appropriate.

ANNEX

JIU RECOMMENDATIONS OR COMMENTS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

Rec. No.	Para. Refs.	JIU recommendation or comment	Secretary-General's response	Action taken	Status
1	6*	The Secretary-General should submit for the Council's consideration a long-term strategy for reduction of costs of international meetings	The Secretary-General proposed, <i>inter alia</i> , inviting the <i>Ad Hoc</i> Working Group on the Strategic Plan (CWGSP) to consider, taking into account the views of the Committees, how work might be alternatively organized in future biennia, in order to meet the Organization's objectives	C 100 endorsed the Secretary-General's proposal The recommendation was referred to CWGSP 8 The Secretariat has submitted proposals for a long-term strategy for the reduction of costs of international meetings Council decisions are required to implement any agreed proposals	Completed
3	22 and 23	The Secretary-General should establish an in-house cross-functional group to make proposals regarding a proactive outreach strategy	The Secretary-General agreed with this recommendation	An in-house group comprised of representatives from Divisions has been established. A strategy is under development	Ongoing
4	24	The Secretary-General should ensure that, starting from the financial period 2010-2011, performance indicators applied should be further refined, based on continuous statistical analysis and experience with their use	The Secretary-General reported that the Organization's statistician will be tasked with further refinement of the performance indicators and related statistical analysis	An initial analysis has been undertaken A report on that analysis has been submitted to CWGSP 8 Experience will be gained in their use during the 2010-2011 biennium	Completed

* References are to paragraphs in document C 100/15(b).

Rec. No.	Para. Refs.	JIU recommendation or comment	Secretary-General's response	Action taken	Status
5	26, 28 and 29	<p>The Secretary-General should ensure that, starting from the financial period 2010-2011, there is an adequate direct linkage between input/resources and output/results</p> <p>The Secretary-General is encouraged to finalize the production of a Budget Manual in the context of the updating of the ERP system and the implementation of IPSAS</p>	<p>The Secretary-General agreed with this recommendation in the context of the Organization's adoption of IPSAS and move towards results-based management (RBM)</p> <p>Further refinement of the draft Budget Manual will be undertaken during this biennium to incorporate some IPSAS components and to ensure that it meets the Organization's planning and budgeting needs as it moves towards to RBM</p>	<p>A methodology for enhancing the linkage between input/resources and output/results has been developed and forms the basis for the 2010-2011 budget proposals</p> <p>The development of the Budget Manual is continuing in parallel with work on implementing IPSAS</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
6	30 to 32	<p>The Secretary-General should, in accordance with Article XIII of the IMO Financial Regulations and Financial Rules, inform Member States of the administrative and financial implications of additional mandates/tasks requested by them in order for Member States to ensure the provision of adequate resources</p>	<p>The Secretary-General stated that this was done as part of the normal budgeting process and it has been the practice to either absorb the cost or defer other items and thus remain within biennial appropriations</p>	<p>None required</p>	<p>Completed</p>
-	37	<p>The Secretary-General should review the experience of fundraising by other UN bodies and consider the possibility of a more comprehensive policy linked to the Organization's public outreach policy</p>	<p>The Secretary-General agreed with this comment</p>	<p>As a first step, the experience gained in this area by other similar UN bodies is under review and, on the basis of any successful initiatives adopted by them, consideration will be given to the development of a more comprehensive policy tailored to the needs of the Organization</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

Rec. No.	Para. Refs.	JIU recommendation or comment	Secretary-General's response	Action taken	Status
-	46	The Secretary-General should seek to increase the percentage of funding for staff training and development	The Secretary-General agreed with this comment	The Secretary-General proposed to seek an increase in the percentage of funding allocated to training within the 2010-2011 budget but financial restrictions have limited the ability to do so	On hold due to budgetary limitations
8	47 and 48	The Secretary-General should establish an ombudsman post, even as a dual function post	The Secretary-General agreed to consider the feasibility of establishing a post within the short-term (i.e. within this biennium)	A review of the 2008 budget has not identified sufficient funding for the establishment of a post this year. Similar financial restrictions have also ruled out the establishment of such a post in the 2010-2011 biennium	On hold due to budgetary limitations
9	50, 52 and 53	The Secretary-General should issue a compendium of privileges and immunities	The Secretary-General agreed with this recommendation	The collection and collation of relevant information is being compiled with the aim of preparing a compendium	Ongoing
10	58 and 59	The Secretary-General should review the Organization's publishing licence arrangements	The Secretary-General agreed with this recommendation	A review had been undertaken A trial is currently being conducted with the charging of a royalty for translations into all languages (not just official languages)	Completed
11	71 and 72	The Secretary-General, in his capacity as a member of the United Nations System Chief Executive Board for Coordination (CEB), should share the experience of IMO concerning its Regional Presence Scheme and its programme to achieve coordination and cooperation with other UN system organizations	The Secretary-General welcomed this recommendation	Information was provided to the members of CEB at its spring 2008 session	Completed