IMO has kindly issued a briefing on the above.

Taking it topic-by-topic we learn:

Construction rules verified as conforming to goal-based standards
The MSC confirmed that ship construction rules for oil tankers and bulk carriers submitted by twelve classification societies conform to the goals and functional requirements set by IMO for new oil tankers and bulk carriers set out in the international goal-based ship construction standards for bulk carriers and oil tankers which were adopted in 2010.

Survival craft safety: SOLAS amendments adopted
The MSC adopted amendments to SOLAS regulations III/3 and III/20 to make mandatory the requirements for maintenance, thorough examination, operational testing, overhaul and repair of lifeboats and rescue boats, launching appliances and release gear, which were also adopted at the session.

This package of provisions, with an expected entry into force date of 1 January 2020, aims to prevent accidents with survival craft and addresses long-standing issues such as the need for a uniform, safe and documented standard related to the servicing of these appliances, as well as the authorization, qualification and certification requirements to ensure that a reliable service is provided.

The adoption of the amendment and requirements for maintenance, thorough examination, operational testing, overhaul and repair represents the culmination of some ten years work on the issue. The intention is to ensure that seafarers can be confident that they can fully rely on the IMO-mandated life-saving appliances and equipment at their disposal.

Adoption of other amendments
The MSC also adopted the following amendments, with an expected entry into force date of 1 January 2020:

• Amendments to SOLAS regulation II-2/13 to extend the requirements for evacuation analysis to all passenger ships, not just ro-ro passenger ships.
Associated revised guidelines on evacuation analysis for new and existing passenger ships were approved;

• Amendment 38-16 to the International Maritime Dangerous Goods (IMDG) Code, to reflect latest changes to the United Nations Recommendations on the Transport of Dangerous Goods;

• Amendments to chapter 8 of the International Code for Fire Safety Systems (FSS Code) regarding prevention of internal corrosion and clogging of sprinklers and a new chapter 17 of the FSS Code, containing mandatory requirements for helicopter facility foam firefighting appliances. An MSC circular on early implementation of the new chapter 17 of the FSS Code was also approved.

• Amendments to the Code for the Construction and Equipment of Mobile Offshore Drilling Units, 2009 (2009 MODU Code), to align it with the new provisions of chapter 17 of the FSS Code;

**Container weights**

Advice regarding the verification of the gross mass of packed containers loaded before 1 July 2016 and transhipped on or after 1 July 2016 was agreed.

An MSC circular on Advice to Administrations, Port State control authorities, companies, port terminals and masters regarding the SOLAS requirements for verified gross mass of packed containers was agreed, following discussion on the pending entry into force of the requirements in SOLAS regulations VI/2.4 to VI/2/6 on the verification of the gross mass of packed containers on 1 July 2016.

**Cyber security**

The MSC approved interim guidelines on maritime cyber risk management, aimed at enabling stakeholders to take the necessary steps to safeguard shipping from current and emerging threats and vulnerabilities related to digitization, integration and automation of processes and systems in shipping.

The interim guidelines are intended to provide high-level recommendations for maritime cyber risk management, which refers to a measure of the extent to which a technology asset is threatened by a potential circumstance or event, which may result in shipping-related operational, safety or security failures as a consequence of information or systems being corrupted, lost or compromised. The guidelines include background information, functional elements and best practices for effective cyber risk management.
The interim guidelines are expected to be updated when the Facilitation Committee had completed its work on facilitation aspects of cyber risk management.

**Guidance for developing national maritime security legislation approved**

Guidance for the development of national maritime security legislation was approved. The guidance aims to assist SOLAS Contracting Governments with developing national legislation to fully implement the provisions of SOLAS chapter XI-2 on Special measures to enhance maritime security and the International Ship and Port Facility Security (ISPS) Code.

**Carriage of industrial personnel**

The MSC endorsed the draft outline for a new proposed SOLAS chapter related to the carriage of industrial personnel, and the outline of a proposed mandatory code. The SOLAS chapter and code would be aimed at ensuring the safe and efficient transfer of technicians serving and servicing installations in the growing offshore alternative energy sectors.

It was agreed that MSC 97 would continue discussion on a roadmap for developing the requirements in the chapter and code, as well as a proposed Recommendation for the carriage of more than twelve industrial personnel on board vessels engaged on international voyages, which could be adopted as interim guidance pending the development, approval and adoption of the proposed new mandatory requirements.

The new chapter and code would be developed by the Sub-Committee on Ship Design and Construction (SDC).

**Recognition of Galileo**

The MSC recognised the Galileo Global Navigation Satellite System (GNSS) as a component of the World Wide Radionavigation System (WWRNS).

**Ships routeing systems adopted**

A number of new and amended ships routeing systems were adopted:

- new traffic separation schemes “Off Southwest Australia”;
- new traffic separation scheme “In the Corsica Channel”;
- amendments to the existing traffic separation scheme “In the Approaches to Hook of Holland and at North Hinder” and associated measures, superseding the existing precautionary areas “In the approaches to Hook of Holland and at North Hinder”;

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amendments to the existing traffic separation scheme “At West Hinder”; amendments to the existing traffic separation scheme “In Bornholmsgat”;

- new two-way routes and precautionary areas “Approaches to the Schelde estuary”, superseding the existing precautionary area “In the vicinity of Thornton and Bligh Banks”;

- new routeing measures “In Windfarm Borssele”; and

- amendments to the existing area to be avoided “Off the coast of Ghana in the Atlantic Ocean”.

**Noise reduction - guidance on application of requirements**
The MSC approved draft amendments to SOLAS regulation 3-12 – Protection against noise to clarify the date of application for ships delivered before 2018, for forwarding to MSC 97 for adoption and approved an MSC circular on Guidance on the application of SOLAS regulation II-1/3-12 to ships delivered before 1 July 2018.

**Training for polar waters and passenger ship emergency training requirements approved**
The MSC approved proposed amendments to the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (STCW) and its related STCW Code, with a view to adoption at MSC 97.

The draft amendments include new mandatory minimum requirements for the training and qualifications of masters and deck officers on ships operating in polar waters, and a requirement for masters, chief mates and officers in charge of a navigational watch on ships operating in polar waters to hold a certificate in basic training for ships operating in polar waters, as required by the Polar Code.

Further amendments relate to the extension of emergency training for personnel on passenger ships.

**Review of the 1995 STCW-F Convention agreed**
Intact Stability Code – Towing, including escort towing, and lifting operations
The Committee approved, in principle, amendments to the introduction and part B of the Intact Stability Code 2008 to add intact stability criteria for ships engaged in towing, including escort towing, and lifting operations, with a view to adoption at MSC 97.

Passenger ship regulations
The MSC approved draft amendments to SOLAS regulation II-1/6 related to the survivability of passenger ships.