

COUNCIL
120th session
Agenda item 8

C 120/8/1
31 May 2018
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CONSIDERATION OF THE REPORT OF THE FACILITATION COMMITTEE

Creation of a collaborative web-based workspace (IMOSpace)

Note by the Secretary-General

SUMMARY

Executive summary: This document provides an update on the collaborative web-based workspace created by the Organization as a common area for correspondence and similar collaborative groups for their work, and addresses issues of accessibility, cybersecurity, financial and administrative resources and other open sources

Strategic direction, if applicable: 7

Output: 7.1

Action to be taken: Paragraph 7

Related documents: A 29/8, A 29/INF.9; FAL 41/17; MSC 98/22/3; C 118/7, C 118/7/1 and C 118/D

Background

1 The Council, at its 118th session, considered the Secretariat's report on the creation of a collaborative web-based workspace by the Organization (IMOSpace) as a common area for correspondence and similar collaborative groups (groups) for their work (C 118/7/1).

2 The Council then noted the general support for this initiative and requested the Secretary-General to conduct a further evaluation relating to the accessibility of the proposed IMOSpace, including cybersecurity; additional financial and administrative resources that may be required; and other open-source web-based workspaces, and to report the outcome to C 120.

Findings of the evaluation

3 As requested, a detailed evaluation of the IMOSpace platform was carried out by the Secretariat. The system has now been developed and has undergone test-bed assessments on its accessibility and cybersecurity preparedness. The system has also been further

compared to other open source systems along with any additional financial and administrative resources that would be required for its operation. IMOSpace has been developed with inputs from the Secretariat and some Member States and presents a fully functional collaborative web-based portal for the work of groups. Since C 118, the system has already been piloted by some groups for their work.

4 The results of the evaluation of IMOSpace are as follows:

- .1 *accessibility*: IMOSpace is accessible using the secure IMO Web Accounts framework for login. IMO Web accounts provide secure authentication to IMO resources such as GISIS, IMODOCS and the Online Meeting Registration System. Users of IMOSpace are able to use their existing credentials to access any group they have been given access rights to by their group's coordinator. This enables Member States' participation in groups, using their IMO login credentials without the added burden of a separate security management system and a new username and password;
- .2 *cybersecurity*: IMOSpace has been designed with security and the privacy of users in mind. It is hosted on a secured website platform with HTTP and an SSL, to ensure that data transmissions are encrypted and secure. The IMOSpace server will perform virus scans on documents that are being uploaded to it, to guarantee their integrity. IMOSpace is accessible at <https://imospace.imo.org>;
- .3 *additional financial and administrative resources required*: the development of IMOSpace fitted into the data, information and knowledge management initiatives of the Secretariat and was accommodated within existing budgetary provisions, at no additional cost to the Organization. The Secretariat already holds licences for software tools that were used for IMOSpace development. Support to coordinators and users of the groups will be provided by the Secretariat's ICT Service Desk. The technical divisions may also provide pre-prepared information and guidance notes to coordinators to assist them. The system is user-friendly with full instructions to coordinators on how to operate the system. Once a group is established, the Secretariat sets it up on IMOSpace and includes the details of the coordinator, who receives an email, securely, from the system with operational instructions. Users have to first be set up by the coordinator before the group in IMOSpace becomes visible for collaboration and information sharing;
- .4 *availability of alternative open-source web-based workspace*: IMOSpace compares favourably to alternative open-source web-based systems such as WCO-Moodle and ISO's implementation of Open Text CMS, and has the added advantage of having been developed using industry standard tools that are fully compatible with other IMO systems such as IMODOCS and GISIS. It has been geared and tuned towards the work of groups that may be established in the Organization.

5 As IMOSpace uses existing security and access credentials that Member States are familiar with in accessing IMODOCS and GISIS, problems with compatibility, accessibility, high cost of development and challenges of security are minimized, compared to other alternatives. The difficulties that may arise with developing these functionalities in an open source environment and the challenges of privacy are eliminated with IMOSpace.

6 Finally, IMOSpace now provides Member States with a new facility that will allow the upload of bulky documents, which were sometimes difficult to send as attachments via an email. A feedback facility is available through imospace@imo.org, to help with the continuous improvement of the system.

Action requested of the Council

7 The Council is invited to note the information provided in this document and, in particular to:

- .1 note that IMOSpace has been fully evaluated and is now available and ready for use; and
 - .2 encourage committees and sub-committees to use it for the work of any groups they may establish.
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