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IFSMA

NEWSLETTER

The Shipmasters' International Voice



Capt. Dimitar Dimitrov, on the right, Individual Member, piloting a vessel at the port of Varna, Bulgaria, Photo: Dimitar Dimitrov©.



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Secretary General's Report

I do hope that this foreword to the November newsletter finds you and your families well as everyone around the world continues the battle against the COVID-19 pandemic. As I keep saying, these are very difficult times for the marine industry and in an unprecedented show of strength, ship owners, unions and ship master organisations are still working together to try and get nations to recognise mariners as key workers and to get crew changes underway effectively.

While more nations have indeed said that they have recognised mariners as key workers, we have seen little evidence in this being used to allow their own mariners to transfer within their own country. We have now been working constantly at this for over seven months and yet we seem to have made little progress. Crew changes have not increased since my last message in September and the ITF estimates that there are now more than 400,000 mariners stuck at sea beyond the ILO maximum allowed eleven month contract.

We all remain very concerned about levels of fatigue at sea especially now so many mariners have been at sea in excess of the eleven months allowed by the International Labour Organisation's Maritime Labour Convention. Some have even been at sea in excess of 17 months and this is an enormous risk to safety.

I would therefore wish to draw your attention, yet again, to the letter IFSMA sent to all Shipmasters at the beginning of June reminding them of their obligations under International Regulations and that if they were concerned about the safety of their crew or their ship, then they had the right to refuse to sail. Indeed there is an obligation to do so and in this event Mariner Unions and the ITF will be right behind you.

Please keep IFSMA informed if you are in any doubt or need advice and it might just be what is required to jolt the nations out of their inward looking inaction.

We in the industry are seriously worried that bad decisions are made when fatigue has set in and any mariner who has been at sea for more than the allowed 11 months without a break will be fatigued. Who amongst your crew mates will be able to tell you, the ship master, that you are fatigued. History has shown time and time again that in the event of an incident, fatigue is not accepted as an excuse.

The IMO meetings have resumed by virtual means with a very limited agenda. The Secretary General of the IMO made a very robust statement to national delegations of their obligations to recognise mariners as key workers and to get on and allow crew changes to take place.

I can report that at the IMO Facilitation Committee Meeting in week commencing 27 September it was agreed to take forward a paper, of which IFSMA was one of a group of 13

nations and NGOs, on anti-corruption in the maritime industry and included some draft guidelines. The paper was unanimously accepted as drafted until a Special Correspondence Group takes time to go through the guidelines in detail. Until then, these guidelines are to be called “Interim Guidelines for use by all in the Industry”. I was also able to make a statement along with Denmark and the ICS about the intolerable situation in rescuing migrants at sea in the Mediterranean. It was agreed that this should be discussed at the Maritime Safety Committee in November.

As always, I will keep you informed of any progress.

From the Editor

IMO video highlights digitalization

A new IMO video has been launched to show how electronic data exchange is vital to ensure supply chains continue to function safely and effectively, with contactless clearance of ships in and out of ports. (See here: <https://tinyurl.com/y64tup73>)

The video was launched during a webinar on 8 October entitled *Future of Shipping: Digitalization*, organised by IMO and the Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore. Opening the webinar, IMO Secretary-General Kitack Lim emphasised the need for increased digitalization by saying: ‘*The COVID-19 pandemic has presented challenges. But we must take this opportunity to seize on the opportunities that increased digitalisation in the maritime sector can present: to enhance the resilience of the maritime supply chain, to support sustainable development and to enable recovery.*’

He reiterated why the IMO FAL convention is so important, as it helps make cross-border trade simpler for the more than 10 billion tons of goods traded by sea annually worldwide. IMO’s FAL Committee, meeting in virtual session, approved a revised version of the IMO Compendium on Facilitation and Electronic Business. These are critical steps towards harmonized and standardised digitalization.

The IMO digest

A summary of some of the news received from the IMO Media service in recent weeks.

All illustrations (© IMO) downloaded from and with grateful thanks to www.imo.org

IMO: Talking repatriation and international cooperation during the pandemic

Successful seafarer repatriation procedures were highlighted as part of an in-depth webinar run by the Embassy of Indonesia in London on 26 August. The event, which gathered representatives from governments and interna-

tional organizations, provided a platform for countries to learn from effective measures and to discuss ways forward.

It included a presentation on Indonesia’s experience in dealing with the issue, which has led to the repatriation of over 25,000 seafarers involving 38 countries and international waters. Methods of return (evacuation and repatriation), the resources used, whether by government, ship owner or agent, were all presented in the webinar. Challenges, with regard to key stakeholders – ship owners, port States, regional government and flag States were also addressed.

This webinar also featured the UK’s approach to resolving cases surrounding global cruise line vessels. For example, port State control action was used to drive action by flag State, company and P&I clubs to protect seafarer welfare after vessel detainment.



Illustration: IMO ©

Additionally, the perspective of the International Transport Workers’ Federation raised the plight of many seafarers – including lack of shore leave, contract expiry, and general worsening living and working conditions, while also praising areas of progress and cases of good cooperation.

Speaking at the event, IMO Legal & External Relations Director and Chair of the Seafarer Crisis Action Team (SCAT), Frederick Kenney accordingly described the crew change crisis as an ‘*all hands on deck evolution*’ in which international cooperation represented the only way forward. Kenney highlighted the work of the SCAT, which works to help resolve individual cases of seafarers in need on the front line as well as dealing with larger policy issues.

Readers are invited to watch the full webinar of 1:46:20 duration here: <https://tinyurl.com/y6ekzjnc>

Maritime Security and the impact of the global pandemic

IMO virtual meeting

IMO reported earlier this month that 46 participants from 18 countries* took part in a virtual meeting on 26 August to discuss the implementation of the Djibouti Code of Conduct (DCoC)** amid the global pandemic.

This meeting also assessed progress made at the operational level of the DCoC, and the development of its governance framework.

It will be remembered that the Djibouti Code of Conduct is a key tool in repressing piracy and armed robbery against ships in the western Indian Ocean and the Gulf of Aden.

At IMO the event saw many proposals presented, such as the development of a regional information sharing network, based on the existing national maritime information sharing centres in all the participating countries.



Illustration IMO ©

Other propositions called for better coordination of capacity-building efforts, based on regional needs and priorities.

IMO gave a presentation on the new EU funded port security project for the region and on the technical assistance available for the development of National Maritime Security Strategies.

The meeting was opened by Major-General Muhammed Abdullah AlShehri the newly appointed Director of the Saudi Border Guard and incoming Chairman of the DCoC Steering Committee.

*Comoros, Djibouti, Ethiopia, France, India, Jordan, Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritius, Maldives, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Seychelles, South Africa, United Republic of Tanzania, United Arab Emirates and Yemen.

**For a briefing on the Djibouti Code of Conduct readers are invited to see here: <https://tinyurl.com/y3hok7ho>

Maritime lawyers graduate online amid pandemic

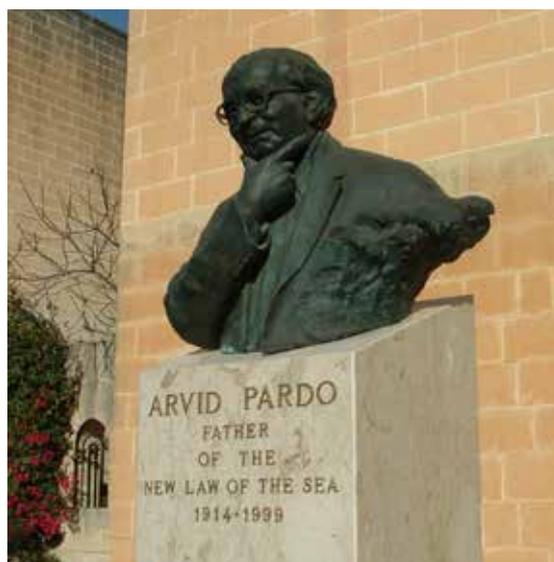
Graduating during a world pandemic is no ordinary event, but this is what the students of the class of 2019-2020 of the International Maritime Law Institute (IMLI*) did during a virtual ceremony held on 3 September and addressed by the IMO Secretary-General, HE Kitack Lim.

Sixty-two students from 34 countries, graduated as international maritime law professionals, joining a network of more than 1000 students from 146 States and territories who have pursued studies at IMLI.



Illustration IMO ©

Two students were awarded the Degree of Master of Philosophy (M.Phil.) in International Maritime Law and Ocean Policy.



The bust of Arvid Pardo (1914-1999), Father of the New Law of the Sea.

Illustration IMLI ©

IMO's Chris Trelawny, Acting Director, Technical Cooperation Division at IMO emphasised how important the next generation of maritime lawyers is to confront challenges affecting oceans today, including destruction of marine environment, climate change and sustainable shipping.

The graduation ceremony marked the successful completion of a very trying but intensive year of studies in all the areas of the Institute's programmes, including the law of the sea, shipping law, marine environmental law, maritime safety and security law, research project and maritime legislation drafting.

* <https://imli.org/>

Joint statement – Crew Change Crisis

UN entities issue a joint statement to urge action on the crew change crisis

On 11 September in an agreed document all Governments were called upon to immediately recognize seafarers as keyworkers, and to address the humanitarian crisis faced by the shipping sector

The Director-General of the International Labour Organization (ILO), the Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the Director-General of the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the Secretary General of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), the CEO and Executive Director of the United Nations Global Compact

and the Secretary-General of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) have jointly issued the statement indicated below to urge all United Nations Member States to take action to urgently resolve the crew change crisis to avert a humanitarian disaster that will also affect the safety of shipping, the protection of the marine environment, the continuation of efficient trade and the recovery of the world economy.

The joint statement can be download here:

<https://tinyurl.com/yyqz9s3j>



The maritime shipping sector faces a humanitarian crisis

The maritime shipping sector moves more than 80% of global trade and is a crucial component of the global economy. As a direct result of the COVID-19 pandemic this sector, and in particular the seafarers who drive it, are facing severe challenges in making the necessary crew changes

of seafarers. This is due, among other reasons, to restrictions on travel, embarkation and disembarkation in ports; quarantine measures; reductions in available flights; and limits on the issuing of visas and passports.

It is because of the sacrifices of seafarers, who have continued working after their contracts have expired, that ports have remained open for trade, so allowing cargo operations to be carried out in a timely manner and goods to continue to circulate smoothly. The world owes a great debt to seafarers for maintaining supply chains throughout the pandemic.

Actions taken by many governments that limit or prevent ship operators from conducting crew changes is the single most pressing maritime operational challenge to the safe and efficient movement of global trade. This has created a humanitarian crisis, with approximately 300,000 seafarers trapped working aboard ships who cannot be repatriated, and an equal number of unemployed seafarers ashore because they are unable to board ships. Those on board have had their contracts extended, sometimes beyond 17 months, and are facing fatigue and physical and mental health issues, leading to fears of self-harm and suicide. The International Maritime Organization (IMO), International Labour Organization (ILO) and International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) have received thousands of urgent calls for help from seafarers and their families.

Governments around the world have been asked to bring the contents of this joint statement to the attention of the competent authorities and all others concerned.

Updated guidance issued for the safety of seafarers during pandemic

On 11 September IMO reported that the World Health Organization (WHO) had issued interim guidance aimed at protecting the health of seafarers working on cargo ships and fishing vessels amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

This specific guidance at fifteen pages (see here: <https://tinyurl.com/y2ycxvxq>) addresses the unique situation of seafarers, who work in close contact environments and often embark on ships for extended periods of time, generally without a medical doctor on board.

Guidance is provided by the document to ship owners, seafarers, unions and associations and competent authorities. It includes advice on pre-boarding screening, hand hygiene, physical distancing and the use of masks, as well as recommendations on how to manage suspected COVID-19 cases on board. Also covered is the importance of mental health services and psychological support for seafarers. The WHO advice reminds Member States that they must ensure that seafarers in need of immediate medical care are given access to their medical facilities on shore.

IMO encourages its Member States and international organizations to disseminate the guidance as widely as possible. Preventing and managing outbreaks on board ships is vital not only for the safety and well-being of the crew, but also to protect the crew's ability to safely navigate and operate the ship.

IMO Member States are also invited to make use of the Protocols to Mitigate the Risks of Cases On Board Ships. Readers are encouraged to see the nine-page document here: <https://tinyurl.com/yve67pjw>

These protocols were issued by non-governmental associations in consultative status with the IMO, for example ICS, INTERTANKO and IMHA). Protocols include tools to help ship operators manage suspected or confirmed cases of COVID-19 and to ensure that seafarers can embark and disembark safely and efficiently.

Global Industry Alliance for marine biosafety

IMO reports new member joining

Early in September the IMO Media service reported that Hapag-Lloyd AG was the latest entity to join the Global Industry Alliance (GIA) for Marine Biosafety, an initiative launched in June 2020 by the IMO GloFouling Partnerships project. Here the initiative works to promote collaboration with the private sector to address two of the most pressing environmental issues of our time: invasive species and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.



At this time the new member of the GIA joins forces with an expanding group of leading private sector champions representing a wide range of maritime industries affected by biofouling, including shipping, aquaculture, offshore oil and gas and ocean renewable energies.

There is a useful introductory article on the Alliance to be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/y3snyrqs>

Biofouling is the build-up of aquatic organisms, such as algae or small animals, on marine surfaces that can lead to the introduction of potentially invasive species to new environments, where they may threaten native species and cause irreversible damage to biodiversity. Additionally, biofouling increases the drag of ships, forcing them to burn more fuel to maintain speed.

Glofouling Project Manager, Lilia Khodjet El Khil, welcomed the latest expansion as an important step towards finding solutions to improve the hydrodynamic performance of ships and thereby contribute to a significant reduction of greenhouse gas emission of the shipping industry.

Further private sector companies were expected to join the GIA in time for its first GIA Task Force meeting, planned for the end of October, where members were due to convene to discuss and commence the GIA work.

More information on the GIA is available here: www.glofouling.imo.org/gia

'NextGEN' shipping decarbonization concept mooted for green and efficient navigation

On 22 September IMO's Media service issued a briefing on the 'NextGEN' shipping decarbonization concept.

This new concept for a collaborative global eco system of maritime transport decarbonization initiatives was introduced by the IMO and Singapore, during a global webinar on decarbonization held the previous week (17 September).

The NextGEN initiative aims to facilitate information sharing on decarbonization initiatives across many stakeholders (including IMO Member States, NGOs, industry and academia); identify opportunities and gaps for decarbonization in the global shipping community; and create important networks and platforms for collaboration across these initiatives.

This network initiative has been named 'NextGEN', where GEN is short for 'Green and Efficient Navigation'.

Attended by more than 500 maritime leaders and professionals, from 63 countries, the webinar was jointly organised by IMO and the Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore.

(Readers may view the full webinar here: <https://fos-decarbonisation2020.sg/>)

During the webinar, IMO Secretary-General Kitack Lim recognized the unprecedented times in which we are living and expressed his belief that *'the single biggest challenge we are still facing is the battle against global warming and climate change'*. He called for more action to speed up

research into zero carbon marine fuels.

He added: *'To achieve this, IMO is stepping up its efforts to act as a global forum and promoter in R&D in zero carbon marine fuels, bringing together interested stakeholders from public and private sectors, and also private and development banks and other potential donors around the world.'*

HE Kitack Lim's full speech is available here: <https://tinyurl.com/y2gnv4ry>)

Singapore's Minister for Transport, Ong Ye Kung, said the world needed to keep up the fight against climate change, even while dealing with the COVID-19 crisis.

He commented: *'No one can do this alone. It is a global ambition, to be accomplished by the international maritime community. But we all have capabilities, expertise, and resources to contribute to this endeavour. Singapore will do our part, and we look forward to the maritime community coming together, under the leadership of the IMO, to re-double our efforts and build a better, greener world.'*

Outlining the principal features of the NextGEN concept, Jose Matheickal, Chief of Department of Partnerships and projects of IMO, said further discussions were envisaged at the forthcoming Future of Shipping Conference in Singapore in February 2021.

Dedicated NextGEN workshops in 2021 will be organised by IMO and supported by Singapore, to bring together various decarbonization initiatives, in order to map out in detail the global shipping decarbonization web.

A subsequent global mapping document will inform a wider audience through relevant IMO meetings. It is envisaged that NextGEN will act as a catalyst to spur collaboration among the various initiatives once the NextGEN collaboration platform is fully developed by 2022/2023.

Other speakers at the webinar gave presentations spanning the entire spectrum of various existing cooperation-frameworks on decarbonization, ranging from initiatives in the Pacific to actions led by the maritime industry and financial institutions.

Panel discussions provided an opportunity to share views on additional opportunities for cooperation and outlining potential next steps to support achieving the 2050 level of ambition of reducing GHG emissions from international shipping by at least half compared to 2008, as set out in the IMO GHG Strategy.

Future of Shipping: Digitalization

The second IMO-Singapore webinar – *Future of Shipping: Digitalization* - will be held online on 8 October 2020 from 1000 – 1200 (BST = GMT+1).

It will hear presentations on the potential that digitalization

offers to make the maritime supply chain more resilient even in the face of new demands, and also discuss how to overcome challenges faced by maritime administrations and the industry on their digitalization voyage.

More details can be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/yytob7ze>

Addressing ballast water management and invasive species in the Mediterranean

A webinar on IMO's Ballast Water Management (BWM) Convention and its application in the Mediterranean region, amid the global pandemic, has helped to raise awareness, enhance knowledge and share best practices on implementing the Convention.

According to a recent REMPEC* Study, vessel-introduced non-indigenous species have been estimated to account for 26% of all species introduced in the Mediterranean. In the last ten years, the number of species in the Mediterranean Sea has continued to increase, posing a significant threat to humans in terms of health and recreational activities as well as environments and indigenous species in the region.

In keeping with the theme of World Maritime Day for 2020: *Sustainable shipping for a sustainable planet*, some 69 participants from various ministries, departments, agencies and other stakeholders, took part in the event on 23 September.



The webinar was the first to be organized online by REMPEC. It included an overview of the BWM Convention and updated participants on revisions to the Mediterranean BWM Strategy with respect to changes in international regulations, since entry into force of the BWM Convention in 2017.

Knowledge was shared on the preparation of a Mediterranean Strategy for the Prevention and Response to Marine Pollution from Ships (2022-2031), and a review of the

guidance related to the common indicator on non-indigenous species of the Integrated Monitoring and Assessment Programme and related assessment criteria for the Mediterranean Sea and Coast (IMAP).

The need for a unified approach to address problems of ballast water and invasive species in the Mediterranean region was echoed in presentations delivered by the IMO, the Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission, the Specially Protected Areas / Regional Activity Centre (SPA/RAC), and the ODYSSEA Project**, as well as representatives from the 16 Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention.

Readers are invited to watch the recordings of the webinar and read more here: <https://tinyurl.com/y6w5tosc>

*Regional Marine Pollution Emergency Response Centre, see here: <https://www.rempec.org/en>

** An EU programme to develop, operate and demonstrate an interoperable and cost-effective platform that fully integrates networks of observing and forecasting systems across the Mediterranean basin, addressing both the open sea and the coastal zone. See here: <http://odysseaplatform.eu/>

How to achieve sustainable shipping for a sustainable planet

A global audience has heard how innovation, the maritime workforce and the role of industry and governments can work to realise shipping's sustainable future.

On 24 September IMO's World Maritime Day webinar brought together speakers from government, international organizations and innovative enterprise. They raised issues and highlighted solutions facing shipping, particularly in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic. One overarching theme was that the pandemic could and should be the catalyst for positive change, with international and cross-sector cooperation being the key.



In his opening remarks, IMO Secretary-General Kitack Lim set the tone by praising the unprecedented level of cooperation between all those involved in the maritime sector in response to the pandemic. He said: *'Never has the spirit of cooperation been more important than now. I can assure you that IMO, as the global regulator of international shipping, is ready to establish new partnerships for cooperation and sustainable economic recovery, and to help drive the SDGs, for the benefit of all humankind.'*

Robert Courts, UK Minister for Aviation, Maritime and Security, Department for Transport, emphasised the need to protect our marine environment, saying that: *'Today's summit is testimony to our international efforts. It is right that as we build our way out of the Covid-19 pandemic, we double down on protecting our environment to deliver a greener future.'*

IMarEST's Alastair Fischbacher said that the pandemic had not changed our shared sustainable shipping target, but raised the issue that: *'In a competitive world, it is easier to follow than to lead – easier to let others take risks.'* The solution, he said, was coordinated, international cooperation.

The event heard from the WHO's Dr. Jaouad Mahjour, who said that: *'Strong action calls for more collaboration between the health sector and the maritime sector because health is a shared responsibility.'*

The message of shared responsibility was also raised in response to a question on how to combine ambitious goals on international ship emissions and sustainable growth of developing countries.

On the topic of maritime careers, Ms. Birgit Liodden (Ocean Opportunity Lab) said the old way of looking at maritime careers was outdated, and that a lifespan approach that mixes onboard and onshore work was needed. There is a need also to move to achieve work-family fusion to attract the best and broadest range of talents as new generations have different values and expectations about how they are spending their time.

The issue of ocean plastic was also discussed, with HE Professor Ricardo Serrão Santos, Minister of the Sea, Portugal, emphasising that: *'To tackle the problem of illegal littering we need new approaches and mechanisms which goes beyond regulation. We need to adopt measures within a circular economy and focus on systematic approach involving all stakeholders.'*

To learn out more about World Maritime Day, including a full list of the day's webinar speakers readers are invited to visit the IMO website <https://www.imo.org>.

Solutions identified to address illegal wildlife trade

The global scale of wildlife trafficking and its devastating impacts across biodiversity, economic development, security and human health was at the core of a webinar to discuss efforts by governments and the private sector to address this crime within maritime supply chains.

Illegal trade in wildlife is a truly global issue and no country is untouched by this form of crime. Wildlife that is illegally traded through containerized sea cargo typically involves large volumes of non-perishable wildlife products, such as pangolin scales, ivory, timber and shark fins. They are usually undeclared.

Participants at the webinar highlighted the involvement of organized criminal groups in transporting large volumes of wildlife contraband at a single time. Corruption was also identified as a key problem.

Tackling transnational criminal groups illegally trading in wildlife requires increased cooperation and information-sharing between shipping lines, government agencies and the NGO community. Detecting this crime can also involve financial investigation – the so-called “following the money” approach.



Use of increased digitalization of shipping documents can also help in facilitating better screening of cargo documentation. Digitalization is also seen as a way to reduce corruption in the supply chain.

The Government of Kenya outlined the country’s proposal to IMO’s Facilitation Committee to develop guidelines on the prevention and suppression of the smuggling of wildlife on ships engaged in international maritime traffic. Government representatives, shipping lines, IGOs and NGOs welcomed the proposal. Such guidelines could be developed through a consultative approach involving a broad group of stakeholders, including maritime authorities, shipping lines and wildlife experts

This event was organized by IMO with the United for Wildlife transport Taskforce* (which brings together transport stakeholders along with law enforcement and other agencies), TRAFFIC¹ (an NGO working to stop trade in wildlife), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)² the

World Bank-led Global Wildlife Program and World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF)³.

Readers are invited to watch the full webinar here: <https://tinyurl.com/ybs88kef>

* See here: <https://tinyurl.com/vdxb39r>

¹ See here: <https://www.traffic.org/>

² See here: <https://tinyurl.com/vdxb39r>

³ See here: <https://www.wwf.org.uk/>

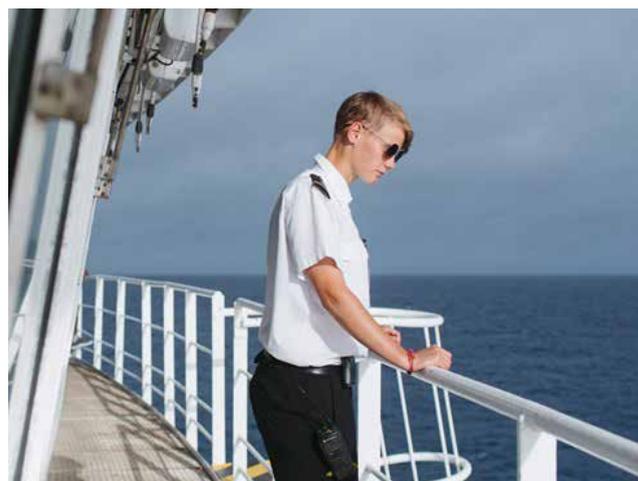
IMO key protocols to support safe crew change updated

IMO announced on 7 October that it had issued updated protocols to ensure safe crew change during the COVID-19 pandemic.

These are given in the IMO document: Circular Letter No.4204/Add.14/Rev.1 5 October 2020 Coronavirus (COVID-19) – Recommended Framework of Protocols for ensuring safe ship crew changes and travel during the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic

Of 60-pages the document is to be found here: <https://bit.ly/30EnSiO>

The Framework of Protocols was first issued on 5 May 2020 and has now been revised, with the principal purpose of emphasizing the need for compliance and strict adherence with COVID-19 testing and quarantine requirements, reflecting that these are now a reality in many national jurisdictions.



Furthermore, the changes also reinforce the importance of seafarers not commencing travel, or continuing to travel, if they feel unwell or suspect that they may have COVID-19 symptoms.

Some additional recommendations have also been included to prevent infection on board when seafarers join their ship. With the exception of a few minor editorials, no other substantive changes have been made.

General Kitack Lim expressed his support for these Protocols and urged their implementation.

IMO new guidance to facilitate repatriation flights for seafarers

As we well know passenger and repatriation flights are essential to allow stranded seafarers to go home, and for their relief crews to be able to join ships.

At the end of September new guidance issued by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) to facilitate those flights marked a further step to alleviate the ongoing crew change crisis.



Guidance outlined specific recommendations for seafarer changeover flights, including the need for advanced bilateral communication, coordination and planning between ship owners, aviation stakeholders and the relevant authorities. It also highlighted the importance of seafarers and requested States to grant rapid authorization for the entry, departure and transit of aircraft, including seafarer changeover flights.

IMO Secretary-General Kitack Lim expressed his confidence that this new contribution by the UN will have a positive impact on the crew change crisis. It is estimated that 400,000 seafarers are still trapped at sea, due to restrictions imposed by Governments in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The guidance was shared by IMO in Circular Letter 4204/Add.32. It will be reviewed and updated as necessary by ICAO as the global situation evolves.

See here: <https://tinyurl.com/y5wo9tql>

III International Maritime Congress

Postponement until 2022

In Newsletter 34 (July 2020) we carried information about the **III International Maritime Congress** to commemorate 500 years from the First Circumnavigation and to be held in

Bilbao, Spain, from 18-20 May next year (2021).

News has now been received from the organisers, the Asociación Vizcaína de Capitanes de la Marina Mercante (AVCCMM) together with Bilbao Port and the Basque Country University(UPV) that the event has been postponed and will now be held from 17 to 19 May 2022.

Suggested topics

The original planned topics remain as: historical content, technological innovation and technical or relevant content from the maritime sector.

The Scientific Committee reserves the right to refuse documentation that does not comply with the established requirements.

Each presentation will last 20 minutes and there will be time for requests and questions.

Who should attend

The Congress will address historians, responsible ranks and professionals of the shipping industry, marine authorities, shipping companies, nautical schools, people and organisations involved in emergency services, salvage, marine pollution and prevention activities, insurance companies and those interested in studying the evolution of everything related to the maritime world from the Middle Ages to the 21st Century.



ASOCIACIÓN VIZCAÍNA
DE CAPITANES DE LA
MARINA MERCANTE

To learn more

For further information readers are invited to contact the Congress Technical Secretariat of AVCCMM by e-mail here: avccmm@avccmm.org

Deadlines

These have been amended to one year on from those forecast for 2021 thus:

15 November, 2021 - Presentation of abstracts.

15 December, 2021 - Acceptance communication.

28 February, 2022 - Final version of the communication for publication.

30 March, 2022 - Final version of the communication for presentation.

Introducing new IFSMA Affiliate Member MM&P

A longtime advocate for Masters

We at IFSMA were pleased to welcome the International Organization of Masters, Mates & Pilots (MM&P), a maritime trade union headquartered outside Baltimore, Maryland, as an Affiliate Member earlier this year.

Below will be found a few words to introduce the organization.

MM&P had its origins in a tragic fire that broke out aboard the side paddle-wheeler *Seawanhaka* on 28 June, 1880, following a boiler room explosion that took place as the vessel transited New York Harbor.

As the flames spread rapidly through the wooden-hulled ship, Captain Charles P Smith stayed at the helm, suffering severe burns as he maneuvered to the shallow waters off Hell Gate, a narrow tidal strait in the East River, where most of the passengers could safely escape.



Although Captain Smith was ultimately recognized for heroism, he was first made a scapegoat by local authorities. *'Eventually he was cleared of any wrongdoing,* wrote Frank O Braynard, maritime historian and curator of the American Merchant Marine Museum at Kings Point, *'but the treatment he received so outraged his colleagues that they formed a committee to actively support masters and pilots in the future. That committee was the genesis of the International Organization of Masters, Mates & Pilots.'*

Today, MM&P represents: US Coast Guard licensed masters and mates on US-flag commercial vessels on international voyages, on the inland waterways, on civilian-crewed ships in the federal government fleet; masters, mates and other marine personnel who work aboard tugs, ferries, dredges and harbor tour vessels throughout the United States, including the San Francisco Bay and New York City ferry systems and the state ferry systems of Alaska and Washington.

MM&P fulfills its mission by: representing union members in collective bargaining with US-flag shipowners and op-

erators; supporting the efforts of other maritime unions to achieve safe and high standards of employment; and working with international organizations to improve industry standards and conditions in the global maritime community.

MM&P seeks to improve the maritime working environment through political action and involvement in the regulatory process that shapes laws and regulations governing maritime work.

On the national level, MM&P represents the interests of masters and mates before Congress and the many governmental agencies that regulate shipping or whose decisions affect maritime industry personnel, such as the US Coast Guard, the US Maritime Administration, the Department of Transportation, the Department of Defense and the Department of State.

At the international level, MM&P actively participates in the work of the International Transport Workers Federation, representing the interests of masters and mates at the IMO and the ILO.

MM&P is a member of the Nautilus Federation and is also affiliated with the Union de Capitanes y Oficiales de Cubierta (UCOC), which represents tug and dredge masters and mates employed by the Panama Canal Authority.

MM&P has five membership groups comprising over 5200 members:

- (i) Offshore Group;
- (ii) United Inland Group;
- (iii) Pilots' Group;
- (iv) Atlantic Maritime Group; and
- (v) Federal Employees' Membership Group.

The union has two international officers: Donald Marcus, President, and Don Josberger, Secretary-Treasurer.

There are eight Vice Presidents: Thomas Bell, United Inland Group-Great Lakes & Gulf; Stephen H Doherty, Atlantic Maritime Group; Thomas Larkin, Offshore Group-Atlantic Ports; Klaus Luhta, Offshore Group-Gulf & Government Affairs; George A Quick, Pilots Membership Group; Randall H Rockwood, Federal Employees Membership Group; Timothy Saffle, United Inland Group-Pacific Maritime Region; and J Lars Turner, Offshore Group-Pacific Ports.

In addition to its international headquarters outside Baltimore, MM&P has:

- Two training facilities, one outside Baltimore and one in Seattle, both of which house state-of-the-art maritime simulators;
- A conference center, restaurant and hotel located on its headquarters campus;
- An employer-funded, trust-administered, health and benefit plan;

- Hiring halls in port cities throughout the continental United States and Hawaii, and on the Great Lakes;
- A total of 35 affiliated state and US Navy civil service pilot groups in the continental US, Alaska, Hawaii and Puerto Rico;
- A legislative presence through the Maritime Institute for Research & Industrial Development (MIRAID), in Washington, DC.

Navigating the St. Lawrence

Challenging Waters, Rich History and Bright Future

The St. Lawrence marine corridor plays a key role in Canada's economy and supply chain. The geography as well as the unique physical attributes and water dynamics of the St. Lawrence challenge the commercial ships transiting through this maritime route in more than one way.

The St. Lawrence River is one of the world's major rivers, flowing into the estuary and gulf that shares the same name. It provides nearly 1,200 kilometres of navigable waters that link the Great Lakes and the heart of North America to the Atlantic Ocean, acting as a vital artery for Canada's economy and supply chain.

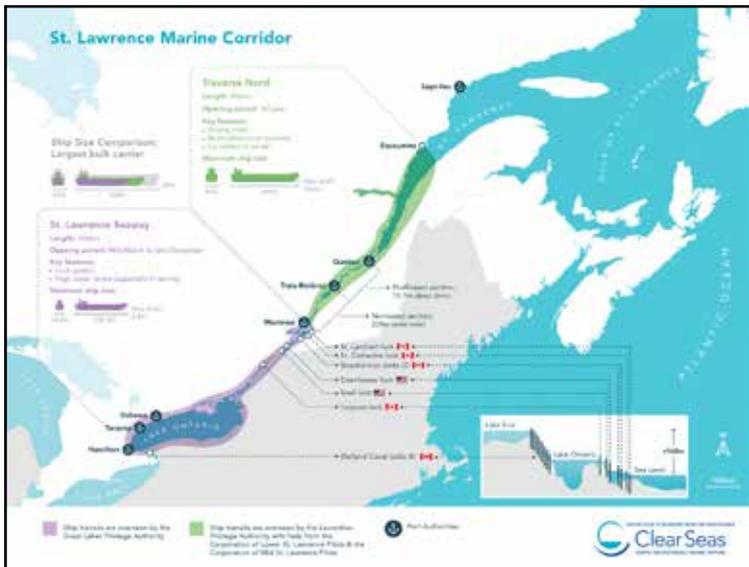


Photo credit: Corporation of the Lower St. Lawrence Pilots.

Some 8,000 commercial vessels sail this marine highway every year, carrying more than 100 million tonnes¹ of cargo. In 2017, marine shipping activities on the St. Lawrence Seaway contributed more than \$16 billion to the Canadian economy, according to a study conducted by the Chamber of Marine Commerce.

The St. Lawrence marine corridor, which is made up of the river and the Seaway, is recognized for its economic value including its strategic location for trade with the United States, Europe and the world. Its challenging physical features and dynamic waters make it one of the most com-

plex waterways in the world for ships to navigate. It is part of the traditional territory of the Kanien'keha:ka (Mohawk) Nation and the Wabanaki peoples including the Wolastoqiyik (Maliseet) Nation.

This article explores the physical characteristics of the St. Lawrence and the main challenges they pose to the commercial vessels using the waterway. It also gives an overview of the safety measures in place and the various initiatives aimed at enhancing the productivity and sustainability of marine shipping on this major route.

St. Lawrence Seaway: A Short History

Commercial marine shipping on the St. Lawrence corridor has a long history. Indigenous people paddled the waters they called Kaniatarowanenneh, or the "big waterway", more than 9,000 years ago using it as a trading and transportation route. Learn more about the major role Mohawks have played in the history of the St. Lawrence and their involvement in the protection and preservation of ecosystems along the St. Lawrence here: <https://tinyurl.com/qmfyu>

The European explorers who settled New France, Upper and Lower Canada used the St. Lawrence as an important transportation link. As North America grew and prospered, major development of the St. Lawrence River was required to allow commercial vessels to sail between Montreal and the Great Lakes. During the 1930s and 1950s, development activity included dredging², digging channels, and the construction of locks. In the 1950s, the decision was taken by Canada and the United States to jointly build the St. Lawrence Seaway. When it opened in 1959, it was considered one of the great engineering feats and examples of international co-operation of the 20th century.

Covering a distance of 306 km, it links Montreal with Port Colborne, Ont., on Lake Erie and includes 15 locks – seven of which are located in the St. Lawrence (five on the Canadian side and two on the American side) – allowing ships to transit through it despite an elevation gain of 168 metres. From there, it reaches Lake Superior and Thunder Bay, the gateway to Canada's grain producing Prairies, some 183 metres above sea level. The St. Lawrence Seaway is jointly managed by Canada and the United States, to ensure that it remains safe and well maintained.

Navigating Safely: The St. Lawrence Pilots

Under Canada's Pilotage Act, the St. Lawrence between Les Escoumins – located on Quebec's North Shore – and Montreal, the St. Lawrence Seaway and the Great Lakes are mandatory pilotage areas. In these areas of higher risk, ships of certain sizes and tonnages are legally required to have one or more licensed pilots on board. These pilots have in-depth knowledge of the river, its dynamics, and the regulations and restrictions in force in their pilotage area. They ensure that ship transits are safe, efficient and respect sensitive ecosystems.

Between Les Escoumins and Montreal, foreign vessels

over 35 metres in length, Canadian vessels over 70 metres in length whose total transport capacity (gross tonnage) exceeds a certain tonnage, and barges carrying pollutants are subject to compulsory pilotage. The Laurentian Pilotage Authority is the Crown corporation responsible for managing compulsory pilotage on this section of the St. Lawrence as well as on the Saguenay River. It is responsible for assigning licensed pilots to the ships that require them.



Photo credit: Laurentian Pilotage Authority

The Authority works with the Corporation of the Lower St. Lawrence Pilots, for transits between Les Escoumins and the Port of Quebec or towards Saguenay, and the Corporation of Mid St. Lawrence Pilots for transits between the ports of Quebec and Montreal. On the St. Lawrence Seaway – from the entrance of the Saint-Lambert lock to Lake Ontario – as well as on the Canadian waters of the Great Lakes, foreign ships over 35 metres in length, those with gross tonnage exceeding 1,500 tonnes and certain tugs are subject to compulsory pilotage. The Great Lakes Pilotage Authority manages and assigns licensed pilots in this area.

A Complex Route with Multiple Challenges

With its shallows, fogs, the presence of ice in winter, strong tides, multi-directional currents, and locks, the St. Lawrence is not a long, calm river. Its physical attributes and the dynamics of its waters pose many challenges to navigation and logistics.

Varying Widths and Depths

Since the St. Lawrence spans a gulf, an estuary and a river, its width and depth fluctuate considerably from one section to another. More than 300 km wide in the Gulf of St. Lawrence³, it gradually narrows in the estuary and the river where, in places, it is only one kilometre wide⁴. In comparison, the Strait of Juan de Fuca – which connects the Salish Sea to the Pacific Ocean on the west coast of Canada – is about 10 kilometres wide at its narrowest point. The depth of the St. Lawrence also fluctuates from one sector to another depending on bottom topography and the tides which cause the water levels to vary. In the gulf and the estuary, for example, the St. Lawrence is several hundred metres deep while the depth of the river is just over a dozen metres.

The shipping channel – the designated corridor through which ships transit – also has varying dimensions⁵ de-

pending on the area. Between Les Escoumins and Montreal, the minimum width of the channel varies from 229 metres to 305 metres and its depth ranges from 10.7 metres to 12.5 metres. Between Trois-Rivières and Montreal the width of the channel is the narrowest (229 metres), and the section between Quebec and Trois-Rivières is where the channel is the shallowest (10.7 metres). However, in this segment, ships can benefit from tides and available depths that exceed 10.7 metres at certain times of day.

Access to the Seaway: A Matter of Size

The narrowness of the river, its shallows, as well as the presence of locks in the Seaway impose constraints – width and draft⁶ – to the ships that transit the river. Ships coming from the lower St. Lawrence whose length and beam do not exceed 294 metres and 44 metres, can reach Montreal. Between Les Escoumins and the Port of Montreal, the maximum draft allowed to ensure safe transits despite the shallows varies according to the tides and available water levels. Between Montreal and Lake Erie, due to the size of the locks, only vessels whose length and beam does not exceed 225.5 metres and 23.8 metres⁷ can access the Seaway. The maximum draft allowed for ships transiting through the St. Lawrence Seaway varies between 8 and 8.8 metres⁸, depending on water levels.

How Ships Approach and Overtake Each Other

When ships meet on the St. Lawrence and seek to pass each other, strict rules are in place that are governed by the size of the vessels in transit and the dimensions and layout of the shipping channel. To ensure safe management of the marine traffic in the sections where there are many topographical constraints, pilots refer to the navigation chart VN301. This chart highlights the sections of the St. Lawrence in which ships can or can't meet and overtake each other based on their size. For example, between Quebec and Cap Ste-Michel à l'Île aux Vaches in Montérégie, vessels from 270 to 300 metres length can't meet or overtake one another in more than ten locations.

How the Seasons Affect Navigation

Marine shipping activities and navigation on the St. Lawrence are seriously influenced by seasonal changes and weather conditions. In the winter, precipitation, the presence of ice in the shipping lanes and the absence of illuminated buoys⁹ downstream from Montreal add a degree of complexity to ship movements. To ensure that shipping activities remain unhampered and safe in these situations, the Canadian Coast Guard is setting up an Ice Operations Centre which provides pilots with information on ice conditions, de-icing activities and safe routes to follow. Moreover, during winter, the Laurentian Pilotage Authority mandates that two licensed pilots must be on board ships transiting between Les Escoumins and Montreal. Meanwhile, the St. Lawrence Seaway is closed to navigation from the end of December to mid-March, since the ice makes the lock system impassable.

In the spring, melting ice and occasional heavy precipitation raise water levels in the St. Lawrence and the Great Lakes. High water levels can have significant economic effects for the marine shipping industry and waterfront communities. Ships in motion create wakes; when water levels are high, this added turbulence can flood or damage shorelines and riverside infrastructure. To reduce these risks and ensure that vessel transits remain safe when water levels are above normal, various measures can be implemented by the pilotage authorities and the St. Lawrence Seaway Management Corporation, including:

- delaying the opening of the commercial shipping season on the St. Lawrence Seaway;
- tightening speed limits and maximum draft permitted;
- reducing the number of ships in the shipping lanes;
- prohibiting certain vessels from transiting at night – for example, wide beam vessels (more than 32.5 metres wide) and very long vessels (more than 270 metres long)¹⁰;

High water levels are a major seasonal issue as they can cause significant damage along the river as well as delay the movement of goods and cut commercial productivity.

Finally, in the summer, the warm air masses that travel over the cold waters of the St. Lawrence create considerable temperature differences on the water's surface, which generate fog and reduce visibility in the shipping lanes.



Tides and Currents

From the Gulf to Trois-Rivières, the St. Lawrence is influenced by strong tides and currents that cause significant variations in water levels. The safe passage of ships – especially large ocean-going vessels – in this part of the river is dependent on the tides. For pilots, it's a matter of synchronization: they must use the tides and currents to create optimal windows for passage and assure ships have sufficient depths. A ship arriving at Les Escoumins during a rising tide could benefit from favourable water levels and resulting effects throughout its journey to an upstream port. Conversely, a large vessel entering the St. Lawrence during an ebb tide may have to slow down and even drop anchor, to wait for the tide to turn before it can continue on its course.

Optimization of Transits on the St. Lawrence: Towards a Digital Waterway

The St. Lawrence is a busy marine corridor. The number of ships and the volume of goods passing through it continue to grow every year. Therefore, the optimization of ship transits is and will remain a key element to ensure safe, efficient and sustainable marine shipping activities on this route.

Vessels that move from point A to B without being interrupted, that benefit from favourable tides and helpful currents, and whose arrival at the port is timed with the dock availability, consume less fuel and emit fewer pollutants – greenhouse gases, sulphur oxides and others. Smooth transits that allow cargoes to be delivered more quickly and efficiently have a positive impact on the productivity and environmental performance of the entire supply chain.

The modernization of the ways of doing things plays an important role in transit optimization on the Laurentian route. The “digitization” of the St. Lawrence to make it a smart marine corridor is also an integral part of Quebec's maritime vision (in French only), which aims to place artificial intelligence and automation at the forefront to boost the efficiency of commercial marine shipping and stimulate sustainable economic development on the river.

Industry stakeholders – ports, pilots, St. Lawrence Seaway Management Corporation, and maritime innovation research centres – have already begun this digital shift through various initiatives. Among them, the implementation of an automated hands-free mooring system in all the locks of the St. Lawrence Seaway; the creation of a tidal current optimization software; and the development of a travel optimization software that calculates, in just a few seconds, the best routes to prevent operational delays caused by weather conditions, currents, navigation restrictions, etc. Recently, the Laurentian Pilotage Authority has started working on a software application to optimize the pilotage and passage of ships between Les Escoumins and Montreal. Developed jointly with Innovation Maritime – the applied research centre affiliated with the Institut maritime du Québec (Quebec's Maritime Institute) – this application will allow the Authority to automate and optimize transit planning in real time based on weather data, water levels at different times of the day, vessel size, and more. This project should be completed in 2022.

All of these initiatives will contribute to improving the safety of shipping on the St. Lawrence, the smooth and efficient flow of maritime traffic as well as protect the river environment.

Learn more

To learn more readers are invited to study these links:

Economic impact of marine shipping in Canada:
<https://tinyurl.com/y6t59wtq>

Maritime innovation projects on the St. Lawrence:
<https://tinyurl.com/yysqwg7q>

St. Lawrence Seaway: <https://tinyurl.com/ykryql8>

Marine pilotage in Canada: <https://tinyurl.com/yfyvggo>

Features of Marine Transportation in the St. Lawrence:
<https://tinyurl.com/y4fq7js5>

Footnotes

¹ St. Lawrence 2011-2026 Action Plan. (2017). Navigation on the St. Lawrence Echo of the Past, Path to the Future. Government of Quebec. p.7

² Dredging is a clearing operation that involves scraping the bottom of a water body to remove natural obstacles such as rocks and sediments. Dredging ensures that marine corridors such as the St. Lawrence River are free of any obstacles that could compromise the flow and safety of the vessels passing through it.

³ Stratégies Saint-Laurent. (2011). Le Saint-Laurent – Géographie. (Available in French only).

⁴ Stratégies Saint-Laurent. (2011). Le Saint-Laurent – Géographie. (Available in French only).

⁵ Data on widths and depths of the shipping channel between Les Escoumins and Montreal provided by the Laurentian Pilotage Authority (2020).

⁶ Draft corresponds to the submerged part of a ship's hull; the height of the draft varies according to the load carried. The more a ship is loaded, the greater the height of the submerged part (draft).

⁷ St. Lawrence Seaway Management Corporation. (2020). Locks, Canals & Channels. Retrieved May 27, 2020.

⁸ St. Lawrence Seaway Management Corporation. (2020). Seaway Notice No. °1 – 2020. Retrieved May 27, 2020.

⁹ In winter, illuminated buoys are replaced by smaller non-illuminated buoys designed to resist ice floes. However, during winter 2019-2020, 32 new lighted, four-season buoys were tested by the Canadian Coast Guard between Les Escoumins and Montreal. These new buoys will eventually replace the current buoys and provide ships with visual markers all year round.

¹⁰ Fisheries and Oceans Canada. (2020). Notices to Mariners 1 To 46 Annual Edition 2020. 27A – Guidelines for the Transit of Wide Beam Vessels and Long Vessels. p. 204.

Published 18 August 2020.

Editor's Note:

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www.clearseas.org/en

It was drawn to our attention by the Company of Master Mariners of Canada

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Romanian Shipmasters` Association

Mentoring scheme

By Captain Marius Tutuianu, President of the Association

The Romanian Shipmasters` Association, a Member of IFSMA, has made implementing a mentoring scheme one of its main goals. This activity, which traditionally takes place on board, is slowly disappearing, especially due to the administrative burden placed on the captain's shoulders.



The simulator
Time spent in the navigation simulator enabled sharing of professional competence.

Within the association mentoring was hitherto taking place thus:

- Through the shore pass application, a mobile application dedicated to seafarers, where masters can create a profile and future merchant navy officers can choose their mentor
- Through informal meetings with students in the maritime universities.



Table tennis
There was a table tennis mini-tournament aimed at creating team spirit.

Given that the two directions do not produce the expected results, the idea of a new approach appeared. This came in the form of a competition called Best Mentor, which was attended by ten teams of captains and students who had to carry out certain activities for three days, based on the qualities expected of a future officer and master.

There was a table tennis mini-tournament aimed at creating the team spirit which had to be developed on board the ship. This sporting activity was like a catalyst for building each team.



Best Mentor

Captain Razvan Tudorache received the Best Mentor trophy.

Time spent in the navigation simulator enabled sharing of professional competence and demonstrated how challenging is the responsibility for commanding a ship safely, in extreme conditions.

Empathy is an important quality of a leader. Teams had to perform a charitable act designed to increase their ability to understand experiences of people in need, as the crew would want to see in a captain. They donate medical equipment, groceries for a family with a disabled child, or toys to an orphanage.

For each activity teams received a score from an independent jury, and the winner was the team of Captain Razvan Tudorache, who received the Best Mentor trophy.

Impressions shared by participants led to the conclusion that this project laid the foundations for stronger mentor/mentee relationships, making it more personal and, it is to be hoped, long lasting.

The Best Mentor project was funded through a corporate social responsibility (CSR) programme of Kaufland Romania and is in line with the main belief of the Romanian Shipmasters' Association according to which the only way for such socio-professional organizations to exist and develop is to attract external grants that may lead to self-financing.

UK independent report into risks to shipping published

Future provision of Emergency Towing Vessels

An independent review of the risks to shipping within the UK's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) was published on 2 September by the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA).

This report was initiated from a recommendation by the Marine Accident Investigation Branch to assess the risk to and from shipping in the Dover Strait, following their report into a shipping incident in November 2016*.

While that incident was localised, the scope of the recommendation was expanded to include the entire EEZ in order to provide the MCA with a broad comprehension of risk within its waters. Integral to the report's development was a series of consultation events with key stakeholders across the UK which took place last summer.



UK EEZ Shipping Risks and Emergency Towing Provision Study

Prepared for the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA)

APRIL 2020

SYSTEMS • ENGINEERING • TECHNOLOGY



Ongoing assessment

The report is being used as part of an ongoing assessment for the future provision of Emergency Towing Vessels (ETVs), whose role is to intercept ships which have become disabled before they ground or collide with other ship traffic. The ETV would secure a tow and take the casualty to a place of safety. While an ETV cannot always prevent an incident from occurring, risk assessments show that its presence mitigates some of the risk.

The UK's current emergency towage provision, in addition to commercial tugs that are potentially available but subject to the spot market, is the *levoli Black*. This ocean-going tug has been operating off northern and north western Scotland and the Scottish Isles since 2016. It is contracted by the MCA until the end of 2021.

Recommendations from the report have been based on factors such as:

- an assessment of the risk of incidents occurring;
- impact on the marine environment;
- regional marine economic dependency;
- the economic cost from an oil spill, and
- cost benefit analysis of emergency towage options.

This study captured the entirety of the UK EEZ but also focussed on seven key shipping and/or environmentally sensitive geographical areas.

It is understood that the MCA is now engaging with ministers to assess the implications of the report's recommendations.

Russel Freeman from the Maritime and Coastguard Agency commented: *'There are no quick answers with this. The independent report makes it clear that there isn't a definitive cost benefit to employing ETVs but because prevention is better than dealing with the result of an incident, there is an argument that says we do need them.'*

'It is still the fact that the Government believes the responsibility for the cost of shipping should be borne by the industry and not the taxpayer. However, we also recognise the waters around north and north-west Scotland are a special case because of their significant environmental sensitivity and their contribution to both the Scottish and UK economy.'

'We are looking at the report and its recommendations, particularly in the light of the comments around provision in the South West Approaches, but taking account of the relative priority in the context of the current spending environment.'

The report can be seen here:

<https://tinyurl.com/y4z3xbue>

**Collision between general cargo ship Saga Sky and barge Stema Barge II resulting in subsea power cables damage. Location: English Channel, off the Kent Coast, England on 20 November 2016.*

MAIB Accident Investigation Report 3/2018 was published on 15 March 2018. See here: <https://tinyurl.com/y2egyuwH>

The Maritime and Coastguard Agency was recom-

mended to commission a study to review the full range of emergency response assets available in the Dover Strait area, including a reassessment of the need for a dedicated emergency towing capability.

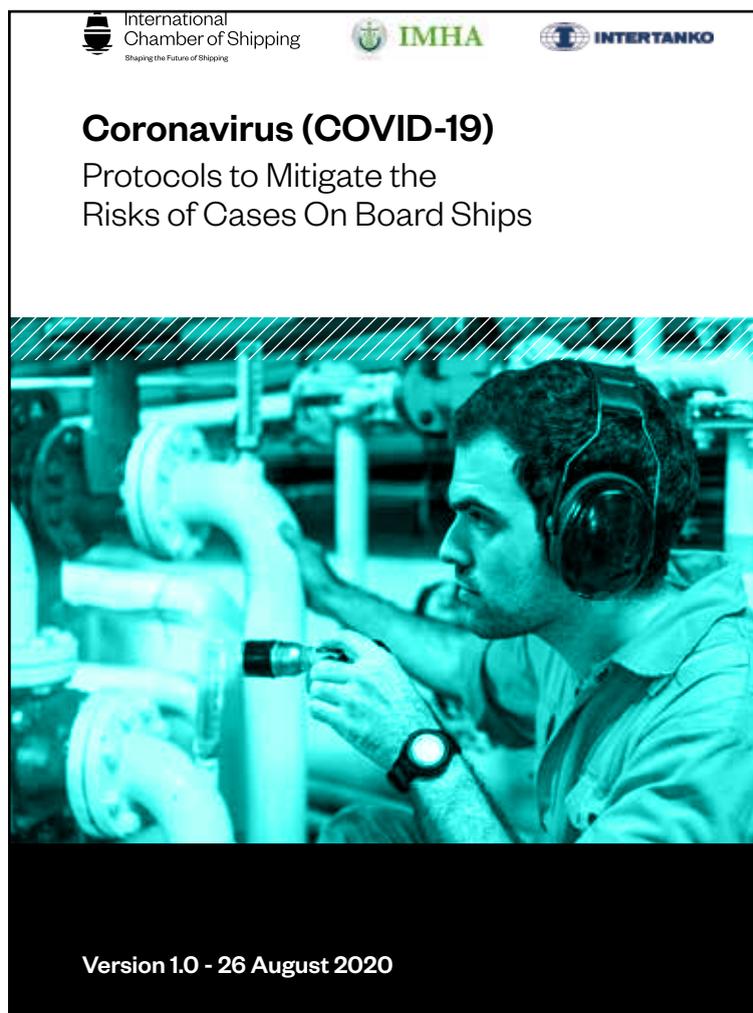
New protocols mitigate risks of COVID-19 on board ships

On 26 August the International Chamber of Shipping (ICS), along with the International Maritime Health Association (IMHA) and the International Association of Independent Tanker Owners (INTERTANKO), issued new protocols to mitigate the risk of COVID-19 cases on board.

These protocols aim to safeguard the health of seafarers and guarantee the safe operations of maritime trade offering governments and the general public reassurance that seafarers can embark and disembark ships safely.

Recently, there have been concerns over COVID-19 infections on board ships, due to a small minority failing to adhere to industry guidance.

While the number of cases has been limited, newly issued protocols will provide ship owners and operators with the tools to safely manage cases on vessels.



International Chamber of Shipping
Shaping the Future of Shipping

IMHA

INTERTANKO

Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Protocols to Mitigate the Risks of Cases On Board Ships

Version 1.0 - 26 August 2020

Building on previous health guidance released by ICS in May, the new protocols published in August equip ship operators with two useful instruments:

- A flowchart to help identify the process to follow when managing a larger number of suspected cases on vessels; and
- A PCR* testing procedures matrix to help identify what to do and when prior to boarding and if a suspect case is identified aboard.

Since the beginning of the pandemic, COVID-19-related travel restrictions have limited the global shipping industry's ability to rotate ships' crews. At the time of writing there were (early September) over a quarter of a million seafarers stranded at sea, waiting to be repatriated.

In light of this humanitarian crisis and its far-reaching impact on the industry, ICS put forward COVID-19 health guidance in March, updated in May, to protect the health of seafarers and passengers, as well as the general public.

These comprehensive documents ensure the safe operation of maritime trade and serve as a reassurance to governments that crew change and seaborne trade pose limited health risks.

Natalie Shaw, Director of Employment Affairs for the International Chamber of Shipping commented: *'The new protocols build on our previous guidance and should give confidence to the industry and governments that maritime trade can operate safely. Especially when there are suspected COVID-19 cases on board.'*

'We have observed a small number of COVID-19 cases among ship's crew in recent weeks and decided to take the initiative to create new protocols, together with IMHA and INTERTANKO.'

The document *Coronavirus (COVID-19) Protocols to Mitigate the Risks of Cases On Board Ships* from ICS and other major bodies is available for download here: See here <https://tinyurl.com/y2ccvttt>

A growing number of guidance documents from ICS are available at no charge from ICS and are available here: <https://tinyurl.com/yxkme4xk>

*Polymerase Chain Reaction. For more see here: <https://tinyurl.com/yao4s3p2>

Release of Iranian hostages

ISWAN* welcomes release of fishermen captured in 2015

ISWAN reported on 25 August the release of three Iranian hostages by Somali pirates after nearly five and a half years in captivity.

The three Iranian hostages, who were held for 1,975 days by Somali pirates, have been released and arrived safely at Tehran. They are the last three crew members of *Siraj*, an Iranian fishing vessel with 19 crew, which was hijacked by Somali pirates on 25 March 2015.

Siraj, an Iranian fishing vessel with 19 crew, which was hijacked by Somali pirates on 25 March 2015.

Last year, one other crew member was released by the pirates on humanitarian grounds and has been provided with support by ISWAN with the assistance of IMM Syndicate – the ITF-affiliated trade union in Iran.



ISWAN has been providing humanitarian assistance to the families of the crew members while they were in captivity by looking after some of the essential needs such as funding the education of their children, helping with the medical care of their elderly parents and paying for repairs to their homes.

In a statement ISWAN said: *'We are grateful to the UN and Hostage Support Partnership for bringing an end to the terrifying ordeal that the hostages went through. With their release, there are no more seafarer hostages in Somalia.'*

'Between 2007 and 2018, according to the International Maritime Bureau approximately 3,639 seafarers from across the world were held in captivity by the pirates, ranging from a few months to five and half years.'

ISWAN's Director of Regions, Chirag Bahri, who was himself once held hostage by Somali pirates, added: *'The seafarers and their families have suffered immensely during their period of captivity as there was very little communication between them. The families also suffered severe hardship during the five and half years while their loved ones were in captivity.'*

'ISWAN worked with number of partners across the globe to help the families with basic livelihood means, education and medical support from piracy relief funds. ISWAN also supported seafarers after their return from captivity with rehabilitation including psychological support. We wish to thank governments and other organisations who supported the piracy relief funds. Over the years this has enabled some of the seafarers held hostage to return to sea.'

ISWAN is a member of the UN Security Council's mandated Contact Group on Piracy off the Coast of Somalia

(CGPCS) and also administers the Piracy Survivor Family Fund (PSFF).

ISWAN is available to provide humanitarian support to seafarers and their families affected by incidents of piracy, armed robbery or hostage-taking.

*See: www.seafarerswelfare.org

China's first hybrid-electric rescue vessel

Shenhai 01

This newbuild, *Shenhai 01*, features an array of ABB's electric, digital and connected solutions that help support sustainable operations and enhance safety and efficiency

The first Chinese-built hybrid emergency rescue vessel is powered by ABB's bridge-to-propeller technologies, including Azipod® electric propulsion, energy storage system and state-of-the-art automation and control equipment that further optimize operational efficiencies.

Successfully delivered to Shenzhen Maritime Safety Administration (MSA) by Huangpu Wenchong Shipbuilding, the 78m loa vessel will be deployed to provide emergency responses at sea and to carry out rescue operations. *Shenhai 01* can be fully powered by batteries for up to three hours of operations, which is particularly crucial for safe rescue operations in areas affected by hazardous gas.

In the words of Xiubin Guo, Deputy Director General of Shenzhen Maritime Safety Administration: *'As the first China-designed and built emergency rescue vessel, Shenhai 01 is ranked among the top technologically advanced ships around the world.'*

'ABB is a leading integrated solutions provider, especially for advanced and complex vessels. We are very glad that the first project between MSA and ABB Marine & Ports has been such a great success.'

Alf Kåre Ådnanes, General Manager of ABB Marine & Ports China added: *'We are very proud to contribute to this benchmark project.'*

'This project marks the first delivery of our energy storage system in China, and it has been an honour to work with such forward-thinking ship owner and yard from the draw-ing board all the way to vessel delivery.'

It is reported that the power setup will be controlled by ABB's integrated Power and Energy Management System (PEMS™), which will optimize the energy use on board. The system controls three sets of diesel generators and two sets of lithium batteries with total capacity of 1680kWh. The PEMS™ system not only increases vessel power plant performance and diesel engine efficiency, but also supports zero-emission operations in the fully electric mode.



Shenhai 01 is powered by twin Azipod® electric propulsion units with a combined power of 6 megawatt. Azipod® units can rotate 360 degrees to increase manoeuvrability and operating efficiency. It is claimed that this system has the proven ability to cut fuel consumption by up to 20% compared to traditional shaft line propulsion systems.

For close to three decades, Azipod® electric propulsion has been the driving force behind safe, efficient and sustainable operations for a wide range of vessels. ABB's scope of supply also includes the remote control system for manoeuvring the Azipod® units from the bridge.

Shenhai 01's operations will be remotely monitored and supported by experts from ABB's global network of ABB Ability™ Collaborative Operations Centers. Remote support and connectivity, together with advanced data analytics enabled by the ABB Ability™ Remote Diagnostics System, will further enhance the vessel's operational safety and ensure optimal performance, while helping to promptly detect and correct faults on board. This is particularly important for vessels carrying out rescue operations in remote areas.

About ABB

ABB Marine & Ports supplies technologies that are driving the evolution of sustainable shipping.

Electrical propulsion, data-driven decision support and integrated solutions for ship and shore from ABB are paving the way to a zero-emission marine industry, providing greater efficiency and reliability to ship owners, and preparing vessels to meet the demands of tomorrow.

ABB's automation and electrical provisions are making port and terminal operations safer, greener and more productive. ABB Marine & Ports operates in 26 countries and has 2,000 employees. For more information readers are invited to see here: www.abb.com/marine

A new publication from the Nautical Institute

A Guide to Bulk Carrier Operations

There is no doubt that bulk carriers are the workhorses of international maritime trade. Those responsible for operating them need to manage significant risks inherent to

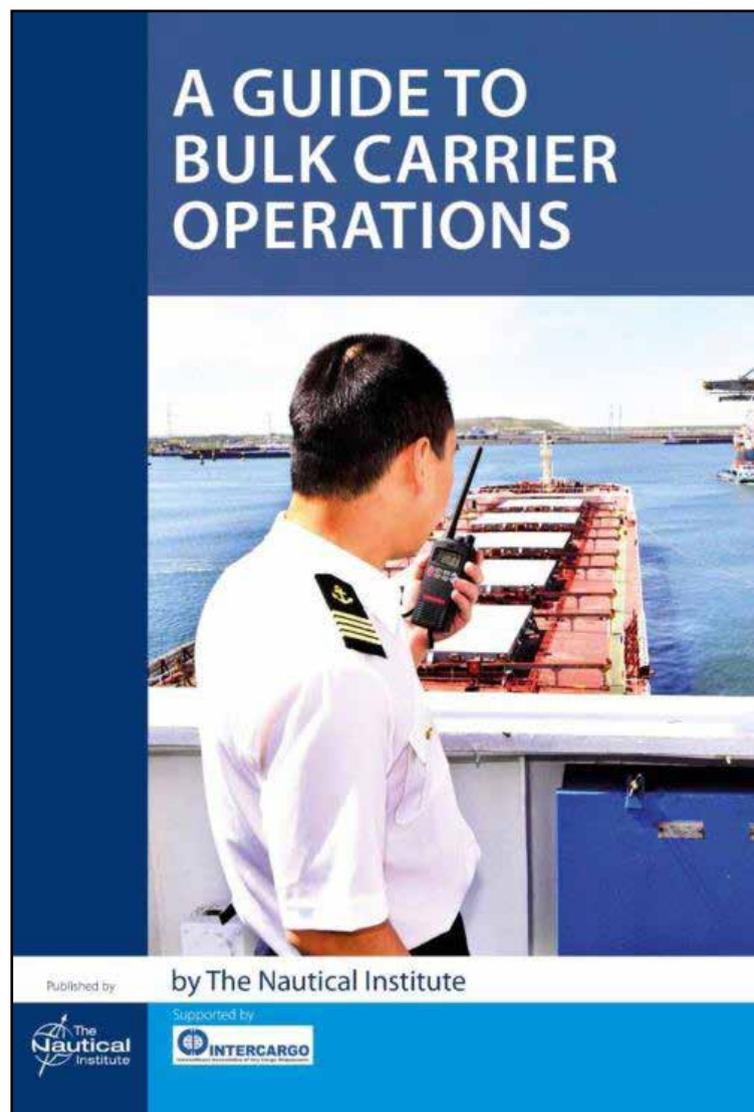
the dry bulk trade. Certain cargoes can deplete oxygen, catch fire, explode, corrode holds or simply deteriorate. At terminals, the Master may come under pressure to accept cargoes that are too hot or wet, which could endanger vessel and crew.

In recent years the dry bulk sector has made huge efforts to improve safety, but to quote Intercargo Secretary General Dr Kostas Gkonis: *'...there is no room for complacency and more work is needed.'*

With the support of Intercargo and vetting organisation RightShip*, The Nautical Institute has responded by publishing *A Guide to Bulk Carrier Operations*.

In the words of RightShip General Manager David Peel, the book has been designed as: *'...a comprehensive end-to-end guide to exemplary safety practices that will be useful for all participants in our workforce, including ship owners, ports, terminals, charterers and associations.'*

This highly practical guide draws on the expertise of more than 20 contributing experts representing a wide range of disciplines involved with the dry bulk trades. *A Guide to Bulk Carrier Operations* takes the reader through the essentials at each stage of the voyage, from preparation and loading, to care of the cargo and ship at sea, and finally arrival and discharge.



Subjects covered include:

- Strength and stability.
- Hatch cover care.
- Enclosed spaces.
- Charterparties.
- Legislation.
- Draught surveys.
- Deballasting.
- Monitoring hazardous cargoes.
- Spontaneous combustion.
- Fumigation.
- Coal fires.
- Liquefaction and oxygen-depletion.
- Safe mooring and access.
- Ship-shore communication and
- Ship/shore damage.

Clear diagrams and photographs complement the text along with tips, checklists and case studies.

The common-sense approach and straightforward language mean that, as Dr Gkonis says: *'... this book is indeed a pleasure to read.'*

The list price of the publication to non-members of The Nautical Institute is £65. Readers wishing to purchase a copy of *A Guide to Bulk Carrier Operations* are invited to contact: pubs.admin@nautinst.org Note: ISBN: 978 1 906915 77 3

Nautical Institute ref: 0397.

Finally in the words of Dr Kostas Gkonis, Secretary General, Intercargo: *'This up-to-date key guidance should find its prominent place aboard every bulk carrier and in the library of every company and professional in our sector.'*

*See also:

<https://www.rightship.com/about-rightship/about-rightship/>

The perfect storm for seafarers

SRI calls for investigation

The recent spate of grim casualties cannot simply be written off as bad luck, says Seafarers' Rights International (SRI), the international pan-industry body researching maritime and seafarers' law. It points out that the failure to treat seafarers as keyworkers during the COVID-19 pandemic is having devastating effects on individuals, who are now at risk of being caught in a perfect storm of exhaustion from extended employment agreements, increasing numbers of accidents, maritime casualties, and unfair criminal investigations.

In the words of Deirdre Fitzpatrick, Executive Director of SRI: *'The response to this seems to be to blame the seafarer. The spotlight should be on how the industry responds to these recent casualties.'*

'Has COVID-19 played a part in these situations? Will

there be fair investigations – as mandatorily required under the IMO Code for Safety Investigations – so lessons can be learned to prevent further tragic loss of seafarers' lives and damage to the marine environment?'

Brian Orrell, Chairman of the Board of SRI, who led the seafarers in the joint IMO/ILO negotiations that produced the Guidelines on the Fair Treatment of Seafarers in the Event of a Maritime Accident and in the negotiations that resulted in the Maritime Labour Convention, agrees: 'If there ever was a time for fair treatment of seafarers, that time is now. Fair treatment of seafarers following casualties and in working conditions are based on international standards that must be followed even in very difficult times.'

Amongst the recent wave of casualties was the Panamanian-registered bulk carrier *Wakashio* which ran aground on a coral reef south of Mauritius, spilling an estimated 1000 tonnes of oil and ultimately leading to the death of two members of the tugboat involved in the oil spill clean-up. An early response from the Government of Mauritius has been to arrest the Captain and the Chief Officer.

Then earlier this month, the Panamanian-registered vessel, *Gulf Livestock 1*, was tragically lost with around 40 crew members and nearly 6,000 cattle in Typhoon *May-sak*. This news came as firefighting crews from Sri Lanka and India were working to put out a large blaze aboard the Panamanian-registered oil tanker, *New Diamond*. One Filipino crew member died, and one was injured in the engine room explosion that sparked the fire.



Deirdre Fitzpatrick, Executive Director of SRI.

SRI Advisory Board Member Dave Heindel, Chairman of the ITF Seafarers' Section, and Jacqueline Smith, the ITF Maritime Coordinator have repeatedly warned against the toxic effects of COVID-19, fatigue and safety at sea: In their words: 'These maritime casualties should re-ignite

the debate on how serious the industry is about reducing the number of reported shipping incidents and tackling slow or non-existent investigations into maritime casualties, one of the industry's most notorious safety shortcomings.

'Massive decreases in shore leave and onshore medical treatment are being accompanied by inordinate periods of service on board contrary to rights of seafarers under the Maritime Labour Convention. This leads to chronic fatigue. And that exposes the safety of crews and the protection of the marine environment to much greater risks.'



Brian Orrell, Chairman of SRI.

About SRI

Seafarers Rights International (SRI) is an independent pan-industry centre dedicated to advancing the rights of seafarers through research, education and training in issues concerning seafarers and the law

Deirdre Fitzpatrick, Executive Director of SRI set up the organisation in September 2010, in response to the need for improved protection for seafarers in national and international laws.

A Solicitor of the Supreme Court of England and Wales she is also dual qualified in Ireland and joined the ITF in 1994 to head up its legal services department. She has considerable experience in the protection and enforcement of seafarers' legal rights and is co-editor of *Seafarers' Rights*, published by Oxford University Press.

AMSA Marine notice Working at height

Early in September the Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) issued

Marine notice 08/2020—Working at height. We reproduce the document kindly provided by AMSA here

Background

In the first six months of 2020, AMSA received ten separate incident notifications from ships that involved a fall

while working at height. Two of these incidents resulted in the deaths of crew members who fell during cargo hold cleaning operations.

While AMSA has previously addressed this issue in a Maritime Safety Awareness Bulletin, incidents involving falls from height continue to occur far too often.

Risks of working at height

Falls can occur anywhere on a ship, such as from ladders, gangways, over the side and stairs in machinery spaces. When adding slippery surfaces and ship motion, the risk of a fall is high.

Many of the serious fall from height incidents reported to AMSA involve people working in cargo holds, either while cleaning or preparing the hold for cargo, or while conducting cargo operations. These incidents can involve both ships' crew and shore-based staff such as stevedores.

Examining height safety is particularly important for the maritime industry because of the inherent risks of working aloft at sea, including slippery surfaces, extreme heights and ship motion.

As many tasks on a ship require working at height, it is crucial to control and manage the risks involved.

Recent Australian Transport Safety Bureau (ATSB) investigations into two serious incidents involving falls from height, highlighted a number of common issues. In both incidents, the work was not conducted in accordance with the existing safety management procedures or industry best practice, training was insufficient, and equipment, including fall arrest equipment, was incorrectly used.

Working at height safely

Eliminating the need to work at height is the most effective way of protecting crew from the risk of falls. However, on ships this may not always be possible, hence, effective risk control measures must be in place to mitigate or reduce the risk of a fall.

The primary risk control measures are the ship's safety management system procedures, permit to work processes and training. Procedural risk controls, such as risk assessment and permit to work systems, are essential tools to manage high-risk activities such as working at height. Using these tools helps you to identify risks and measures to control, or reduce the risk.

Physical risk control methods are also important. Temporary work platforms are one method of reducing risk when working at height. These can include scaffolds, elevating work platforms, and personnel cages lifted by cranes.

Fall arrest harnesses are an essential measure to reduce risk of injury if a fall is still possible after using other control measures.

However, all these devices need to be correctly installed and used to ensure they effectively reduce the risk of a fall.

The risk assessment should also consider what to do if something goes wrong – how will you rescue someone who is injured at height, or is suspended from fall arrest equipment?

Strategies to reduce fall incidents

It is possible to reduce the number of falls from height at sea by addressing the broader issues in height safety practices.

Managers and ships masters have a role to play in ensuring the safety of ship's crew by:

- ensuring all crew are familiar with the working at height risk assessment and procedures,
- ensuring all work at height is adequately supervised,
- ensuring safety training, including that required for working at height, is a top priority,
- ensuring permit to work systems are in place, effective, and are used,
- managing workload and ensuring that fatigue is effectively controlled
- ensuring suitable equipment (including rescue equipment) is available for use for working at height.

Seafarers also have a responsibility to:

- follow procedures,
- ensure they use the proper safety equipment for the task at hand,
- know how to use safety equipment,
- report defects,
- not take any unnecessary risks.

Further reading

AMSA's *Maritime Safety Awareness Bulletin Issue 1* provides more information on height safety including identifying common safety factors.

See here: <https://tinyurl.com/yx9bezvl>

AMSA's *Maritime Safety Awareness Bulletin Issue 6* provides guidance on tools and methods you can adopt to support risk identification and control.

See here: <https://tinyurl.com/y5xlqy5e>

AMSA's *Fatigue guidelines – managing and reducing the risk of fatigue at sea*, provides more information on reducing fatigue as a factor in workplace accidents.

See here: <https://tinyurl.com/y4rvf2pw>

ATSB's *investigation report MO-2018-001* Serious injury on board Berge Daisetsu, Portland, Victoria on 11 January 2018 provides an analysis of a fall from height incident.

See here: <https://tinyurl.com/y4rr3ulo>

ATSB's investigation report MO-2017-001 Fall from height and serious injuries to crewmembers on board Shanghai Spirit near Port Alma, Queensland, on 29 January 2017 provides an analysis of a fall from height incident.

See here: <https://tinyurl.com/y7sv8gy4>

Container losses: The Swedish Club identifies the catalysts

Established less than 70 years ago, the container industry is perceived by many as the modern face of shipping. Yet despite the sector being well regulated and highly regarded, containers are still lost overboard. *Container focus: Preventing the loss of containers at sea*, a new loss prevention report from The Swedish Club, provides an overview of statistics, an insight into specific cases, and with the help of experts, delivers hands-on advice for preventing such losses.

Even a small number of containers lost overboard can pose a serious danger to shipping and the environment, said Lars A Malm, Director, Strategic Business Development & Client Relations at The Swedish Club. He reflects: 'In *Container focus* we have used case studies to highlight common and avoidable errors and provided simple to follow advice to prevent them. However, unlike other of the Club's loss prevention guides, in the case of container loss, the statistics that we have analysed fail to tell the whole story.'



— With you at all times —

Container focus
Preventing the loss of containers at sea



'One catalyst for such losses is known to be misdeclared cargo. Sadly, the nature of these losses makes it difficult to translate incidents into data, and more importantly, identify the party that cause such damage to the industry.'

'A second catalyst we have seen is heavy weather. The excessive forces that are applied to the structure of a vessel in extreme conditions can lay bare errors that have been made when loading the cargo on board,' he adds. 'The immediate cause may seem to be poor navigation but in fact often the root cause lays in port.'

The Club's statistics show heavy weather to be the major immediate cause of container losses, responsible for half the claims and more than 80% of the costs – despite the widespread availability of sophisticated weather routing systems.

Many of the issues raised in *Container focus* occur time and time again, despite the fact that lost containers can be costly. Whilst just over 4% of the Club's claims are for containers lost overboard, these account for over 10% of costs. Claims caused by containers being lost overboard generate an average claims cost of US\$135,000 which is more than two and a half times higher than the average cost of claims from other causes.

Container focus explores planning, loading and stability, lashings, and provides advice on dealing with heavy weather. Case studies show the extent of the problems that can be revealed by heavy weather.

Malm continued: 'When we look at many cases, we must question the quality of training received by all involved in the logistics chain. Reluctance by crews to reduce speed or alter course to avoid heavy weather; poorly stuffed containers; containers not secured in accordance with the *Cargo Securing Manual (CSM)*; lashing strengths not checked against the loading computer's lashing module; excessive GM – all these factors can be avoided with good seamanship and proper training.'

A copy of *Container focus: Preventing the loss of containers at sea* can be found in pdf form here:

<https://tinyurl.com/yaovvnvz>

Or requested here: www.swedishclub.com

From the IFSMA Office

We draw your attention to the necessary delay to the International Maritime Congress announced by Asociación Vizcaina de Capitanes de la Marina Mercante (AVCCMM) on Page 10, which will now be held in May 2021.

Following this on Page 11 we have an introduction to our latest Member, the International Organization of Masters, Mates and Pilots (MM&P) who are based in Baltimore, USA.

Stay Safe, wherever you are.

AMSA and managing mental health at sea

On 15 September the Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) issued the latest edition of its *Maritime Safety Awareness Bulletin* which carries the common theme: Shaping shipping for people

This edition has the title *Managing Mental Health at Sea* and is available online at: <https://tinyurl.com/y4k9kpxq>

Issue 12 in the Maritime Safety Awareness Bulletin series provides an insight to the impact of COVID-19 on seafarers' mental health, indeed how the situation created by the pandemic has affected seafarers' wellbeing, and the ways of managing mental health at sea.

The valuable four-page document gives information and guidance to assist ship operators and seafarers to:

- alleviate the effects of stress;
- support crew, and
- identify signs of possible mental-health problems.

In this paper managing mental health is considered with one page set aside for trends in the data available and case studies. Strategies for managing mental health at sea are also introduced taking account of crew education, recognition of the signs of possible mental health problems and managing crew reactions.

To close there are key messages:

- Consider training key staff on mental health first aid.
- Break down the stigma, both on board and ashore, regarding mental health issues. It should be no different than any other injury or illness.
- Be alert for potential signs of mental health issues among crew.
- Proactively manage cases of mental health issues, including repatriation if appropriate.
- Maintain a fair, just and supportive crew environment, as part of a positive safety culture.

Editor's note:

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UK Department for Transport publications

For the UK shipping community Guidance Note MIN 635 (M) *Wellbeing at Sea* was published on 15 September.

Background

Wellbeing can be described as an individual feeling of fulfilment and contentment in life. It includes a state of good physical, mental and emotional health.

Overwhelmingly, research has shown that safety and wellbeing are inherently linked. Poor employee wellbeing is consistently linked to a greater accident and error rate, reduced productivity and increased absenteeism at work.

Seafarers work in unique environments that can be immensely rewarding and at times challenging. As understanding of health, wellbeing and safety increases, the industry is aware that some characteristics inherent to the environment onboard, for example prolonged periods away from loved ones, the assault of noise and vibration, may have a negative effect on the wellbeing of seafarers.

Publications

Wellbeing at Sea: A Guide for Organisations and *Wellbeing at Sea: A Pocket Guide for Seafarers* address a range of issues that can threaten wellbeing at sea to empower seafarers and management (companies and personnel) to make improvements that will enable all crew to stay safe, healthy and well.

Wellbeing at Sea: A Guide for Organisations provides pragmatic advice for organisations on how policy, procedures and company culture can be adapted to improve crew wellbeing.

Wellbeing at Sea: A Pocket Guide for Seafarers provides practical personal advice for seafarers to empower them to take care of their own and be aware of others' wellbeing.

These publications are non-mandatory but support mandatory texts such as the *Code of Safe Working Practices for Merchant Seafarers*.

To order printed copies

Printed copies of *Wellbeing at Sea: A Guide for Organisations* (ISBN 9780115536076) and *Wellbeing at Sea: A Pocket Guide for Seafarers* (ISBN 9780115537875) can be ordered from the following website: www.tsoshop.co.uk

It is understood that enquiries will be dealt with here: Telephone: +44 (0)333 200 2425

Readers are advised to cheque availability, cost and post & packing charges

E-mail: esupport@tso.co.uk

More Information can be provided here:

UK Seafarer Services

Maritime and Coastguard Agency

Bay 2/17 Spring Place

105 Commercial Road

Southampton

SO15 1EG

Telephone: +44 (0) 203 8172114

E-mail: humanelement@mcga.gov.uk

General Enquiries: infoline@mcga.gov.uk

Grounding of bulk carrier *Bulk India*, Dampier, Western Australia

11 March 2018

ATSB investigation and report

On 11 March 2018, during departure from Dampier, Western Australia under harbour pilot guidance, the bulk carrier *Bulk India* (Panama-flag, Class NK, 289 metres loa, 177,640 dwt) experienced an electrical blackout resulting in loss of propulsion and steering control. As a result, the ship exited the channel and ran aground. The ship was recovered into the channel with the aid of tugs, before being taken out the channel, to anchor, for further investigation.



Findings

In its investigation the Australian Transport Safety Bureau (ATSB) found that the electrical blackout occurred because the auxiliary diesel generator engines shut down after the cooling water temperature controller malfunctioned, resulting in overheated cooling water. The ship's engineers did not immediately identify the problem and were unable to manually operate the cooling water temperature control valve in time to prevent the blackout.

In addition the ATSB found that problems in the engine room started about 13 minutes before the blackout, however the two pilots on board were not informed of the situation. This removed the opportunity for the pilots to prepare for the loss of control, and delayed actions that may have assisted in a more timely or more effective response.

Further, it was found that *Bulk India*'s emergency generator was not fit for service. When the blackout occurred, the engine started but shut down shortly after, due to overheating. The radiator fan belt had failed several months prior but had not been replaced. The vessel's operator, Kowa Marine Service of Japan did not have in place adequate procedures to ensure that critical spares were identified and their inventory level maintained, to guarantee availability when required on board.

Action taken

Kowa Marine Service has undertaken a fleetwide programme of continual improvement of its safety manage-

ment and operating systems, and staff education and training processes. This included actions directed at identification, operation, maintenance and spare parts management relating to critical plant and machinery.

Rio Tinto have revised escort towage arrangements for ships departing their facilities in Dampier on the basis of extensive simulation exercises and a review of existing risk assessments. As a result, attendance by a second tug remains in attendance with bulk carriers further along the channel.

Furthermore, a comprehensive guidance manual for ship towage operations in Dampier and Port Walcott has been developed.

Safety message

In its report of the incident ATSB urged ship operators and crew members to ensure that systems, machinery and equipment, critical to the continued safe operation of the ship, are thoroughly understood, as well as appropriately maintained and tested. This will reduce the likelihood of an emergency situation relating to these items developing and provide a defence against adverse outcomes, should such a situation arise.

The 37-page ATSB investigation report is available here: <https://tinyurl.com/y5kylxts>

ESPO calls for a FuelEU maritime initiative

On 22 September as part of the continuing discussions on the future FuelEU Maritime Initiative, the European Sea Ports Organisation (ESPO) expressed the commitment of European ports to play their part in helping the shipping sector decarbonise.

The full ESPO position on the FuelEU Maritime Initiative is available here: <https://tinyurl.com/yywed84x>

ESPO welcomes Europe's ambition to be the world's first net zero emission area by 2050 and believes that the greening of shipping is a priority to deliver on this ambition.

In the words of a *communiqué* issued by ESPO: '*It is time to act. Enhancing both the development, uptake, use, and availability of sustainable alternative fuels and technologies is crucial to curb the rising CO₂ emissions from shipping.*'

For Europe's ports, according to ESPO, the best and most effective way forward is a policy which combines clear goals with measures facilitating the uptake of a variety of clean fuels and technologies, overcoming the barriers to the use of sustainable alternative fuels and supporting investments on both the demand and the supply sides.

It is the belief of ESPO that since there is currently no simple method to reduce shipping emissions, Europe's ports believe that a goal-based and technology-neutral

approach is best placed to facilitate the deployment of promising potential technologies and allow for innovation as part of a multi-fuel future.

To facilitate this approach, ESPO calls for the creation of agreements between all relevant partners in the maritime sector. Relying on a supporting policy at the European level, such accords would ensure that the alternative fuels' infrastructure available in ports is effectively used and that demand matches supply. This approach would help achieve economies of scale and overcome potential hurdles to the deployment of alternative fuels infrastructure, which include uncertain demand, high initial investment, and slow and uncertain return on investment.

ABB powers P&O super-ferries towards new sustainable transport era

Towards the end of September ABB reported that it is to supply electric, digital and connected equipments for P&O Ferries' two new vessels, including Azipod® propulsion and energy storage units, cutting fuel consumption by an estimated one ton per return trip across the English Channel.

In announcing the news ABB indicated that it had won a contract with Guangzhou Shipyard International Ltd for supplying a full scope of integrated equipment for P&O Ferries' two new vessels.

It is understood that the hybrid propulsion system using electric power from 8.8MWh batteries and diesel generators, will cut fuel consumption on P&O Ferries' Dover-Calais route by 40%.

These batteries are expected to provide full power for harbour manoeuvring and time in port and will prepare the vessels for a zero-emission future once more electric shore-charging stations are available.



Azipod® propulsion

Equipped with four Azipod® propulsion units per vessel, each rated at 7.5 megawatt, the 230 metre loa vessels will be the largest passenger and freight ferries to sail the route when they enter service in 2023. Benefits of bridge-to-propeller integration proved decisive in selecting the hybrid equipment fit for the new ferries, according to P&O Ferries.

In addition to Azipod® propulsion and energy storage, the new ships will feature a comprehensive scope of ABB products to cover power and propulsion, automation and power energy management. ABB's Power and Energy Management System (PEMS™) is closely integrated with the vessel's electrical system and ensures optimal use of the vessel's total power resources by improving the information flow across shipboard systems.

In the words of Zhongqian Chen, Chairman of Guangzhou Shipyard International: *'The P&O ferries under construction at the Guangzhou Shipyard International are truly iconic. We are delighted to strengthen our strategic cooperation with the technology leader ABB and to work together on this leading-edge project, considering ABB's proven supplier status in the global ferry market.'*

Juha Koskela, Division President, ABB Marine & Ports added: *'We are proud to have ABB technology at the heart of P&O Ferries' sustainability programme, as it transitions to the zero-emission future envisaged for shipping.'*

Saving in steaming time and fuel

Built to the double-ended design the vessels will feature a pair of Azipod® units and a bridge at each end and so there will be no need to turn ships in port. The master and senior officers will move to the opposite bridge, saving seven minutes on each outbound and return passage and saving one ton of fuel – a sixth of what is consumed on the 21-mile crossing.

These vessels will also be equipped with ABB Ability™ Marine Pilot Control, the intelligent manoeuvring and control system that enables safer, more efficient operations by automating some navigational tasks to allow officers to focus on the activities of the bridge team.

The vessels' engines will be equipped with ABB's Power2 two-stage turbocharging system that will further improve power efficiency and help achieve up to 5% in fuel savings. In addition, the Power2 system will help reduce up to 60% of nitrogen oxide emissions.

With over 20 vessels and 27,000 sailings each year on eight routes between the UK, the Republic of Ireland and north continental ports, P&O Ferries is one of the leading ferry and logistics companies in Europe, carrying 8.4 million passengers, 1.6 million cars, and 2.2 million freight units every year.*

The Guangzhou Shipyard International, where the vessels will be constructed, is recognized as one of the most modern and biggest shipbuilding companies in China and has an increased focus on building sustainable vessels.

Demand for Azipod® propulsion is growing strongly in the global ferry industry which carries around 2.1 billion passengers, 250 million vehicles and 32 million trailers every year.

Benefits of these propulsion systems, apart from the 360 degree rotation of podded propulsion units, include higher reliability, lower vibration and more lane metres can be created in the vessel.

*Based on 2019 figures.

World Maritime Day - The crew change crisis

Nautilus Federation unions call for it to end

The Nautilus Federation, an influential group of 22 maritime and inland waterways unions, released a joint statement on 23 September from its affiliates adding further pressure on governments and industry to resolve the continuing crew change crisis.

Marking World Maritime Day on 24 September, the statement drew attention to the apparent inability for some of the world's largest flags to enforce the fundamental rights of seafarers during the Covid-19 pandemic. While many of these Flags of Convenience (FOCs) quickly ratified the Maritime Labour Convention 2006 (MLC), the *'ease and speed by which many flag states subsequently ignored the rights of seafarers is a stain on the entire maritime industry.'*

Nautilus Federation affiliates have worked hard with their own national jurisdictions, demonstrating numerous attempts at resolving the crisis at national level. The Federation called upon the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) to approach the International Labour Organization (ILO) to hold to account those Flag States that have failed to respect the fundamental rights of seafarers.

The statement adds:

- Maritime and shipping professionals should be recognised globally as keyworkers;
- IMO and ILO protocols for crew change should be adopted by the entire industry;
- Port States should assist Flag States by enforcing the provisions of the MLC and detaining ships that do not comply

The World Maritime Day statement from the Nautilus Federation complemented an earlier statement backing ships' officers in supporting crews who may be mentally and physically exhausted from being stuck at sea during the pandemic.

Nautilus Federation director Mark Dickinson said: *'Maritime and shipping professionals, at sea and on inland waterways, have had enough. We will continue to push for an international solution, together as Nautilus Federation affiliates and as affiliates of ITF, so that the key workers of the world's seas and rivers are able to get to and from their vessels without delay. Should that international solution cause Port States to detain growing numbers of vessels until seafarers are repatriated, the industry and governments will need to prepare for the disruption this would cause to global supply chains.'*

'This is a wholly predicted – yet avoidable – humanitarian crisis, and we call for action against governments who deny seafarers their fundamental rights.'

Nautilus Federation's full statement is available here: <https://tinyurl.com/yxh2zz2f>

The Human Dimension in Tomorrow's Aviation System

In the linked document (White Paper) the word aviation could be replaced by the word maritime for a look at our future. As many of you frequently fly to join and leave ships the aviation discussions will be of interest to you.

The document was produced by the Chartered Institute of Ergonomics and Human Factors and may be found here: <https://bit.ly/CIEHFFutureAviationWP>

This document, amongst other things, considers the implications of AI (Artificial Intelligence) taking over the role of air traffic control and aircraft pilots, it suggests there will be mature systems in place by 2050, but even then, there will be a place for humans. Is there a parallel in the maritime world?



WHITE PAPER

THE HUMAN DIMENSION IN TOMORROW'S AVIATION SYSTEM



Chartered Institute
of Ergonomics
& Human Factors



In particular your attention is drawn to the human factors toolkit on page 5, and the five destinations on page 44 onwards.

Does this give us any clues as to the future of the human dimension in tomorrow's maritime system? Let us know what you think by e-mail to. hq@ifisma.org

International Chamber of Shipping updates health guidance on Coronavirus (COVID-19) to reflect latest knowledge

A great deal has changed since March, when the International Chamber of Shipping (ICS) first issued guidance for the global shipping industry to help combat the spread of COVID-19. The entire world has been affected, seeing 32 million cases and around one million deaths globally*. While deaths, and indeed infection rates on ships stand at almost nothing in comparison, seafarers face the same risks as the general population and it is important to recognise that following health guidelines is essential to maintain this situation.

Updated publication

With that experience, knowledge of COVID-19 has substantially increased, and the ICS has now published a new, fully updated version of *Coronavirus (COVID-19) – Guidance for Ship Operators for the Protection of the Health of Seafarers*, reflecting the latest thinking and advice on the virus. Version 3 has an updated introduction reflecting the situation nine months on from the start of the global pandemic and adds two new annexes on Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) testing and Managing Multiple Cases of COVID-19 On Board Vessels. This replaces version 2, published in May, and should be read in conjunction with *COVID-19 – Protocols to Mitigate the Risks of Cases On Board Ships*.

The new 48 page Guidance has been developed with support from a number of prominent international bodies including:

- The International Maritime Organization (IMO)
- The European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC)
- The International Maritime Health Association (IMHA)
- The International Transport Workers Federation (ITF)
- INTERTANKO

Measures highlighted in the Guidance include advice on managing port entry restrictions, shipboard measures to address risks associated with COVID-19, managing cases of COVID-19 on board ship when at sea, assistance for all seafarers to access medical care when in ports, and dealing with other medical issues during COVID-19.

More practical advice

In addition to the new PCR Testing Procedures Matrix, the publication also includes updated practical advice on the use of masks, renewing prescriptions, support and logistics supply, decision making for on board suspected or confirmed COVID-19 cases and measures to enhance mental health and wellbeing. It contains sample crew/passenger locator cards and health self-declaration forms, and a number of posters that can be printed out and displayed.

Guy Platten, Secretary General of the ICS commented: *'Our seafarers continue to work tirelessly to ensure the global supply of goods and services during the COVID-19 pandemic. It is essential that governments and shipping companies do all they can to support this updated Guidance, and seafarers use its recommendations to ensure we all play our part to keep everyone safe.'*

The Guidance is for use on all types of ship and aims to recognise the needs of both cargo and passenger ships. It is recognised that cargo ships are unlikely to have a fully trained doctor or nurse on board and that medical treatment on cargo ships will be provided by a crew member with training to STCW medical requirements.

Coronavirus (COVID-19) - Guidance for Ship Operators for the Protection of the Health of Seafarers will be distributed to seafarers through the ICS's network of national member associations, is free to download from the ICS's website here: www.ics-shipping.org and will be shared via social media and through partner organisations that contributed to the publication.

* Source: Johns Hopkins University

SMOU Helped Stranded Seafarers in Claiming Close to US\$160,000 of Owed Wages

MV Sevastopol, a Russian-flagged ship, was arrested on the 22 October 2019 in Singapore due to unpaid agency fees. Clueless to why their vessel was arrested, the crew sought the Russian Embassy for assistance.

At the onset of the arrest, the Russian Embassy in Singapore made arrangements with the ship-owning company for the payment of the 13 crew members while they continued to stay on board during the arrested period. The crew continued to receive their salary until December 2019, when the company told the embassy that they had ran out of funds, and would not be able to keep up with subsequent wage payments.

The Russian Embassy turned to SMOU for assistance in January 2020. SMOU quickly jumped onto the case to assist the Russian Embassy and helped the affected crew by contacting the law firm, Gurbani & Co, to file their wage claim.

On 13 February 2020, representatives from the Embassy, law firm and SMOU boarded the ship to meet with the crew. While speaking to the crew and looking through their documents, it was uncovered that the owners were in fact paying wages that are higher than their contractual terms, but this was based only on verbal promises. Due to the poor economy and high unemployment rates back in their country, they were forced to accept the poor terms and conditions set, bringing them to such a situation. The crew explained that despite the shady nature of the agreement, they took on the job so that they can earn their keep and support their families back home.



© SMOU

The 13 crew accompanied by officials from SMOU, Singapore Organisation of Seamen (SOS), representatives from the Russian Embassy and Law firm Gurbani & Co.

This posed a great challenge for the lawyers in filing their claims that are outside of their contractual agreement. The team advised the crew members to extract proof of their actual salary received from bank account statements and other supporting documents. With this additional proof of actual wages received by each crew member, the lawyers managed to draft and submit the Crew's Statement of Claims to the court. which amounted to almost US\$160,000 on the date of filing. The seafarers' wages will then be recovered from the monies collected from the sales proceeds from the successful auction. The ship was successfully sold on 17 April.

Apart from worrying about their owed wages, the seafarers were concerned about their passage back home to their families. Due to the current COVID-19 situation, their repatriation home has been affected due to various countries imposing border controls and restricting crew changes to combat the spread of the virus. With advice from SMOU, the Russian Embassy has been consulting the Sheriff's agent to facilitate the repatriation process. Arrangements are underway as the Sheriff's agent continues to work with Singapore Government agencies to ensure that the crew members can be repatriated home safely.

SMOU lived out its mission in championing the interests of the 13 crew members, and will continue to add value to the maritime community and beyond.

First publish in Seavoices Jan-Jun 2020. Reproduced by kind permission of SMOU, IFSMA Member. Online version with more photographs here <https://tinyurl.com/y8723nbz>

Fuel cell project

Advanced fuel technology for ships and offshore

New and flexible fuel cell technology could reduce emissions from shipping by 40% to 100%, it has been stated. In Norway partners from shipping, R&D and the oil and gas industries are now constructing a pilot system that can use different types of fuel.

A 1.3mW prototype fuel cell will be tested at the Sustaina-

ble Energy Catapult Centre at Stord, Norway prior to being installed aboard one of Odfjell's newest chemical tankers for a trial period.

It is understood that this system will first be tested at the Sustainable Energy Catapult Centre in Norway before installation on a chemical tanker. The unique project, reported on 2 October, was presented to the Norwegian Prime Minister, Erna Solberg, during a ceremony celebrating an expansion of the Catapult Centre the previous day into Future Fuel Test Centre.

The new technology is understood to take advantage of many different types of fuel, including green ammonia and LNG. With this flexibility, vessels can choose fuel according to availability. Main partners in the project are Odfjell, Prototech, Wärtsilä and Lundin Energy Norway. Odfjell has leading expertise in global shipping, Prototech in fuel cell technology, Wärtsilä in maritime technology and energy, and Lundin Energy Norway in oil and gas.



In the words of Bernt Skeie, CEO of Prototech: *'Our tests show a CO₂ reduction of as much as 40-45% when using LNG, compared to current solutions. Increased efficiency and reduced fuel consumption also provide significant cost savings, and the ship will be able to sail significantly longer on the same amount of energy.'*

'The system will also be ready to operate completely emission-free from the locations where, for instance, ammonia is available for bunkering.'

'The technology also enables direct capture of CO₂, which will be yet another alternative for emission-free operation when logistics for CO₂ management become available.'

Harald Solberg, CEO of the Norwegian Shipowners' Association, emphasised the potential this project demonstrates. He reflected: *'The development of this fuel cell is an example of how forward-looking shipping companies and our unique maritime expertise have the prerequisites to drive new solutions through a broad collaboration within the maritime cluster.'*

'In the long run, scaling up such solutions will be of great importance in achieving our climate goals, they will have business value, and they can create new jobs in Norway. Norwegian shipping has set ambitious climate goals. This type of projects is very important for us to be able to develop solutions that quickly reduce emissions.'

Bilge water alarms consultation under way

At the time of writing, early October, consultation was underway on draft legislation intended to reduce the risk of an accident arising as a result of water ingress without warning for the vessel's crew.

The new regulations would mean that all vessels greater than 24 metres loa but less than 500 gt would have to be fitted with bilge alarms.

Owners of vessels of less than 500 gross tonnage would still have to formally assess the risks to crew sleeping on board overnight and to check that emergency alarms are capable of alerting those asleep on board; these alarms to work in a similar way to smoke or carbon monoxide detectors.

This consultation follows an incident involving a dredger which developed a leak but the crew were asleep and did not know until flooding caused it to become unstable and roll violently to port.

The crew escaped injury but a subsequent Marine Accident Investigation Branch report recommended that the MCA introduce the requirement for a bilge alarm.

Katy Ware, Director of Maritime Safety and Standards commented: *'As part of the MCA's commitment to safety of life at sea, we want to bring in a regulation that reduces the risk of crews being caught out by water coming into the vessel without them knowing about it. This regulation will apply to cargo ships of 24 metres or more in length and less than 500 gross tonnage.'*

'These new regulations place a duty of care on owners and operators to make sure there are bilge alarms are loud enough to wake them if they are off duty for example. We feel these regulations will substantially reduce the risk of accidents involving potential injury, loss of life, loss of vessels and possible marine pollution incidents.'

More details can be found at: <https://tinyurl.com/y27c5uqm>

Editor's note:

This consultation is only concerned with UK-registered vessels.

Towards the end of September the US Maritime Administration (MARAD) issued an advisory notice (No 2020-016) concerning GPS interference.

Multiple instances of significant GPS interference have been reported worldwide in the maritime domain. This interference is resulting in lost or inaccurate GPS signals affecting bridge navigation, GPS-based timing, and communications equipment. Satellite communications equipment may also be impacted.

Over the last year, areas from which multiple instances have been reported include the eastern and central Mediterranean Sea, the Persian Gulf, and multiple Chinese ports. The US Transportation Command "Message for Industry" at <https://go.usa.gov/xdSpq> provides additional GPS interference information.

Guidance

Seafarers are advised to exercise caution when operating underway and prior to getting underway.

The US Coast Guard Navigation Center (NAVCEN) and NATO Shipping Centre websites contain information regarding effective navigation practices for vessels experiencing GPS disruption.

Here information reaffirms safe navigation practices when experiencing GPS disruptions, provides useful details on reporting disruptions, and is intended to generate further discussion within the maritime community about other disruption mitigation practices and procedures.



Approximate locations are on the map here; instances where there are (1) or more report are represented by only (1) red dot on the map.

© USCG NAVCEN

This guidance also recommends reporting such incidents in real time; noting critical information such as the location (latitude/longitude), date, time, and duration of the outage/disruption; and providing photographs or screen shots of equipment failures experienced to facilitate analysis.

The NAVCEN information is available here: <https://go.usa.gov/xQBau>

NATO Shipping Centre is to be found here:

www.shipping.nato.int

Contact Information

Maritime GPS disruptions or anomalies should be reported immediately to the NAVCEN at <https://go.usa.gov/xQBaw> or via phone at +1 703 313 5900, 24-hours a day.

NAVCEN will further disseminate reported instances of GPS interference in this region to the NATO Shipping Center.

Cancellation

This message will automatically expire on March 21, 2021.

For more information about US Maritime Alerts and Advisories, including subscription details readers are invited to visit: <http://www.marad.dot.gov/MSCI>

International Chamber of Shipping releases 2020 Annual Review

On 5 October the International Chamber of Shipping (ICS), which represents the world's national shipowners' associations and more than 80% of the world merchant fleet, announced that it had published its Annual Review for 2020. The Review covers a broad cross-section of issues in which ICS is engaged on behalf of the global shipping industry.

The Review explores, in depth, the significant issues faced by the industry in 2020, including:

- The impact of COVID-19 and the intensifying crew change crisis – COVID-19 related restrictions on travel and the ability to rotate crew, leaving 400,000 seafarers stranded at sea.
- Efforts to decarbonise shipping, including the ongoing negotiations at the IMO and the radical industry proposal for a US\$ 5 billion fund to accelerate the R&D of zero-carbon technologies.

This year's Review offers a comprehensive analysis of ICS's activities across a wide range of subjects.

These include:

- Piracy in West Africa.
- The continuing migrant crisis in the Mediterranean.
- Supporting the successful implementation of the IMO 2020 Sulphur Cap and the IMO Ballast Water Management Convention.
- Defending the global pollution liability regime; and
- Pushing for a fundamental review of the STCW Convention on seafarers' training standards.

A full copy of the Annual Review can be downloaded here: <https://tinyurl.com/yymwk76g>

Speaking on the publication of the Annual Review, Esben Poulsen, ICS Chairman said: *'For the global shipping industry, 2020 is a year that will be long remembered. As remarked in this year's Annual Review, the COVID-19 pandemic has led to significant disruptions to the industry's way of working. ICS continues to be at the forefront of addressing the ongoing crew change crisis, making every effort to persuade governments to facilitate the repatriation of 400,000 seafarers stranded at sea.'*

'While much of this Review necessarily focuses on COVID-19, the vital work of ICS continues, representing the global industry with its global regulators.'

'This includes critical work on the reduction of the industry's CO2 emissions, to which ICS remains fully committed. Last December, ICS, along with industry partners, proposed the establishment of a USD 5 billion global R&D fund dedicated to zero-carbon technologies. Support from governments for this bold initiative will be critical if we are to deliver on the ambitious IMO objective to at least halve total emissions from shipping by 2050.'

'As we move into ICS's centenary year, which will hopefully be far less challenging than 2020, there is still much work for ICS to do in helping to shape the future of shipping.'

14 million tonnes of microplastics on seafloor

CSIRO estimate

CSIRO, Australia's national science agency, has provided the first ever global estimate for microplastics on the seafloor, with results suggesting there are 14 million tonnes in the deep ocean. This is more than double the amount of plastic pollution estimated to be on the ocean's surface.

Justine Barrett from CSIRO's Oceans and Atmosphere who led the study published on 6 October (see here: <https://tinyurl.com/y3b7yhr6>) said the research extended understanding of the amount of plastic pollution in the oceans and the impact of plastic items, both large and small.





Researchers collected and analysed samples from the seafloor to estimate the amount of microplastics.

Photo: CSIRO / GABDMP ©.

Ms Barrett commented: *'Plastic pollution that ends up in the ocean deteriorates and breaks down, ending up as microplastics. Our research provides the first global estimate of how much microplastic there is on the seafloor. Even the deep ocean is susceptible to the plastic pollution problem. The results show microplastics are indeed sinking to the ocean floor.'*

Millions of tonnes of plastic enter the marine environment annually, and quantities are expected to increase in coming years, despite increased attention on the detrimental impacts of plastic pollution on marine ecosystems, wildlife and human health.

The samples used in this study were collected using a robotic submarine in depths to 3000 metres at sites up to 380 kilometres offshore from South Australia.

The amount of microplastics recorded was 25 times higher than previous deep-sea studies. Based on the results of deep-sea plastic densities, and scaling up to the size of the ocean, CSIRO calculated a global estimate of microplastics on the seafloor.

Dr Denise Hardesty, Principal Research Scientist and co-author, said plastic pollution of the world's oceans was an internationally recognised environmental issue, with the results indicating the urgent need to generate effective plastic pollution solutions.

'Our research found that the deep ocean is a sink for microplastics,' she said.

The number of microplastic fragments on the seafloor was generally higher in areas where there was also more floating rubbish.

Hardesty added: *'We were surprised to observe high microplastic loads in such a remote location. By identifying where and how much microplastic there is, we get a better picture of the extent of the problem. This will help to inform waste management strategies and create behavioural change and opportunities to stop plastic and other rubbish entering our environment.'*

'We can all help to reduce plastic ending up in our oceans by avoiding single-use plastics, supporting Australian recycling and waste industries, and disposing of our rubbish

thoughtfully so it doesn't end up in our environment.

'Government, industry and the community need to work together to significantly reduce the amount of litter we see along our beaches and in our oceans.'

The samples used for this research were an ancillary collection to a baseline survey of deep-sea geology and ecology funded by CSIRO and the Great Australian Bight Deepwater Marine Program (GABDMP). The GABDMP is a CSIRO-led research program sponsored by Chevron Australia, with data generated to be made publicly available.

Mercy Ships announces its second hospital ship: *Global Mercy*

On 6 October it was announced from Cotonou, Benin, that the international humanitarian non-governmental organization Mercy Ships (<https://MercyShips.Africa>) had introduced its new hospital ship, *Global Mercy*, which will join *Africa Mercy*, in service in Africa since 2007.

Dr Pierre M'Pelé, Director of the Mercy Ships Africa Bureau, announced that *Global Mercy* is scheduled to begin service in Africa in 2021 and he relayed the cry from the hearts of Africans who say: *'Thank you to Mercy Ships.'*

Every year, 16.9 million people around the world die due to lack of access to surgical care and 93% of sub-Saharan Africa still lack this access. Between 1990 and 2020, Mercy Ships has performed more than 100,000 free surgical procedures, trained more than 40,000 medical professionals, renovated more than 100 health facilities, and implemented more than 1,000 community projects in Africa. It is understood that *Global Mercy* will more than double the impact of Mercy Ships on the African continent.

Since 1990, Mercy Ships has been bringing hope and healing to the African people and has conducted more than 30 humanitarian missions in 14 African countries: Benin, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Congo, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Madagascar, Sierra Leone, Senegal, South Africa, Togo.

Rosa Whitaker, President for Mercy Ships commented: *'As COVID-19 threatens the stability of already fragile health-care systems globally, the need to provide accessible, life-saving surgical care is greater than ever. The Global Mercy represents a unique call to support the strengthening of healthcare systems in Africa on behalf of the most vulnerable.'*

Global Mercy is a modern, state-of-the-art hospital ship, equipped with six surgical operating rooms. She will also provide a specialized training platform for African surgeons, obstetricians, dentists and anaesthetists, including a simulation laboratory for surgical and post-operative care. The charity's ships are crewed by volunteers from over 50 nations, with an average of over 2000 volunteers each year.

Brief details of *Global Mercy*

Loa: 174 metres

Tonnage: 37,000 grt

Facilities: Six operating theatres

Capacity: Over 600 professional volunteers from around the world representing a variety of disciplines, including surgeons, mariners, cooks, teachers, electricians, reception staff and many more will staff the ship.

Other facilities: Spaces have been designed to host up to 950 crew and guests, including a 682-seat auditorium, a school, a gymnasium, a pool, a café, a store and a library when the ship is berthed.



Mercy Ships announces its second hospital ship: Global Mercy.

Photo: Mercy Ships©.

For more about the vessel, her specification and construction see here: <https://tinyurl.com/y2pjgqtj>

It is understood from www.maritime-executive.com on 7 October that delivery was imminent from Tianjin Xingang Shipyard where *Global Mercy* has been under construction since 2014. *Global Mercy* will be the world's largest civilian-owned hospital ship, it has been reported.

About Mercy Ships

Mercy Ships (<https://MercyShips.Africa>) uses hospital ships to deliver free, world-class healthcare services, capacity building, and sustainable development to those with little access in the developing world.

Founded in 1978 by Don and Deyon Stephens, Mercy Ships has worked in more than 55 developing countries, providing services valued at more than \$1.7 billion and directly benefitting more than 2.8 million people.

Professionals including surgeons, dentists, nurses, healthcare trainers, teachers, cooks, seamen, engineers, and agriculturalists donate their time and skills.

With 16 national offices and an Africa Bureau, Mercy Ships seeks to transform individuals and serve nations.

Charities urge shipping companies to adopt best practice standard for mental health awareness training

In the UK the Maritime Charities Group (MCG) and the Merchant Navy Training Board (MNTB) are calling on shipping companies and training providers to make sure that any training they offer on mental health and wellbeing awareness meets the standards set out in their good practice guide.

Published in June this year, *A Seafarers' Mental Health Awareness and Wellbeing Training Standard* was written by experts from the maritime and education sectors in response to the growing mental health crisis amongst seafarers. The Standard has received widespread endorsement from academics, trainers and industry alike.

Speaking in advance of World Mental Health Day on 10 October Commander Graham Hockley and Chair of the MCG, said: *'One in four people will develop a mental health problem during their lifetime, but the incidence amongst seafarers is much higher. Sadly the Covid-19 crisis has made the situation even worse. Now is the time for shipping companies to provide relevant, high quality mental health and wellbeing awareness training that meets the needs of their crew. And our Standard helps them to do just that.'*

Aimed at prospective buyers of training courses as well as potential participants, the Standard sets a benchmark for training that aims to develop a keen awareness and appreciation of mental health and wellbeing amongst seafarers, as well as those with an interest in seafaring. It includes course content, delivery and the qualification requirements of course facilitators.

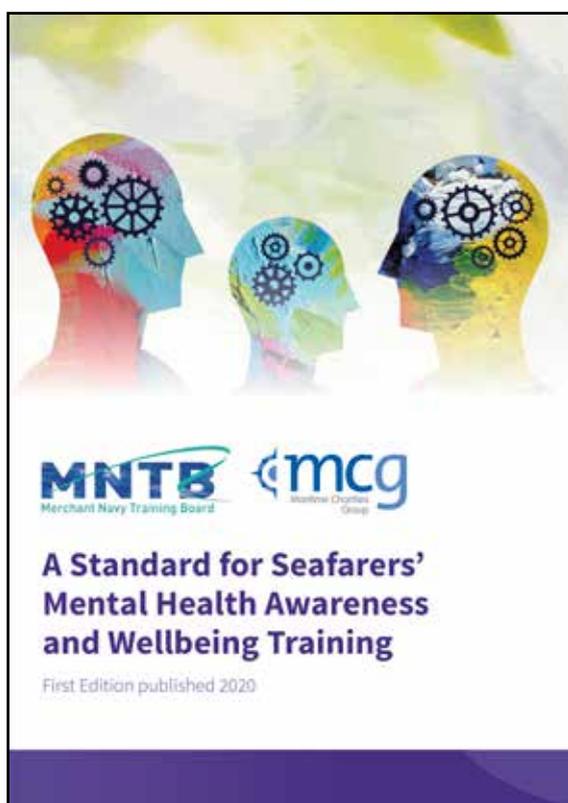
Commander Hockley explained why the Standard is important: *'There are many reputable providers offering really good training courses but the majority are generic and really don't address the specific issues facing seafarers. If you're working at sea you need a course that's much more targeted otherwise it just won't be relevant. That's why we've developed the Standard, setting out clearly what a good training course should cover.'*

The Merchant Navy Welfare Board (MNWB) is a training course provider to over 40 constituent maritime welfare organisations and has already adopted the Standard for future mental health awareness training courses.

MNWB Chief Executive Officer, Peter Tomlin said: *'With the cancellation of instructor led courses as a result of COVID-19, we've concentrated our resources on the creation and provision of eLearning courses. We'll be launching a new Seafarer Mental Health Awareness course for Port Chaplains and ship welfare volunteers in November and used the Standard as a best practice guide.'*

He added: 'I recommend all training commissioners to check out this extremely useful benchmarking tool. The Standard will undoubtedly benefit course providers and students alike, particularly during these challenging times.'

Shipping industry representative, Bob Sanguinetti, CEO of the UK Chamber of Shipping added: 'We were delighted to work with the MCG to make this Standard available but now is the time to remind those responsible for commissioning training that it's there and they need to use it. In time for World Mental Health Day on Saturday, we're calling on companies to make sure they provide mental health and wellbeing awareness training for their crew and that it meets the relevant standards. And only by looking for the MCG and MNTB logos can they be sure that the course will meet their specific needs and be delivered by someone who understands the environment they work in.'



The *Seafarers' Mental Health Awareness and Wellbeing Training Standard*, published by MNTB, is available from maritime publishers Witherbys for a nominal £10 fee. To buy a copy readers are invited see here: <https://tinyurl.com/yxtts3pu>

For information readers may wish to contact Valerie Coleman, MCG Programme Development Manager by e-mail on Valerie.coleman@seafarers.uk or call 07515 050 301

About MCG

The MCG fosters collaboration across the maritime charity sector. It does this by sharing information, commissioning research, supporting the education and welfare of seafarers and their families and by the promotion of best practice within the maritime charity sector. Our vision is for a maritime charity sector that works collaboratively to achieve the greatest impact for seafarers and their families.

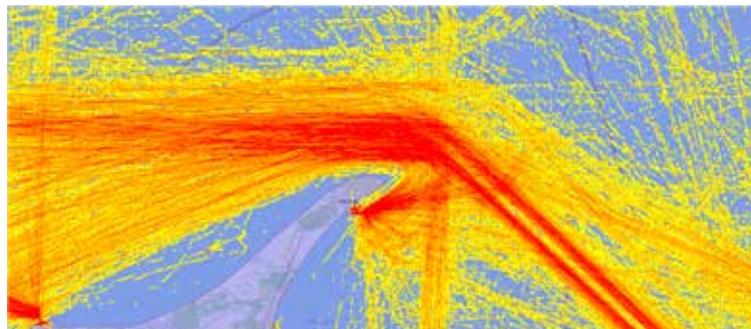
For more information see here: <https://tinyurl.com/y67373b3>

Danish Maritime Authority waters

New routing systems provide visible traffic changes

This summer, new shipping routes were established in Skagerrak and Kattegat. The purpose is to create more predictable traffic patterns and separate oncoming ship traffic better. The first analysis indicates that the routing systems work as intended. This was explained in a Danish Maritime Administration (DMA) *communiqué* of 12 September.

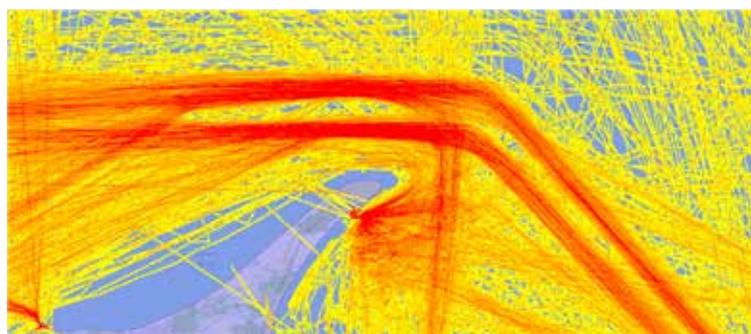
At the DMA it continuously uses digital tools to support its work. In connection with the new shipping routes, the DMA employs AIS data to assess whether a change has the intended effect.



Before the implementation of traffic separation scheme (24 June – 1 July, without fishing vessels)

On some sections of the new shipping routes, traffic separation schemes were introduced in order to simplify navigation and help prevent ship collisions. One example is the traffic separation scheme around Skagen.

The pictures below show how the ships sailed around Skagen during the last week with the old routes (24 June to 1 July) and the first week with the new routes (1 July to 8 July). They clearly illustrate the change that immediately occurs in ships' sailing patterns when routes change. The distance between oncoming traffic has increased and the sailing patterns are more predictable, it was reported.



After the implementation of traffic separation scheme (1 July – 8 July, without fishing vessels)

In addition to the new traffic separation schemes, two new deep-water routes for deep-draught tankers have been established as well as a new route (Route S) along the Swedish coast, which will help relieve the heavy traffic of Route T.

See here for an introductory paper on the new routes issued earlier this year by the DMA: <https://tinyurl.com/vw5r9oe>

The new shipping routes in Skagerrak and Kattegat have been developed in a collaboration between the Danish Maritime Authority, the Danish Geodata Agency (<https://eng.gst.dk/>), the Swedish Transport Agency (<https://tinyurl.com/yxwmv6sh>) and the Swedish Maritime Administration (<https://tinyurl.com/yxvpt4vg>).