

COUNCIL
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Agenda item 3

C 110/3
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STRATEGY, PLANNING AND REFORM

Report of the Council Working Group on Prioritization

Note by the Secretary-General

SUMMARY

Executive summary: This document reports on the outcome of the Council Working Group on Prioritization (CWG-P) which was held from 28 to 31 January 2013

Strategic direction: 4

High-level action: 4.0.1

Planned output: 4.0.1.7

Action to be taken: Paragraph 29

Related documents: CWG-P 1/1, CWG-P 1/1/1, CWG-P 1/2/1, C 109/3/1 (paragraphs 33 to 44), C 109/WP.3 and C 109/D (paragraph 3.13)

General

1 The Council Working Group on Prioritization (hereinafter referred to as Working Group) met from 28 to 31 January 2013, under the chairmanship of Miss Katy Ware (United Kingdom).

2 The meeting was attended by representatives from the following Member Governments:

ARGENTINA
AUSTRALIA
BAHAMAS
BELGIUM
BRAZIL
CANADA
CHINA
COOK ISLANDS
CYPRUS
DENMARK
FRANCE

GERMANY
GREECE
INDONESIA
JAPAN
LIBERIA
MARSHALL ISLANDS
MEXICO
NETHERLANDS
NIGERIA
NORWAY
PANAMA



RUSSIAN FEDERATION
SINGAPORE
SOUTH AFRICA
SPAIN
SWEDEN

SYRIAN ARAB REPUBLIC
THAILAND
TURKEY
UNITED KINGDOM
UNITED STATES

Background

3 At its 109th session, the Council considered the Secretary-General's proposal on priority setting (C 109/3/1, paragraphs 33 to 44) and decided to establish a one-off Council Working Group on Prioritization, which should meet in Spring 2013 and be open to all Member States, in order to develop a process to be used on an interim basis to prioritize the planned outputs for the 2014-2015 biennium. The Council further invited Member Governments to submit proposals to the Group.

4 The Council decided on the following terms of reference for the Working Group (C 109/WP.3):

"Taking into account the Secretary-General's proposals for a priority-setting mechanism in document C 109/3/1 (paragraphs 33 to 44), and comments made at C 109; the Working Group is instructed to:

- .1 identify the most appropriate methodology for the prioritization of the Planned Outputs of the Organization, including the developing of criteria to be applied in establishing priorities; and
- .2 report to C 110, with a view to C 110 requesting its Ad Hoc Council Working Group on the Organization's Strategic Plan to apply the methodology to the planned outputs for the 2014-2015 biennium, as appropriate."

5 In accordance with paragraph 4.11 of the *Guidelines on the organization and method of work of the Council* (Circular letter No.3292), regarding, inter alia, the reports of the Council's working groups, this document is submitted "in Summary-of-Decisions format to keep such reports as short as possible".

Adoption of the agenda

6 The Working Group adopted its provisional agenda as set out in document CWG-P 1/1.

General debate

7 The Working Group commenced its work with a general debate intended to inform the discussions on the items on the agenda and in order for the Chairman to propose a way forward in the meeting. The questions the debate was based on were as set out in CWG-P 1/1/1:

- .1 What is the intended purpose of the priority-setting mechanism (e.g. is it to assign resources, for business planning or a tool to cut the budget and/or workload)?
- .2 What information is needed in order to set priorities and how will the required information best be collected?

- .3 Who will assess the information and assign a priority (e.g. CWGSP, Secretariat, chairmen, others)?
- .4 What will be done with the assigned priorities (e.g. will only a certain number be taken up by the committees and sub-committees; will cost of each planned output be set and a cut-off for work be set when the budget allocation is spent)?

8 No decisions were taken by the Working Group in relation to the above questions, however, a number of ideas were raised that could be of relevance for the Council in its consideration of the matter in the future.

9 One view, broadly shared by the Working Group, was that ideally the prioritization could be used for the Organization to assign time and resources to meetings of committees and sub-committees on a biennial basis, in order to assure that sub-committee sessions, working, drafting and correspondence groups address the Organization's priority issues appropriately. It was, however, recognized that such an approach had not been requested by the Council at this time, and was therefore not discussed in-depth.

10 Another idea that generated considerable interest among the participants was a proposal to create four bands of prioritized planned outputs. The purpose of the banding would be to closely align the outputs with the effort and resources needed to carry out the planned outputs. This would mean that the outputs under the lowest band would not be carried out or only carried out if certain requirements were fulfilled, such as available time and resources in a sub-committee.

Methodology for the prioritization of the planned outputs in the High-level Action Plan of the Organization

11 The Working Group agreed that a **Grid Analysis** would be the preferred method for establishing priorities, and used as a basis the table set out in CWG-P 1/2 (United Kingdom) for its further work.

12 Noting that, in accordance with the Working Group's terms of reference, this was an interim measure focused on prioritizing the work for the 2014-2015 biennium, the Working Group agreed as a matter of principle to keep **the criteria as simple as possible**, whilst ensuring that the interests of all Member States were taken into account.

13 The Working Group agreed to apply the method to all the Planned Outputs to be included in the High-level Action Plan for the 2014-2015 biennium and that this be reflected in a footnote.

14 The Working Group agreed in principle to the following four criteria to be used for prioritization:

- .1 Impact on maritime safety, security and prevention and/ or control of [marine] pollution from ships;
- .2 Impact on the efficiency and facilitation of shipping, in particular, in developing countries and SIDS;
- .3 Impact on the development of the international maritime sector; and
- .4 Impact on Administrations on implementation of IMO instruments.

15 The Working Group was unable to conclude on the word "marine" in criterion 1. There were a number of Member States who expressed the view that the criteria should reflect the IMO Convention Article 1, which makes specific reference to the "control of marine pollution from ships". A number of other Member States were of the view that the criteria should reflect the mission statement of the Organization as per the Strategic Plan of the Organization (resolution A.1037(27)), which states "prevention and control of pollution from the ships". The Working Group therefore agreed to place the word "marine" in square brackets for further consideration by Council at its 110th session.

16 The Working Group also considered a fifth criterion:

Impact on IMO's work in relation to IGOs and NGOs in consultative status.

17 The Working Group was unable to agree on its inclusion, due to the diverging views on the specific intent of the criterion. Some Member States expressed the view that the criteria should reflect the impact of IMO's delivery of work in relation to the impact of the work programme of other United Nations bodies only. Whereas, some Member States expressed the view that this should reflect the reputational damage to IMO perceived by IGOs and NGOs, should IMO not undertake certain planned outputs. Due to the diverging views on the criterion's intent, the Working Group agreed to place the criterion in square brackets.

18 Regarding the **scoring** of each criterion, the Working Group agreed that it was important that the scoring should allow the Organization to rank each planned output against each other.

19 In general, two scenarios were considered:

- .1 Scenario 1 – scoring was evenly spaced, with a score of 5 for the "best" assessment down to zero for the worst (5 – 3 – 1 – 0); and
- .2 Scenario 2 – scoring with a pronounced gap being introduced between the second (neutral or slightly favourable) and third (unfavourable) assessments, giving scores of 5 – 4 – 1 – 0.

20 With these specific scoring schemes, the Working Group noted that Scenario 2 would, all else being equal, tend to favour those Planned Outputs with generally positive results over those with some strong positives and some unfavourable impacts. The Working Group recognized that it would be preferable to avoid any unjustified distortion with the scoring and therefore equal gaps between the scores would be preferred.

21 After consideration, the Working Group felt it was preferable to be able to allocate a score of zero to the most unfavourable scoring for each criterion. For example, under criterion 3, the least favourable score is one considered to have a significant constraint on the development of the international maritime sector, and under criterion 4, the least favourable score is the one considered to produce a high burden on Administrations. Taking into account the discussion, the Working Group decided that the scores allocated should be 5 – 3 – 1 – 0.

22 The Working Group considered various options for **weighting** the criteria, options receiving support included 1-1-1-1, 2-1-1-1, 2-2-1-1, 2-2-2-1 and 2-1-2-1.

23 As a result of the diverse views, no conclusion could be reached, with the majority of those who spoke expressing a preference for option 2-1-1-1 and the Working Group agreed to forward the weighting in square brackets to the Council for its consideration and decision.

24 The Working Group acknowledged that the prioritization method may benefit from refinement, and invited Member States to submit their comments to C 110.

25 The delegation of China was of the view that the primary objective of priority setting is to optimize the allocation of the limited resources of the Organization in a fair, impartial, transparent and balanced way, with a view to realizing the core objective of IMO as stipulated in the IMO Convention. However, the discussion on the first criteria and on the weighting did not follow the above principle and China reserved its position on keeping the word "marine" in the brackets and on the proceedings in this respect.

26 The Working Group recognized that consultation with the full membership of the Organization, in particular the Committees was the preferred option in order to ensure that the whole Organization is involved with the prioritization of the planned outputs for the 2014-2015 biennium.

27 However, taking into account the meeting programme for 2013, that the Ad Hoc Council Working Group on the Organization's Strategic Plan (CWGSP) is open to all Member States (thus allowing all Member States an opportunity to take part in the priority setting exercise) and that the outcome report is transmitted to both Committees I and II of the Assembly, (allowing all Member States to review and comment upon the outcome of the CWGSP and the extraordinary session of the Council), the Working Group supported the view of C 109 that the prioritization of the planned outputs for the 2014-2015 biennium should be undertaken at the thirteenth session of the CWGSP, and that the recommendations of that Group would be forwarded to the twenty-seventh extraordinary session of the Council for onward transmission and consideration by the Assembly (Committees I and II), as appropriate.

28 The Working Group noted that the Chairman of the CWGSP indicated that he would liaise with the Secretariat well in advance of the Group's thirteenth session to see what preliminary actions might be taken to ease the work of that Working Group.

Action requested of the Council

29 The Council is requested to consider the outcome of the Council Working Group on Prioritization and, in particular, to:

- .1 consider and decide on the text and the weights in square brackets in the annex;
- .2 approve the methodology for prioritization to be used on an interim basis on the planned outputs for the 2014-2015 biennium as set out in the annex; and
- .3 approve the report in general.

ANNEX

Criteria	Weighting	Score 5	Score 3	Score 1	Score 0
Impact on maritime safety, security and prevention and/or control of [marine] pollution from ships	[2]	High risk as a result of no action	Medium risk as a result of no action	Low risk as a result of no action	No consequential risk
Impact on the efficiency and facilitation of shipping, in particular, in developing countries and SIDS	[1]	Produces positive impact with no additional costs	Produces positive impact with additional costs	Produces no positive impact with no additional costs	Produces no positive impact with additional costs
Impact on the development of the international maritime sector	[1]	Benefit to the development of the international maritime sector	Neutral impact on the development of the international maritime sector	Constrains the development of the international maritime sector	Significant constraints on the development of the international maritime sector
Impact on Administrations on implementation of IMO instruments	[1]	Benefit to Administrations	Neutral impact on Administrations	Burden on Administrations	High burden on Administrations
[Impact on IMO's work in relation to IGOs and NGOs in consultative status]	[x]	[High impact]	[Medium impact]	[Low impact]	[No impact]

Footnote: This model has been developed for the prioritization of all the planned outputs for the 2014-2015 biennium.