



*Nuclear Free Local Authorities Steering Committee*

# information

**NFLA Media release - for immediate release, 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2014**

## **NFLA meeting with the Secretary General of the International Maritime Organisation to discuss Atlantic Cartier report and concerns over the transport of nuclear materials**

The NFLA Chair, NFLA Secretary and independent marine pollution consultant Tim Deere-Jones will be meeting the Secretary General of the International Maritime Organisation (IMO), Koji Sekimizu, to discuss the concerns it has raised over the regulation of certain 'roll on roll off' vessels transporting nuclear materials around the world.

The NFLA report considered a major fire incident in Hamburg affecting the vessel 'Atlantic Cartier' in May 2013. The vessel had a cargo which included uranium hexafluoride, other chemicals, explosive materials and a fleet of cars. A serious emergency incident was only narrowly averted. (1)

The NFLA report outlined that the vessel had 20 reported deficiencies in 10 port safety inspections, and yet was still deemed fit to transport such dangerous materials. The report was sent to the UK and Irish Governments, the Parliamentary Transport Select Committee, devolved governments, maritime trade unions and the IMO. Responses have been received to the report from the UK Government and its Maritime and Coastguard Agency, arguing that such matters are in the remit of the IMO. (2)

The NFLA welcomes the opportunity to meet the IMO Secretary General on the 8<sup>th</sup> July and it will be putting forward to him the following issues:

- The key issue with the Atlantic Cartier fire incident is should regulatory standards be vessel based or cargo based?
- The NFLA report also outlines that the Atlantic Cartier had 20 outlined deficiencies in 10 safety inspections, and yet none of these led to it being impounded. Why?
- Given that the Atlantic Cartier has been reported twice under the International Safety Management MARPOL protocols in the past 5 years, why is it being permitted to transport such dangerous materials?
- What guidance does the IMO provide to port authorities and local authorities if a damaged shipment is told to go to the nearest available port, particularly if nuclear materials are on board?
- Will the IMO encourage national governments to improve the level of detail in marine emergency plans and procedures around dealing with radiation shipping incidents, with the associated need for appropriate exercises and training?

NFLA also recommends the IMO encourage national governments to implement the following procedures:

- That ships carrying dangerous cargoes into any port should issue a public notice about the potential dangers which they might cause;
- That the international transportation of uranium hexafluoride (UF-6) should cease from now on;
- That any ship carrying radioactive materials should have regular fire inspections;
- That any ship which fails to pass such tests should be prevented from sailing;
- That the ship owners and the ship management should be held legally responsible for any breach of these regulations;
- That any ship carrying radioactive materials should be subject to a new set of rigorous fire and safety standards regulations;
- **That international shipping regulations are changed so that no radioactive materials can be transported on any ships which carry either explosives, or highly inflammable liquids or gases;**

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- That all radioactive materials containers and packages intended for maritime transport, and all container units in which they are transported aboard ship, should carry active transponders enabling location, identification and recovery/salvage in the event of being lost overboard or sunk.

NFLA Chair, Councillor Mark Hackett said:

“I welcome the opportunity to meet with the IMO’s Secretary General to discuss the concerns that the NFLA has with the transportation of nuclear materials in certain types of vessels. Our recommendations are well meaning and considered, and I believe would improve international maritime safety. The Atlantic Cartier fire incident was an example of the real risks in transporting nuclear materials in certain types of ‘roll on, roll off’ vessels and I will be calling on the IMO to urgently review their international regulations for such ships.”

Ends

For more information please contact Sean Morris, NFLA Secretary on 07771 930196.

For discussion on the content of the NFLA report contact Tim Deere-Jones on 01834 871011.

Notes for editors:

- (1) NFLA Policy Briefing 120 on Atlantic Cartier fire incident, 4<sup>th</sup> March 2014  
[http://www.nuclearpolicy.info/docs/briefings/A234\\_\(NB120\)\\_Marine\\_nuclear\\_transportation.pdf](http://www.nuclearpolicy.info/docs/briefings/A234_(NB120)_Marine_nuclear_transportation.pdf)
- (2) Responses from the Department of Transport and the Marine and Coastguard Agency are attached with this email and will be placed on the NFLA website.

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