

HNS WORKSHOP CONCLUSIONS

October 10, 2014

- The international community has adopted a global legal framework to address a gap in liability and compensation regimes by striking a balance between the protection of victims of HNS incidents and national economic interests.
- Many states are advancing their eventual ratification of the HNS Convention and are at various stages in their implementation. Both the shipping industry and the cargo interests role is critical in advancing the state's implementation efforts.
- States and the industry need practical means to effectively have the necessary dialogue. Regional considerations can be paramount to ensure a level playing field but this can be mitigated by ensuring there is a coordinated implementation and ratification effort.
- Better tools are needed to engage stakeholders. There already exist the reporting guidelines, the HNS Finder and the various brochures to support states and engaging stakeholders. Further tools can be developed but the main task of moving forward with the HNS Convention rests with states and their willingness to bring it into force.
- Bringing the HNS Convention into force is not impossible and that was clear in the presentations and discussions at the Workshop. It is possible and there are many platforms for continuing the dialogue.
- A global regime for HNS incidents is to the benefit of all. It is to the benefit of the shipping industry with ships that move from one jurisdiction to another and need global rules. It is to the benefit of cargo interests who benefit from a pooled fund which minimizes an uneven financial burden. Most of all, it is to the benefit of victims who will have an effective regime with high limits of liability and comprehensive coverage.
- We are confident that the HNS Convention will come into force. Working with industry and cooperating internationally are paramount to ensuring its success. Much work has already been done and new products can help. Any issues or problems are not insurmountable and can be dealt with incrementally. Finally, public opinion is important in order to mitigate the risk of shipping HNS and doing nothing is not an option.