

NEAR COASTAL VOYAGES IN BIMP-EAGA

BACKGROUND:

The BIMP EAGA is a sub – regional economic cooperation within the ASEAN. The Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines – East ASEAN Growth Area (BIMP-EAGA) was envisioned to stimulate the economies of the member-countries through intensified trade, investment, and tourism. Although conceived in 1992, this growth area was formally created in 1994 in Davao City, Philippines

The BIMP-EAGA covers 16 focus areas, i.e., the entire Sultanate of Brunei Darussalam; and the less-developed regions of Irian Jaya, Maluku and all the provinces of Kalimantan and Sulawesi in Indonesia, the states of Sabah and Sarawak and the Federal Territory of Labuan in Malaysia; Mindanao and Palawan in Southern Philippines.

The growth area shares common characteristics; such as distant from capital states; more proximate to each other; resource based regional economies; less developed territories

While there are three key development strategies, i.e., to facilitate movement of people, goods and services, rationalize the development of vital infrastructure in the sub-region, and coordinate the management of ecosystems and common resources.

The Working Group on Sea Linkages, Transportation and Shipping Services has already convened nine meetings. The latest was the 9th meeting of the Working Group (WGM) on December 2004 in Brunei Darussalam.

The adoption of the Near Coastal Voyage concept pursuant to Reg. 1/3 of STCW, 1995 in the BIMP EAGA particularly for the seafarers onboard ships operating within the focused area has been discussed since the early meetings of the Working Group.

MAPPING

It is informed that the Working Group did not formally declare nor endorsed to the Senior Officials and the Ministers of the member countries to recognize BIMP -EAGA focused areas as a Near Coastal Voyage.

MANNING

There were proposals submitted for consideration by the WG as follows:

1. Use of Seaman's Book (SIRB) as a travel document has been adopted. However, Brunei Darussalam does not recognize the same. The said arrangement can be adopted in a bilateral basis. Ref: 3rd WGM
STATUS: No Bilateral Arrangement materialized, to date.

2. An agreement for the TWG on Joint Maritime Training Center Network in BIMP-EAGA to study the establishment of a system for cross-recognition of certificates and facilitation of apprenticeship by the different training centers onboard BIMP-EAGA operated ships. Ref: 3rd WGM
STATUS: The 4th WGM endorsed acceptance of STCW '95 as the common standard. However, the TWG was directed to pursue the study on the system for cross-recognition of certificates. No updates to date.

OTHER INFORMATION:

➤ VESSEL SAFETY:

Requirements on safety to domestic vessels operating in international waters are strictly implemented. A proposal that SSIS and NSM can be adopted to Philippine flag vessels operating in BIMP-EAGA, must be considered. Classification requirement must likewise be reviewed.

➤ PORT CHARGES

The Philippines adopted the Uniform Port Tariff (UPT) to BIMP-EAGA vessels since 1997.

➤ ISPS CODE

The IMO Regional Coordinator in East Asia sent a letter to the Administrator on 21 June 2004 on the possible forging of an alternative security arrangement in BIMP-EAGA. A draft MOU and the Bilateral Operational Procedures was likewise furnished

This office submitted its comments to the Administrator on 24 June 2004. On 15 October 2004, the IMO Regional Coordinator sent a draft MOU between the Philippines and Malaysia on the alternative security agreement pursuant to the ISPS code.

Said proposal was forwarded to the OTS for their evaluation. No information on actions taken, to date.

BIMP-EAGA SEA ROUTES

