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I F S M A - NEWSLETTER

The International Shipmasters Link

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Congratulations to **Captain Ahmed Zubair**, Individual Member, from the Republic of Maldives, who was announced as the Lloyd's List - Nautical Institute **Shipmaster of the Year** on 13 February 2003, for his special leadership qualities both at sea and in promoting enhanced training and standards of seamanship.

IFSMA Register of Technical Consultants and Maritime Experts
(RTCME) now Available on the Internet at "www.ifsma.org"

Mark your Diaries now for IFSMA Annual General Assembly and
Annual Dinner - May 23 & 24 London, HQS Wellington.

An Electronic Version (pdf) of this Newsletter is available at "www.ifsma.org"

IFSMA 29th Annual General Assembly

London - HQS Wellington

Friday 23 and Saturday 24 May 2003

The 29th Annual General Assembly will be held in London on HQS Wellington, adjacent to Temple underground station on the River Thames. This is the first time we have used this exquisite floating venue which is the Livery Hall of the Honorary Company of Master Mariners. This is also the venue for the IFSMA Annual Dinner on the Friday evening.

This year we have arranged an interesting programme for members and their guests. Although the Agenda is not yet finalised we can bring you the highlights to whet your appetite.

The first morning is largely taken up with General Assembly business including the Secretary General's report, the Honorary Treasurer's report and other Federation matters.

After lunch on Friday the first papers will be presented, among the speakers who have agreed to speak are:

Dr. Chris Drinkwater of the UK Hydrographic Office who will speak on matters concerning electronic charts,

The President, Captain Christer Lindvall will make a presentation on the Rescue of Persons at Sea (in light of the Tampa incident).

We plan to have a speaker on the IFSMA ISM Auditors Project following which there will be ample time to discuss the implementation of this project.

We anticipate the launch of another excellent product in the series of training videos by the Japan Captains' Association.

We expect at least one speaker from the International Maritime Organization, we have requested information on the new ISPS Code which deals with security.

A Drafting Group will be formed early on the first day to ensure that sufficient time is available for the General Assembly to make and agree any Resolutions. They will be expected to report at 1430 hours on day two.

Another matter of business is to agree the amendment of the IFSMA Statutes and Bye-Laws to include two additional Vice Presidents for the Executive Council.

As already mentioned the Annual Dinner will be held on the Friday evening on HQS Wellington and we are delighted to announce that the principal guest will be Mr. William O'Neil, Secretary General of the International Maritime Organisation and Honorary IFSMA Individual Member.

The final Agenda will be sent to all Associations and Individual Members and posted on the IFSMA Web Site.

International Command Seminar

Immediately prior to the IFSMA Annual General Assembly, on Wednesday 21 and Thursday 22 May the 12th International Command Seminar will be held.

This is jointly organised by The Nautical Institute, The Honourable Company of Masters Mariners, Trinity House and IFSMA.

The theme is "Restoring Confidence in Command", please see the separate pamphlet enclosed with this Newsletter.

National Model Audit Scheme

By Sudhir Subhedar, Individual Member

International Maritime Organization Council since late last year has embarked on ambitious program of Safety & environmental audits for member States. This was discussed also at Ministerial Conference of Transport in Tokyo in January 2002. While this is a good step in the right direction for international shipping, it should not be seen to be another layer of surveillance by way of external audit. Timing for this may not yet be right.

If experience of STCW 95 White List preparation and its subsequent monitoring is anything to go by, it is clear that such initiatives have not yet yielded desired results. ISM Code implementation has also only meant transfer of not so good ship operations to elsewhere. High expectations on both these counts have not yet been helpful.

The basis of audit as in accounting or financial audit has to be backed by powerful laws of the States. Even then there have been in the recent past (ENRON is a case in point) serious misgivings about auditing practice. Quality audits at best can only be voluntary. These may be performed on national or international Standards / Guidelines such as ISO9000 series.

IMO is unlikely to embrace ISO Standards in the near future. ICAO audit model by its very nature and Civil Aviation Convention, small number of players, substantial industry standardization is unlikely to be suitable to Maritime Administrations.

Need of the hour is to bring all member States of IMO to embrace Quality principles and to this end Council's directive should be welcomed. However, external audits should be deferred until all member States have reported findings of National audit and or of self-evaluation.

Therefore, IMO should consider issuing Assembly Resolution at its 23rd session (November 2003) for this purpose and give a time limit of say, two years from adopting such a resolution. Resolution should be followed by Technical co-operation sponsored training in quality principles and auditing practice to members who may wish to have such training. IMO advice and possible additional funding by way of providing experts may also be necessary because present structure of most Marine Administrations is not conducive for implementation of quality management systems. If IMO embarks upon external audit of member states now, serious problems could be encountered and initiative lost for otherwise a good cause.

However, proposed National Audit Scheme (or self-evaluation) together with progress being made on Formal Safety Assessment (FSA) may help shipping community to gain from Council's 88th. Session initiative to combat marine pollution and substandard shipping & seafarers.

National Audit Scheme (Model) or Self Evaluation Guidelines could be based on the following lay out:

Scope: Assessing the effectiveness of implementation of relevant IMO Conventions with respect to Safety & prevention of pollution. The model may be incorporated in Member State's existing internal audit procedures, if any.

Responsibility: Maritime Administration (preferably restructured as autonomous body reporting to the appropriate federal Government).

Reference document: SOLAS, MARPOL, STCW95, Load Line International Tonnage, COLREG Conventions and current amendments there to. Consideration in this draft scheme could also be given to the relevant provisions of UNCLOS and ILO Conventions especially with respect to human element.

Procedure:

Details in respect of audit team (Auditors to drawn from outside the department)

composition – qualifications, experience, expertise in technical / legal / administrative matters etc. Audit instructions based on ISO19011 or equivalent – planning, independence, gathering objective evidence, closing of non conformities in given time frame, review of management & resources. Post audit formalities – review by top management / Government, monitoring effectiveness of corrective measures, program of continual improvement & auditor training.

Report to IMO the findings of such audits – for evaluation by MSC / MEPC bi-annually and advise the Marine Administrations as appropriate.

Corrective measures suggested by IMO – acknowledge & repeat the cycle.

Voluntary external audit of member States by IMO without additional cost to the organization.

Record: Quality certification (optional) and or IMO confirmation of its satisfaction with implementation of Assembly Resolution on the subject matter. IMO circulars summarizing report findings.

Marine Administration before becoming ready for adopting the above proposal should adopt process approach to carry out core activities by way identifying requirements, adding value by deploying resources, measurement methods, internal audits, management reviews and ensuring output is as is desired. Taking feedback periodically and adjusting the process/es for continual improvement.

Marine Administration should have documented quality management system and trained internal auditors.

Auditing should include internal / external audit reports, results of self-evaluation (vide ISO9004: 2000 guidelines), IMO / Customer feedback, top management review minutes etc.

Marine Administration should send report to IMO in the format approved by the Organization. Report may include areas of deficiency in resources, areas of excellence, corrective & preventive measures taken, investigations carried out into accidents / incidents / near misses and status of returns required to be filed etc.

After two such reports have been evaluated by IMO, member state may request for external audit.

After about three years of such scheme in operation, Member States may wish to consider it as mandatory provision with in the framework of IMO. This way it is possible to arrive from present reactive approach to marine management to stable formal system approach and continual improvement. However, unless there is commitment from top and necessary leadership any audit will fail to deliver the necessary result.

Mooring Company Launches New Design

Our company has recently achieved a breakthrough in the design of an automated fender mooring system and we are currently working with several overseas Port Authorities towards installations to berth container and bulk carrier ships.

Any business entering into this huge industry must have a mooring system that meets the following criteria:

Equipment mounted on a Quay must not interfere with working operations that would normally include cranes which have rails running close to the edge of the quay.

If the equipment has no fendering capability, then it must be mounted back behind the fender impact line. This can result in limiting the flexibility of a design both in outreach for attachment, sideways movement and height adjustment.

The greatest challenge for any design is the ability to retain the loading from the vessel over the height range of operation which for most cargo vessels can be a draught change of over 4 metres plus a tide change of 2 metres. With most cargo vessels, a fully laden ship on a low tide will only have a metre or two clearance above the quay, which is insufficient for attachment above the quay.

Ship operators and port authorities have stated to us that they are not interested in complicated systems that have a greater potential for failure with disastrous consequences, they would also require a higher level of skilled maintenance. The cost of such systems can also be prohibitive.

The potential for a practical design is great as the advantages of automated mooring are substantial:

There is no disruption to the Port personal work schedule as they are not required for berthing ships thus increasing productivity.

There is no disruption of ships crew as it prepares for berth operations such as preparing for loading/unloading.

Operational running costs for mooring tension winches are eliminated for the shipping company.

Improved ship autonomy.

Operational costs for time lost in tying up/letting go is used for loading operations.

We have three Provisional Patents on our design which operates by automatically lowering large vacuum pads on vertical tensioned cables to the required attachment level on the hull.

The vacuum pads each have a folding framework that extend outwards so the pads act as fenders when the vessel berths. The frames fold with impact and remained folded, tensioning the vessel towards the quay. The tension guide cables act like a bowstring where the ship has the ability to pull in any direction from any height. Height allowance for draught and tide displacement is achieved by vacuum pads that have the ability to operate underwater.

Our loading design calculations are assisted by a computer program that calculates from information such as ship profile, size, berth and weather detail entered to give ideal attachment positioning and loading detail which will meet the requirements of the marine industry for the safe berthing of ships.

We have also recently developed a smaller mooring fender device that is designed to minimize the rolling action of pleasure & luxury vessels. When this type of vessel is used for entertainment in a moored position, wave action tends to cause a rolling movement against wharf fendering, which can be unpleasant. This system will not only improve mooring positioning and security but will increase stability by minimising rolling.

In 1996 I took out a Provisional Patent for automated vacuum mooring which was used in the development of the automated mooring system used on the Inter-Island ferry Aratere.

Please note: Our company has no relationship with the publicly listed New Zealand company, Mooring Systems Ltd.

For further information please contact John M Hadcroft, Managing Director AML Automated Mooring Ltd P.O. Box 36 205, Christchurch, NEW ZEALAND, Telephone: (03) 329 8275. Facsimile: (03) 329 8275, Mobile: 025 2102398, E mail: AMLMoorings@Hotmail.com.

Collision Between Tug and Tow

Narrative

This incident concerns a 10,022gt general cargo ship that was being towed upriver at night to her discharge berth, and illustrates how a routine operation can run into difficulties in a very short time indeed. The events described here took place over a period of about 6 minutes.

Two tugs – let’s call them *Alpha* and *Beta* – had been escorting the ship eastwards upriver for about 9 miles, when *Alpha* spotted a low-flying fog bank ahead. The pilot decided to make the tugs fast.

When the three vessels entered the fog bank, the tugs were unable to see the ship. This was not a problem for *Beta*, as she was towing over the bow, astern of the ship. But *Alpha’s* mate was steering ahead of the ship, maintaining his position in the river with the aid of radar.

Alpha’s master posted port and starboard lookouts in the wheelhouse, while controlling the engine and the winch. Because the river was only about 100 metres wide at this point, the winch wire had to be kept relatively short, at about 30 metres. This meant that there was only about 20 metres between the stern of the tug and the bow of the ship.

At this time their speed was about 5 knots. *Alpha’s* master was having trouble keeping the tug ahead of the ship because of the poor visibility. The pilot, therefore, stopped the ship’s engine and they decided to make for a temporary berth about 2 miles ahead.

As *Alpha* approached a bend in the river, the radar picture of the south low lying bank became less well defined, so the mate had to monitor the northern bank in a effort to keep to the centre of the river. But then things began to go wrong:

- The pilot told *Alpha* that she was too far to port of the centre line. The tug moved over to starboard, bringing the ship’s head with her.
- The master saw a navigation light on the southern riverbank and realised that the tug had gone too far to starboard, and instructed the mate to steer to port.
- As *Alpha* moved to the centre of the river, her stern came in line with the bow of the ship. Realising the danger of either colliding with the ship or girting, *Alpha* increased speed, went further to port and slackened the gob wire to maximise steerage.
- While the master was subsequently taking up the bight in the gob wire some lights on the northern bank suddenly came into view. So *Alpha’s* master reduced speed and went hard to starboard again. Believing this wasn’t enough to avoid hitting the northern bank, he went to full astern, and radioed for the ship to do the same.
- The ship’s captain ordered a “double full astern”. He and the pilot then felt a cushioned impact and thought the ship had gone aground. *Beta* also went full stern.
- Going full astern in a flood tide caused *Alpha’s* stern to swing out into the river at right angles to the bank. Believing that the ship would pass astern of him, the master heaved in the gob wire to change towing point from amidships to the stern so that the tug would not be girted.
- The ship’s bow struck *Alpha* amidships on the port side, pushing her over on to her starboard side and on to the riverbank. The tow-line

(which had been let go by the crew on the pilot's orders) then fouled the tug's propeller.

Thankfully, *Alpha* righted herself, while the ship and *Beta* continued upriver. Visibility improved, and the ship was berthed without further incident.

The Lessons

1. The tug's ability to right herself, following the collision, was in no mean way due to her intact watertight integrity. Quite rightly, all external openings had been checked shut before starting the towing operation and, again, before entering the fog bank. Recognising the risks, and following standard operating procedures to address them, is fundamental to reducing the potential consequences of an accident.
2. A tug and tow requires teamwork. Teamwork requires an understanding of each other's perspective. Understanding requires good communication. The tugmaster was concerned about the potential danger of conducting the tow in fog. Although he reported the fog bank to the pilot, he failed to communicate his concern. The pilot was less anxious and, not appreciating the tugmaster's concern, decided to proceed with the tow. Had he understood the tugmaster's perspective, he would have been in a position to postpone the tow. Good communications sometimes means relaying bad news!
3. Navigating in fog requires additional skills. Before doing so, make sure those charged with the navigation are adequately trained and are provided with and use all necessary equipment, and that the surrounding terrain and conditions

permit the operation to be carried out safely.

4. Tugmasters must be prepared, and have the ability, to release a towline in an emergency. In this case, the tugmaster recognised the danger of girting and yet resisted the temptation of slipping the towline for fear of the ship grounding. While recognising his good intentions, the outcome of this incident might well have been disastrous in terms of injury and damage. Tugmasters should not hesitate to slip a tow if they perceive their vessels and crew to be in imminent danger.

UK MAIB Safety Digest 3/2002

IMB Piracy Report 2002

A copy of the full report is available for viewing on the IFSMA Web Site in pdf format.

Since 2000 we have seen a steep increase in the hijackings of vessels. There is an increase in violence. In some parts of the world it is all too easy to unlawfully board a merchant vessel. Against the current concern in respect of maritime terrorism, it is vital that coastal states allocate resources to better patrol their waters. Failing this, we do not foresee a reduction in these incidents," said P Mukundan, Director of the IMB.

Indonesia continues to record the highest number of attacks with 103 reported incidents in 2002. Piracy attacks in Bangladesh ranked second highest with 32 attacks and India is third with 18 attacks. Nigeria and Malaysia recorded 14 attacks each. Brazil, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Ecuador and Guyana have shown a marked increase in attacks. It appears that piracy is on the increase in South America.

There was a substantial rise in hijackings from 16 to 25 incidents. Many of the hijackings involved tugs, barges and fishing boats in the Malacca Straits and Indonesian waters. It is believed that syndicates in the area may be targeting ships and barges carrying valuable palm oil and gas oil. In May 2002, cooperation between the Royal Thai Marine Police and Navy and the IMB resulted in the capture of the hijacked tanker MT Han Wei. Prompt investigations by the Royal Thai police led to the arrest of three men in Thailand who have confessed to the hijacking.

Malacca Straits, one of the busiest shipping lanes, has continued to see a welcome drop in the number of piracy attacks to 16 in 2002 as compared 75 in 2000. This must be due to vigilant patrols and constant operations by the relevant authorities particularly the Royal Malaysian Marine Police. We hope that the Indonesian Authorities will increase their efforts, without which the area will always remain high risk.

Although the number of crew killed has declined to 10 as compared to 21 in 2001, the potential for violence however continues to be a worrying factor. There were 24 crew or passengers missing and this should be considered along with the 10 confirmed killed. The number of attacks using knives rose from 105 to 136.

The report identifies 29 ports and anchorages, which had three or more attacks during the year. Chittagong, Balikpapan, Lagos, Samarinda and Jakarta-Tg. Priok continued to record higher number of attacks on ships in their waters.

The threat to shipping posed by armed militia off the coast of Somalia has been highlighted by the IMB for many years. The risk of attack to vessels staying close to the coastline from organised Somali militiamen has now increased from one of possibility to certainty. Any vessel, not making a scheduled call in a Somali port,

which slows down, or stops close to the Somali coast **WILL BE** boarded by these gangs who have so far been successful in extorting substantial sums from owners for the return of the vessel and the crew. During 2002 there have been three high-profile hijackings of commercial vessels.

The report draws attention to new initiatives in combating piracy in particular a unique preventive and deterrent system called Secure-Ship which is the most recent and effective innovation in the fight against piracy. It is a non-lethal, electrifying fence surrounding the whole ship, which has been specially adapted for maritime use. The fence uses 9,000-volt pulse to deter boarding attempts. An intruder coming in contact with the fence will receive an unpleasant non-lethal shock that will result in the intruder abandoning the attempted boarding. At the same time an alarm will go off, activating floodlights and a very loud siren. Further details can be obtained at www.secure-ship.com.

The report highlights the following piracy prone areas;

S E Asia and the Indian Sub Continent

- Bangladesh - Chittagong and Mongla
- India - Chennai, **Haldia**, Hoogly and Kakinada
- Indonesia - Belawan, Balikpapan, Bontang, Panjang, Samarinda, Santan Tarahan, Tanjong Priok/ Jakarta and the straits of Bangka, Berhala and Gelasa.
- Malacca straits - Coast near Aceh is particularly risky for hijackings
- Malaysia - Sandakan
- Solomon Islands - Honiara
- Thailand - Koh Si Chang

- Vietnam - Vung Tau

Africa and Red Sea

- Abidjan, Conakry, Dakar, Dar Es Salaam, Diego Suarez, Douala, Gentil, Guinea Bissau, Lagos Libreville, Owendo, Tema^o and Warri.
- Gulf of Aden and Somalian waters - high-risk area for hijackings.

South and Central America and the Caribbean waters

- Brazil – Belam, Rio Grande and Santos
- Columbia – Barranquilla, Buena Ventura
- Dominican Republic - Rio Haina^o
- Ecuador – Guanta, Guayaquil, Manta
- Guyana – Georgetown
- Jamaica - Kingston
- Peru -^oCallao
- Venezuela – Puerto La Cruz

The work of the IMB Piracy Reporting Centre is funded by donations from 20 organisations, mostly P&I Clubs, ship owners and insurers. The Centre is now recognized throughout the maritime industry for its valuable contribution in quantifying the problem of world piracy and providing assistance, free of charge to ships that have been attacked. A summary of these daily reports is also posted on the Internet at www.icc-ccs.org

The IMB's Annual Report on piracy seeks not only to list the facts, but also to analyse developments in piracy and to identify piracy-prone areas so that the crew can take preventive action.

The Invisible Underwriter The Weakest Link in the Maritime Safety Chain?

The text of a speech given by Robert D. Somerville, President ABS, on 17 September 2002 at IUMI 2002 - New York for the "Ocean Hull Open Forum "Quality Underwriting".

Good morning everyone.

I doubt that any of you can appreciate what a pleasure it is for me to be given this opportunity to speak to you about safe ships and quality underwriting.

At too many conferences in the recent past I have spent too much time and effort defending class against a deluge of disapproval, directed at us by self serving sectors of this industry seeking to deflect attention, and responsibility from their own shortcomings.

So, as a representative of the constantly criticized classification profession, I intend to use my time today to do some criticizing of my own.

I admit to relishing the opportunity.

And I hope that, at the end of my few minutes up here, at least some of you may feel somewhat chastened.

If you have been paying attention to the trade press over the last two or three years, you will be aware of the frequent analogy made between marine safety and a chain.

The appropriateness of that analogy is why it has become such a recurring theme.

It is a forceful reminder that no one entity, no single sector of this industry can make substantive improvement in the level of maritime safety by itself.

Like a chain, we are only as strong as the weakest link.

Who form those links?

Shipowners must be mentioned first.

It is the shipowner who bears the primary responsibility for the safety of the ship and its crew, and the protection of the cargo that has been entrusted to his care.

Unfortunately, some shipowners go by the names of Bob, Duck and Weave.

They are adept at plumbing every loophole in their quest to pare away costs and to dodge their legal, regulatory and moral responsibilities.

In many respects I find it sad that this industry often gives tacit approval to their shennanigans.

Like the impish child, always stretching the boundaries, seeing how far he can go before getting caught, the owner is often spared because his conduct is somehow expected.

The result, however, is that it is clear that this sector can not be relied upon by itself to improve maritime safety.

The next link is the flag State.

I trust that each of you carefully reads and digests the annual reports issued by the Paris and Tokyo MOUs and by the US Coast Guard.

It does not take a superior intellect to very quickly identify those flag States that repeatedly fail to live up to the responsibilities placed upon them under international conventions.

The Port State Control administrations even make it easy for you.

They break flag State performance into categories - white lists, grey lists, black lists.

They themselves target vessels from the black and grey listed nations for increased scrutiny because of the unacceptably high number of ships in poor condition trading under those flags.

What has been the result?

Panama, the world's largest flag, with almost twice as much tonnage on its register than its nearest challenger, appears on the Paris MOU Black List yet continues as the primary flag of choice for owners without penalty.

Others on that Black List include Cyprus and Malta, two of the larger open registers, which continue to flourish apparently unaffected commercially by their shortcomings in standards.

Quite clearly we, as an industry cannot rely on flag States alone, any more than we can rely on the owners who select lax jurisdictions as the titular home of their vessels.

I have already introduced to you the third link in that maritime safety chain - the port State.

Here, at least we have a selectively effective check against the failings of the other links.

I say selectively as, powerful as the Paris and Tokyo MOU signatories, and the US Coast Guard may be, there is still a preponderance of nations in the world that have not yet accepted that the effort and expense of an effective port state regime is justifiable.

These nations continue to provide trading havens for those sub-standard vessels that have been chased from the high scrutiny areas.

Sadly, sub-standard ships are rarely withdrawn from service.

They merely move to a more forgiving part of the world.

The fourth link in the chain is the shipbuilder.

This is a vitally important link although it seems that our shipbuilding brethren prefer anonymity to responsibility.

They seem to think it is less troublesome to pass that responsibility over to others – the owners and the classification societies.

Admittedly the shipbuilders are in a highly competitive business in which many only survive through government intervention.

It is understandable that they should want to build the cheapest ship possible when profit margins are slim to non-existent.

It is for that reason that the other links in the chain become so important if ships that are fit for their intended purpose are to be designed, built and operated to internationally accepted standards.

The next link is the charterer, another sector that has preferred the shadows of anonymity.

It is really only since the Erika that they have been flushed out into public view and shown signs of accepting the responsibilities that do fall on them.

I do not suggest that all charterers, any more than all owners, or all flag States, or all shipbuilders, pay no attention to the quality of the vessel that they take on hire.

But the evidence is legion of even very high profile organizations selecting the cheapest ship in preference to the safer ship.

It has taken the stick of financial and criminal liability to remind them of the false economies they have traditionally pursued.

There are, as you are all aware, two further links in this maritime safety chain.

The first of those is class.

While pointing an accusatory finger at others in the chain, I cannot and do not for a moment suggest that class is blameless.

Like our brethren in the other sectors there are responsible class societies and less reputable organizations that purport to offer some form of classification or certification related services, or who are authorized to act as a Recognized Organization by certain flag States.

The tally varies daily but it is fair to say that the total number of "class" organizations is between 50 and 60.

Only 10 of these are members of IACS.

Those 10 societies class about 90 percent of all large commercial tonnage, but only about 50 percent of the total number of vessels that are trading across the globe.

Yet that leaves plenty of tailings for the remainder.

How is it that collectively, we as an industry, allow the tens of disreputable organizations to remain in business?

Because there are still too many owners, too many flag states, too many underwriters, and too many charterers willing to accept a certificate without questioning its validity or the professionalism, the expertise, and the ethics of the issuer.

Since I am overcome with honesty this morning I will go even further and state the obvious - not even all IACS societies offer services of comparable quality.

Once again Port State Control statistics do not lie.

At ABS we consider these figures to be the best public accounting of our performance and we have an internal target of recording zero detentions of ABS classed vessels for class related deficiencies anywhere in the world in each calendar year.

We have not yet reached that target.

But we continue to strive towards it through increased training and rigorous application of a policy of continuous improvement.

Part of that process is conformance with the IACS Quality System which subjects each member to organization-wide audits of all its activities on an on-going basis.

So I can assure you that, regardless of each society's start point, every IACS member is committed to improving its standards, to upgrading its operations, and to maintaining conformance with independently audited quality systems as part of its contribution to the strength of the safety chain.

The classification sector continues to find itself in the center of the public debate over maritime safety, as I alluded too at the beginning.

It has not been a pleasant place to be.

It is chastening to be subject to constant scrutiny and criticism.

But it is even more galling to be criticized for not exercising powers that we do not possess.

It has been unfortunate that much of the recent criticism of class has stemmed from a widespread misperception that we are the de facto safety policemen of the industry.

This is simply not the case.

Our powers are circumscribed either by the traditional contractual relationship with the owner or by the specific authorizations bestowed upon us by each of the flag states for whom we act as statutory agents.

We are not omnipotent.

We cannot bring about a safer maritime industry solely through our efforts unless the industry determines that it wants to increase the authority and extend the scope of the classification sector's responsibilities.

And that brings me to the symbiotic relationship that exists between class and the marine underwriting fraternity.

Surely I do not need to remind you that it was your forbears who saw the need for an independent third party, with unquestioned technical expertise, to establish appropriate standards for the design, construction and operational maintenance of the ships you are asked to insure.

It is the certificate of classification that we issue that gives you the confidence to underwrite the risk. It is that same certificate that is relied upon by so many parties within the industry, from the bankers to the flag States, to the charterers, even the seafarers aboard the classed vessel.

We are your, and to an increasing extent the industry's, technical advisers.

It is, after all, your money that is at stake when we establish our Rules, when we approve a design, when we issue the classification certificate on delivery, when we survey the ship throughout its service life.

At ABS we believe that we do our part.

We believe that we strive diligently to live up to our responsibilities and to our Mission of protecting life, property and the natural environment.

We are constantly trying to push the safety bar higher and higher.

And as we do that heavy lifting, as we bear the brunt of public criticism for our actions, and our occasional shortcomings, we look around to the other members of the safety chain for their assistance.

And we particularly look to the underwriting fraternity for something more than support.

We look to you to step out strongly and impose the one type of penalty that the safety averse owner understands - the financial penalty of either significantly increased premiums or withdrawal of coverage, to back up our efforts.

And we look in vain.

With a handful of personal exceptions, you are invisible individually and as an industry group.

I dare to suggest that the marine underwriting community is so unwilling to accept its responsibilities for promoting safer shipping that you have not yet even forged a link with the maritime safety chain.

Most of you are AWOL, absent in action.

There is a war going on out there.

It is a bitterly fought campaign to get rid of that substandard owner and the deck-chair ship register.

It is a war for the backbone of the charterer and the shipbuilder.

It is an on-going battle to extend the reach of effective port state control.

And it is skirmish after skirmish to close off the opportunity for class societies to be played off, one against the other, in an owner or shipbuilder's effort to persuade us to turn a blind eye, to accept the brown enveloped bribe, to liberalize the interpretation of a Rule.

You remain in your box at Lloyds or behind your desk in the insurance company office focused on a narrow and desperate race to grab business, any business, at ruinous rates.

When the broker brings his slip to you, do you question which flag each of the vessels in the fleet will fly?

Do you check flag performance against Port State statistics?

Do you care if the vessel is light scantling or built to the most robust standards?

Do you pay attention to the operating philosophy of the shipowner?

Is he an asset player or a true ship operator?

Do you ask who will manage the ship?

How it will be crewed?

Do you care which classification society it is classed with?

Do you look at that classification society's port State record?

Do you know what the level of in-house technical expertise the society has, or are we all interchangeable?

Do you look at the port state control performance of the operator's other ships?

Do you make full use of information sources such as Equasis?

Do you adjust the premium accordingly?

Or do you take the broker's word that the owner's okay, that, even though it might look like a 20 year-old sinker, it has been well maintained?

Do you allow yourselves to be bullied by the broker who tells you that, if you won't take 2 percent of this risk, you may not be offered a chance to write a line on the five star fleet he will be bringing around next week?

Do you blindly follow the lead scratch?

Do you assume that the lead underwriter asked all the appropriate questions and, if he was satisfied and took 4 percent, it is okay for you to apply your scratch for one percent of the risk, most of which you will be laying off under reinsurance.

Do you spend more time talking to the broker about Wimbledon than the Paris MOU?

Do you have the guts to turn down bad business at a bad price?

If you did, would there still be so many substandard ships, operated by substandard owners, that continue to trade?

They cannot operate without you.

You have the power to make a very significant contribution to improving marine safety.

But I fear many of you spend too much time reviewing the dry statistics of past loss ratios before taking out your pen to sign the next slip with your customary flourish.

Tell me I am wrong.

I want to hear I am wrong.

Tell me loudly and frequently that I am wrong.

And then show me I am wrong by your actions.

I feel like the servant rebuking the master.

As I said a moment ago, it was you, the underwriters who created us, the classification profession.

But too many of you have abandoned us.

It is lonely out here on the battlefield.

We need your assistance.

The industry demands your participation.

The maritime safety chain is frayed and weakened by your absence.

I will even plead venality in support of my case.

Safety and quality promote good business.

Do you want to keep more of your premiums, pay fewer claims, sleep easier at night?

Get with the program.

Get with the maritime safety program.

Help us raise that safety bar.

It is a heavy burden.

Together we can move it higher.

Thank you.

Narrow Channels!

Narrative

An 11,723gt ro-ro vehicle/passenger ferry was inward bound to a buoyed channel on the evening flood tide. She was carrying 77 units, 17 passengers and had a maximum draught of 4.40m. At 2052, the vessel passed the fairway buoy, with a recorded tide gauge reading of 3.3m, with the echo sounder recording 1.47m underkeel clearance. Passing No 11 buoy, with a propeller pitch of 3, a slight vibration was felt, and the echo sounder recorded an underkeel clearance of 0.73m.

Shortly after rounding No 16 buoy, the chief engineer called the bridge to report the sound of scraping on the starboard side. About 30 seconds later, the helmsman reported problems with the rudder indicator; similar to a problem that had occurred on a previous occasion.

While the vessel continued towards No 18 buoy, an engineer was sent aft to check the steering gear. Clearly, the vessel was not responding as it should have been, so the master decided to manoeuvre her alongside, by operating the main engines independently, as well as utilising the thrusters. By 2130, the vessel was safely secured alongside. Subsequently, the engineers confirmed that the starboard rudder tiller arm had fractured, and this had prevented any control over the starboard rudder.

Although the company's initial investigation suggested that, from the available evidence, the vessel's rudder had hit an underwater obstruction, an hydrographic survey of the channel failed to substantiate this theory. The results from the VDR analysis were disappointing:

- The radar set connected to the VDR was set on too great a range (3 miles) to display accurate detail;
- The DGPS position and time signal were not recorded because of the setting of the controls; and
- The DGPS alarm was non-operational, because it had not been initiated during the original installation.

Further analysis of the VDR, ship's head by gyro, and courses ordered, showed that the incident occurred about three ships lengths after No 11 buoy. The vessel was passing between Nos 13 and 14 buoys at this point, and during the turn the starboard rudder had clipped the steep bank on the west of the river. With the vessel turning, and moving away from the con-

tact point (about 1m above the ruder foot), no jolt, slowing or slewing was felt on board. It is not known why the hydraulic relief valves on the control system failed to cope with this situation, because all tested satisfactorily.

The combination of wind and tide were not unusual, but the pilotage in this port involves negotiating a narrow channel, and requires a vessel to maintain a strict line during the passage. Just a few metres off-line, as occurred in this case, will expose a vessel to the possibility of touching ground. The pilotage is demanding, and although this vessel did touch on this occasion, there is no evidence of incompetence, recklessness, or lack of procedural protocol.

The Lessons

This incident illustrates the need for constant attention to detail when negotiating narrow river passages. Even the most competent of masters can be caught out by a slight variation in wind and tide effects.

Those on the bridge should be aware from which radar the VDR records data, and should ensure that the range and other control settings on this radar are appropriate for the navigational situation being experienced at the time.

The VDR unit, like all other navigational equipment, should be checked regularly to ensure that ALL inputs are operational, and that ALL alarm systems are active and switched on.

A VDR unit is NOT, as some might think, a stick with which to beat the crew. Its function is to provide unbiased and accurate information to owners (And the MAIB) so that the true circumstances of an incident can be established. It is in the crew's interest, as well as owners, that these systems are fully operative at all times.

UK MAIB Safety Digest 3/2002

Apostolos Mangouras

Who is Apostolos Mangouras? He is the Master of the Prestige, the tanker that sank off the Spanish coast on the 19th November 2002. He remained in a Spanish jail for some weeks since he was airlifted from his sinking ship unable to raise the euro 3 million to allow his release on bail.

It is easy to understand why the 67 year old Greek Captain was the target for the authorities. He was on hand and available. No sign of pursuit and arrest of the manager, the owner, the charterer, the surveyor. Greek owned, Bahamas registered, American classed, Latvian chartered, it's not so easy to identify and lock up someone from this International stew. It is of course yet another matter to prove culpability or criminality.

Millions of words have been written on the subject of the Prestige. Oil on the beaches and slicked birds are powerful images. Many reporters have superficially equated the sinking with sub standard ships, bad management, poor maintenance and a lack of ship inspection and control measures. Yet although shipmasters know only too well the extremes of weather in the oceans of the world, no shipmaster knowingly takes his ship to sea if he thinks it will sink. After all, its likely he'll go down too.

Capt Mangouras exercised his professional judgment and did his best to save his ship and the lives of his crew following a breach of the hull plating, probably due to stress of weather. This occurred over a period of days, with bad weather and violent motion inducing fatigue and bone weariness. When the vessel began to break in two, Capt Mangouras ordered the evacuation of all hands except himself and two officers to continue with salvage and towing attempts.

The debate continues as to whether the Spanish were correct to attempt to tow the vessel into deeper water (and hope it would disappear or become some other State's problem – possibly ours) when further weather damage was only going to increase the likelihood of the Prestige sinking with consequent major pollution. Or whether to attempt to salvage and off load it in a confined bay or harbour where containment may be possible but the environmental howls due to a localised spill or leak may unnerve the fainthearted. When it all goes wrong, it is easier to blame and jail Apostolas Mangouras for doing his duty and there, but for the grace of God, go I.

Capt Kieran O'Higgins, President, Irish Institute of Master Mariners.

Behind the scenes

IFSMA strongly challenged Spain concerning the detention of the Master of the tanker Prestige, Captain Apostolos Mangouras, by writing to the Spanish Government requesting the immediate release of Captain Mangouras, and further discussed the situation with the Greek (Nationality of the Master), Bahamas (Flag State for Prestige) and Spanish delegates at IMO. Despite all these efforts it seemed that no NGO or flag state could obtain any satisfaction from the Spanish Authorities about the status of Captain Mangouras. He was eventually released after his bail was paid by the vessels' P&I Club.

IACS ISSUES "PRESTIGE" AUDIT REPORT

On January 31, 2003 the IACS Quality Committee formally presented to IACS Council its final report on the ad hoc audit of ABS survey procedures as they relate to the loss of the tanker Prestige. The audit was conducted by the IACS Quality

Secretary supported, as needed, by two senior, experienced IACS auditors.

At the request of ABS, IACS agreed that observers from the IMO, the European Union, the Bahamas Maritime Administration and Intertanko accompany the auditors. The audit team visited the ABS Headquarters, and the shipyards and ABS offices in Dubai and China that conducted the previous annual and special surveys respectively on the vessel. In addition to a comprehensive review of all files and documentation relating to these surveys, the audit team also interviewed the attending surveyors and, where appropriate, shipyard personnel.

The terms of reference that governed the IACS Quality audit were threefold. They were to establish whether or not the Prestige was surveyed by ABS in accordance with the Rules and Regulations and with the statutory requirements and International Conventions related to the Certificates issued by ABS on behalf of the Flag Administration.

Second to establish whether or not ABS complied with the IACS Quality System Certification Scheme requirements, reference documents, IACS Code of Ethics and Procedural Requirements during the preparation and performance of the surveys.

Third to recommend to IACS Council any changes that need to be made to current established practices of maintaining existing oil tankers in class, with the object of furthering IACS' stated commitment to safety of life at sea and the protection of the environment.

IACS Council will now assess the findings contained in the report. Council is not aware of any so-called "loopholes" in the relevant requirements that would compromise the effectiveness of a field survey.

The text of the ad hoc report prepared by the IACS Quality Committee has been posted to the IACS web site – <http://www.iacs.org.uk/prestigeaudit.pdf>.

Training in Shiphandling and Safety at Sea - Opening Of The 2003 Season at Port Revel

As it does every year at the beginning of April, Port Revel Shiphandling Training Centre will be opening its doors once again. As maritime safety becomes an increasing concern, Port Revel is even more relevant than ever in training ships' captains and pilots to handle emergency situations.

The French and North American pilots who make up 95% of the Centre's trainees are well aware of this. Since 1967, the Centre, located near Grenoble, has trained more than 5000 pilots, captains and officers from all over the world.

But... why is such training necessary?...

Because human error is still the main cause of accidents.

... and why train on scale models? ...

Because this is still the best way to acquire certain reflexes which, when the time comes, will make all the difference between being good and being the best. Training on the scale models provides experience that could never be gained on real ships for the simple reason that neither ship-owners nor local authorities would allow such risks to be taken.

Training on the 1:25 scale models is a complement to training on electronic simulators (similar to those used in the aviation industry) as it provides *additional experience through a feeling of "déjà vu"*:

Nature is at work on scale models, with random effects that are similar to those

of real-life situations. The unforeseeable character of squalls, shallows, currents and waves calls for an immediate, appropriate reaction, without any repeat or automatic response.

For the same reason (natural phenomena) hydrodynamic effects are correctly reproduced on scale models and it is therefore unnecessary to transpose them in the form of complex equations. This gives a better simulation of effects such as interactions between ships (for example in a canal), interactions between the ship and berth, little under-keel clearance (for example 10% of the ship's draught) and the use of anchors in various operating situations.

A complete view of the ship's environment is also characteristic of scale models. Trainees really have a 360° field of vision. They can analyse their environment instantaneously (for example wave propagation, eddies, etc.) and freely decide to take bearings abeam and go astern.

And when things go wrong on the scale model, the trainee really feels his ship run aground or collide with another ship or berth. Those who have experienced a situation of this kind know how much it motivates and convinces one to do better...

Lastly, the time scale means that it is possible to perform five times as many manoeuvres (everything happens five times more quickly on the model). In other words, it is possible to perform as many manoeuvres in a 40 hour course as in 200 hours on the real ship.

Port Revel opens its doors again on 31 March for what promises to be a good 2003 season. North American and French pilots are already enrolled. At a time when several accidents in succession have sullied our coastal environment, it is still surprising to note that few European captains and pilots attend courses at Port Revel...

A few technical details ...

The courses are given by extremely experienced instructors, all of whom are former maritime pilots. The ships are precisely reproduced to a 1:25 scale and are equipped with indicators giving rudder angle, engine speed, ship speed, wind speed, etc. Most of the ships are equipped with bow and stern thrusters and with perfectly operational anchors. They behave like real ships. The lake is fitted with wave and current generators and complex port approach configurations.

Two tugs were purchased in 1999. One of them is fitted with Voith Schneider propulsion and the other with a Z-peller system. The two tugs are controlled by the pilot via a remote-control system.

35 years' experience have shown that trainees quickly learn how to control the models just as they do the real ships that they are used to manoeuvring.

A few words of background history ...

After three years spent with Esso captains at the end of the 1960s, the Centre was taken over by Sogreah in 1970.

During the 1970s, most trainees were captains, while the first pilots came to discover the centre.

During the 80s, the ratio of 9 captains to 1 pilot was reversed.

In the 90s, the first refresher courses were organised for pilots, who returned every 5 years. These courses are less directive and leave more room for customisation, which is a way of optimising port operations to increase port accessibility.

During the current decade, we have seen a change in our relations with pilots. We are now moving towards a closer partnership in which pilots use our installations at their convenience. Courses and equipment are specially designed in close collaboration with the pilots, such as the courses on

operations using escort tugs, with our friends from San Francisco.

For more information please contact: Arthur de Graauw, Manager, Tel: 33 (0)4 74200240, Fax: 33 (0)4 74201229, E-mail: port.revel@sogreah.fr, Website: www.portrevel.com.

Amended "Off Ushant" Traffic Separation Scheme – Entry into force

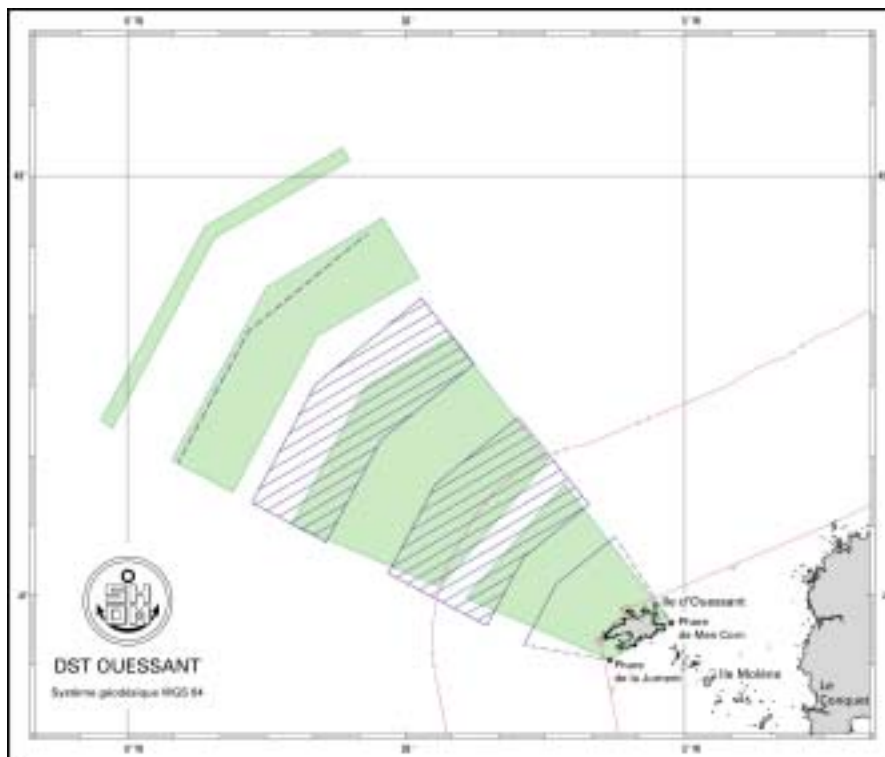
From the current Traffic Separation scheme designed with three traffic lanes, the new TSS "Off Ushant" is designed with two main traffic lanes complete with a coastal two way traffic route, authorised only for coasters sailing between La Hague Cape and the Gulf of Biscay.

The objective of this new traffic scheme is to remove the dangerous maritime crossing points located in the North-East and the South of the current TSS, while the offshore shifting of the traffic lanes will increase maritime authorities capabilities of reaction when facing an accident or a hazardous situation at sea.

The implementation of this new scheme will improve navigational safety and maritime environment protection, while increasing the efficiency of maritime traffic streams in the Channel and the Gulf of Biscay.

The amended "Off Ushant" Traffic separation scheme will enter into force on May 1st at 00H00 UTC.

For a period of a few hours, the area including the scope of both the new and the former TSS, and the vicinity, will be subject to different navigation streams, some vessels transiting according to the former lanes, because entering the TSS before 00h00 on the 1st May, and other vessels



Seafarers are advised to keep a close watch on VHF 16 and 13 and to pay careful attention to information and warning messages delivered by vessel traffic systems.

It is reminded that vessels sailing through the new TSS must fully comply with Mandatory the ship reporting system in force in the “off Ushant TSS”.

According to IMO regulation, the Ushant mandatory ship reporting system area is widened from a 35 to a 40 miles

sailing according to the new lanes, because they entered the TSS after this time.

Consequently, seafarers are required to keep a close and careful watch when sailing in the Ushant area and are warned that vessels in their vicinity may steer a course according to rules different from the one they are complying with.

Preventing and prior information will be issued by the usual navigational information broadcasting means :

Navigational warnings issued by the French hydrographic and oceanographic service (SHOM) and notices broadcasted by NAVTEX stations at Niton (UK) and Corsen (France).

Furthermore, Jobourg Vessels traffic systems will broadcast specifics information to vessels heading for the “off Ushant” traffic separation scheme.

Corsen vessel traffic system will provide navigational warnings for vessels transiting through the “off Ushant” TSS around the implementation date of the new TSS.

circular area centred on Ushant island (Stiff radar tower).

Description of the new traffic separation scheme “off Ushant”

From Ushant to open sea, the “off Ushant” traffic separation scheme is designed as describe below°:

An inshore traffic zone bounded by a lane connecting the following geographical points :°

48° 37,20’ N - 005° 11,90’ W

48° 28,00’ N - 005° 01,40’ W (Men Korn lighthouse)

48° 25,35’ N - 005° 08,00’ W (La Jument lighthouse)

48° 29,39’ N - 005° 22,05’ W

A separation zone bounded by a lane connecting the following geographical points:

48° 38,00’ N - 005° 12,90’ W

48° 37,20’ N - 005° 11,90’ W

CONTD.

48° 29,39' N - 005° 22,05' W

48° 29,80' N - 005° 23,50' W

A two way traffic route – 2 miles wide

This route is allowed only for passenger ships operating regular schedules to or from a Channel port situated west of meridian 1°W and for ships sailing between ports situated between Cape de la Hague and Cape Finisterre, except for ships carrying oils listed in appendix 1 of annex 1 of the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships, 1973, as modified by the Protocol of 1978 (MARPOL 73/78), and ships carrying in bulk the substances listed in categories and B listed in appendices I and II of Annex II of that convention.

A separation zone bounded by a lane, 12 miles wide, connecting the following geographical points:

48° 48,60' N - 005° 25,10' W

48° 39,70' N - 005° 14,70' W

48° 30,60' N - 005° 26,30' W

48° 35,10' N - 005° 42,30' W

48° 45,00' N - 005° 34,30' W

A Northeast bound traffic lane, 5 miles wide :

Course on ground : 028° as far as the line of the turning point at 315° from the Creac'h light, then : 060° as far as the north-east boundary of the scheme.

A separation zone, 5 miles wide, bounded by a lane connecting the following geographical points :

48° 57,00' N - 005° 32,50' W

48° 52,75' N - 005° 28,60' W

48° 48,60' N - 005° 39,60' W

48° 37,40' N - 005° 48,60' W

48° 39,70' N - 005° 55,20' W

48° 52,05' N - 005° 45,00' W

A southwest bound traffic lane, 5 miles wide :

Course on ground°: 240° as far as the line of the turning point at 315° from the Creac'h light, then : 208° as far as the south-west boundary of the scheme.

A separation zone bounded by a lane connecting the following geographical points :

49° 02,00' N - 005° 36,80' W

48° 01,10' N - 005° 36,05' W

48° 55,60' N - 005° 50,60' W

48° 42,00' N - 006° 01,60' W

48° 42,60' N - 006° 02,80' W

48° 56,40' N - 005° 51,60' W

Off Ushant'' TSS entering in force on May 1st 2003

Laws

Law of Documented Relativity

Nothing is as easy as it seems or as difficult as the manual makes it out to be.

Law of Time Management

Everything takes longer than the amount of time you have available to do it in.

Law of Telephone Priority

If you dial a wrong number, it will never be engaged.

IACS Rallies to the Challenge of Safety Concerns

At a series of top-level meetings with regulators and Industry the Council of the International Association of Classification Societies (IACS) deliberated the way forward for classification societies in the wake of new public and political concerns regarding safety and protection of the environment. At the recent meeting IACS met with the European Commission (DGTREN), the IMO Secretary General and Industry leaders (BIMCO, Intercargo, Intertanko, ICS and underwriters) to liaise with all the stakeholders in the shipping industry about the way ahead. As a result of this inclusive approach major new policy decisions for 2003 were taken.

Class is a critical element in the "safety chain". In fact, with more resources at work than anyone else, IACS has been and intends to be even more at the forefront of making new rules and developing the technology to prevent both pollution and loss of life.

With safety at the top of its agenda several key initiatives have resulted from these recent meetings:-

IACS is to intensify its dialogue with the Regulators in Europe and a proposal for a regular "PANEL" of Council members to meet with DGTREN is being taken forward.

IACS Council has increased the levels of complex technical work to improve Bulk Carrier safety. New tasks have been added to an extensive work programme (over 150 tasks) to ensure that strictly correct technical solutions to this vulnerable area of shipping can be implemented as soon as possible.

IACS, with its extensive technical resources has developed an initiative to as-

sist poorly performing flags by offering a methodology to improve the Flag States' control of their registered ships, particularly those which have received an unacceptable number of Port State detentions. All IACS members, in small teams, will offer their assistance to poorly performing Flags to ensure a unified approach.

IACS member societies, together with some small groups of these members, are pooling their technical resources to achieve the best solutions to improve safety. As examples, one group of Members has combined research to harmonize rules for tankers while another research group is working on shipbuilding standards. All this research will be made available for inclusion in IACS normal work programmes, with the overall objective of greater levels of harmonization.

The IACS Council, in its meetings with DGTREN was keen to establish the transparency of class and statutory information with regard to the survey status of ships. The information, soon to be on every IACS society website, has been developed in liaison with DGTREN and will meet the new standards of transparency set out in the EU Directives.

The IACS Council endorsed increased scope of IACS quality audits for both the processes within the societies, and also the technical work on ships. Again the aim is to ensure the proper and complete delivery of classification services and statutory certification. This effort should also increase the confidence of the maritime industry, such as passengers, crew, cargo interests, insurers, bankers, on the structural and mechanical soundness of ships, and as recently exemplified the innocent third parties affected by pollution, wrecks, or collisions. The Council considered that it was important to stress the proper application of rules that already exist throughout the safety chain as a priority in increasing safety.

The IACS Council will continue to open up the process of decision making to those that can contribute significantly. There is a new years programme of meetings with Industry and, as above, with DGTREN. The IACS permanent representative at IMO also continues to create an intensive dialogue within this forum.

IACS is at the "centre" of the safety chain and the recent meetings over 4 days set the scene for seeking practical solutions to ensure that new legislative measures can be met in the period ahead.

A Seafarer's Prayer

**Received from Individual Member
L. Pozolotin**

O Lord, stand near me as I stand my
watch

Keep me alert as safety of my shipmates
depends on me.

Help me to see the beauty of your
creation as I sail your vast oceans.

Keep me faithful to those I leave behind

And bless them while I am away.

Protect us from all of the perils at Sea.

Calm the waves and hush the wind.

Bring me safely home to my family and
friends

Help me to keep you within my heart,

Bless me, Lord. Amen...

Gandalf the Grey

"Many that live deserve death. And some that die deserve life. Can you give it to them? Then do not be too eager to deal out death in judgment. For even the very wise cannot see all ends."

- Gandalf the Grey in "The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring"

Feasibility Study On The Carriage Of VDR On Existing Cargo Ships

The following is the introduction from a Paper to be considered during the next IMO Navigation Sub-Committee. For more information please contact IFSMA.

1 The Sub-Committee on Safety of Navigation (NAV) has been instructed by the Maritime Safety Committee (MSC) to carry out a feasibility study on the carriage of Voyage Data Recorders (VDR) on existing cargo ships. The terms of reference are:

- to carry out the feasibility study, taking into account:
- practicability;
- technical problems relating to retrofitting VDRs;
- adequacy of existing performance standards, including possible development of simplified standards;
- experience in the use of VDRs on ships already fitted out with them, including data that could not have been obtained without VDR; and
- relevant financial implications, including a cost benefit analysis,
- if the study clearly demonstrated the compelling need for mandatory carriage of VDRs on existing cargo ships, to prepare appropriate draft amendments to chapter V of the Convention and associated performance standards, for consideration by the Committee and action as appropriate; and
- finalize the study not later than 1 January 2004

2 The Sub-Committee agreed at its 48th session to establish a Correspondence Group with the following terms of reference:

The Correspondence Group should advance the feasibility study as instructed by Resolution MSC.109(23). This should be achieved by collating information discussed at previous meetings and the existing documentary submissions and coordinating the work of delegate members of the group. In certain areas this may involve further research including, but not limited to, the following key areas:

- Review of Data Items to be Recorded
- Marine Accidents Investigators from member states should be invited to prepare a series of reports based on their experiences of transcribing a VDR recorded incident using all the information currently called for in the existing performance standard and then, as a comparison, using just the basic parameters of (say) date, time, position, course, speed, bridge audio and radar. The aim would be to see which of these parameters are essential.
- Protective Capsule
- Discussions and views on the merits of employing a float-free capsule, fixed capsule or EPIRB should be advanced with additional material being researched on practical experiences. For example, it is suggested that a trial on the recovery of a float-free device may be scheduled. Members of the group could gain first hand experience of the exercise which could form the basis of a valuable input document. In addition input should be encouraged from manufacturers to provide costed alternatives.

- Costs/Benefits
- Considerable concern has been expressed about the perceived difficulties and costs involved in fitting VDRs to existing cargo ships. Group members should be encouraged to invite manufacturers to produce costed proposals for a representative range of vessels, including specific notes and comments on the practical aspects of installation and interfacing.

3 The Committee endorsed the establishment of this Correspondence Group, which consisted of representatives of:

- United Kingdom
- Japan
- The Netherlands
- Germany
- France
- Brazil
- Sweden
- Canada
- Norway
- Bureau Veritas / ICAS
- ICS
- CIRM
- INTERTANKO
- World Maritime University

4 The Group used the terms of reference to organize the work, but has tried to contribute as much as possible to the work of the Sub-Committee by presenting its findings in the structure of the terms of references which were given by the Committee to the Sub-Committee itself.

5 The Group collected substantial relevant and interesting information through consultation with maritime accident investigators, VDR manufactures and ship owners / operators. Although the recommended trial with a float-free protective capsule was conducted, the results were not yet available to the Correspondence Group. Information was gathered on the following:

- Casualty statistics
- Data requirements for casualty analysis
- Experiences from casualty analysis without VDRs
- Benefits gained from casualty analysis with VDRs
- Technical problems with installing VDRs and connecting VDRs to various required input devices
- Costs estimates for installing VDRs on various vessels

6 With this information the Group was able to jointly develop a proposal for a simplified VDR (S-VDR), maximizing the usages whilst minimizing the cost, taking into consideration the restrictions and difficulties of installing a VDR on existing cargo ships.

7 When assessing the practicability of the simplified VDR it has to be realised that this simplified VDR with different capabilities than a full VDR only has to be used for a limited time. In approximately 25 year almost all cargo ships over 3000 gt will have been built after 1 July 2002 and will therefore be equipped with a full VDR.

8 It should be noted that the European Union has already decided (Directive 2002/59/EC) - in addition to what has decided in IMO – that:

Ships in the following classes and built before 1 July 2002 must, inasmuch as they call at a port of a Member State of the Community (i.e. the EU), be fitted with a VDR meeting the relevant IMO standards:

- cargo ships of 20.000 gt and upwards, not later than the date fixed by the IMO, or, in absence of a decision in IMO, not later than 1 January 2007
- cargo ships of 3.000 gt and upwards but less than 20.000 gt, not later than the date fixed by the IMO, or, in absence of a decision in IMO, not later than 1 January 2008

9 This VDR should meet the performance standard of IMO Resolution A.861(20) and the testing standards set by Standard No 61996 of the IEC. Absence or malfunctioning of this mandatory full VDR on existing cargo ships will then be grounds for PSC detention.

10 However, there are strong indications that a simplified VDR would be accepted by the EU. So there is an urgent need to develop a simplified VDR to avoid existing cargo ships to have to be equipped with an expensive full VDR if these ships want to call at an (enlarged) EU port after 2007/2008.

With great sorrow we have to report the death of -

Captain Dott. Gaspare DE PALMA,

President of Collegio Nazionale Capitani L. C. & M (CNPC), Genoa, Italy

Captain Mario GANDOLFI has been appointed the new President

Early Implementation of the Special Measures to Enhance Maritime Security

IMO Maritime Safety Committee Circular 1067, 28 February 2003

1 The December 2002 SOLAS Contracting Governments Conference on Maritime Security adopted a new SOLAS chapter XI-2 on Special measures to enhance maritime security; and the International Ship and Port Facility Security (ISPS) Code. Both of these documents are expected to enter into force on 1 July 2004. It would therefore be prudent (given the high number of ships and ports which will have to implement the decisions of the Conference) that all parties concerned start putting in place, methodically, systematically and as soon as possible, all the necessary infrastructure (including legislative, administrative and operational) needed to give effect to all the decisions of the Conference. It is important that parties do not await the entry-into-force date before consideration of these important issues so as to avoid the need to have to take hasty action at the last minute and also to avoid the need for control action against ships found not in compliance with the applicable requirements of SOLAS and the ISPS Code.

2 In this respect, the particular attention of SOLAS Contracting Governments is invited to the new SOLAS regulation XI-2/9 on "Control and compliance measures" and the serious repercussions ships might face after 1 July 2004 if they are found not to be in compliance with the requirements of that regulation and Section A/9.81 of the ISPS Code (for which guidance can be found in Sections B/1.14, 1.21, 4.29 to 4.35 and 4.36 to 4.46 of the Code). The repercussions to ports should

also be assessed and appropriate action taken accordingly.

3 It should be noted that operative paragraph 1 of Conference resolution 6 (Early implementation of the special measures to enhance maritime security) draws the attention of Contracting Governments to SOLAS and the industry to the fact that neither chapter XI-2 of the Convention nor the Code provide for any extension of the implementation dates for the introduction of the special measures to enhance maritime security adopted by the Conference.

4 The attention of Member Governments is also invited to Conference Resolution 5 (Promotion of technical co-operation and assistance), operative paragraph 1 of which strongly urges SOLAS Contracting Governments and Member Governments to provide, in co-operation with the Organization, assistance to States having difficulty in implementing the decisions of the Conference. SOLAS Contracting Governments and Member Governments needing such assistance are encouraged to use the Organization's Integrated Technical Co-operation Programme.

5 In the meantime, Member Governments are invited to consider advising companies and ships operating under the flag of their State, to take steps, dependent on the degree of perceived risk in their ships' areas of operation, to increase awareness of potential dangers. This is considered very important so that the crews of the ships concerned may be extremely vigilant and alert to any security threat they may encounter or be suspicious of, whether they are in port, at offshore terminals or underway.

6 This circular is issued following consultations between the Secretary-General and the Chairman of the Maritime Safety Committee.

Carbon Dioxide as a Fire Suppressant - Help Needed

Dear Captain McDonald,

I was referred to you by Mr. Norman Lemley who suggested your organization might be able to provide valuable input into a project that I am doing for the US Environmental Protection Agency. In the United States, the US EPA has statutory responsibility for assessing the safety of fire extinguishing agents that are being used to replace the halons.

The US EPA has asked me to study the use of carbon dioxide total flooding fire extinguishing systems in normally occupied spaces including Category A machinery spaces aboard ships. As you know, carbon dioxide systems have had an important role in fire extinguishing systems for many years; but, at the same time, there have been numerous injuries and deaths caused by these systems. Many of these accidents are documented in the attached EPA report "Carbon Dioxide as a Fire Suppressant: Examining the Risks."

Among other things, this study is intended to assess the principal IMO recognized alternatives to carbon dioxide (water mist, inert gas systems, aerosol systems and halocarbon systems) from several standpoints to determine if they individually or collectively are able to fill the role now played by the carbon dioxide systems. Ultimately, this study is intended to present an objective recommendation to the US EPA on whether or not there is a need to consider enacting use controls on carbon dioxide total flooding fire extinguishing systems employed in normally occupied spaces.

I am now in the data collection phase and would appreciate any help I can get from you and your members. In this regard, I am hoping that you can provide me with some input on this project in several areas

(1) DNV has been quoted as saying 9 out of 10 new DNV classified ships are using carbon dioxide for machinery space protection.

Is this ratio consistent with the experience of your members?

(2) Is there a common rationale among your members why some outfit their ships with carbon dioxide systems and others use alternatives to carbon dioxide for the protection of their machinery spaces (is it a matter of approvals, cost, installation ease, habit, whatever??)?

(3) In order of most often used, how would your members rank the following systems being employed to protect the machinery spaces on new ships: water mist, carbon dioxide, inert gas (like Inergen), halocarbons (like FM-200), aerosols or other?

(4) If it was concluded that the time has come to put use controls on carbon dioxide systems in normally occupied spaces (e.g. a ban on the use of carbon dioxide total flooding systems on new ships for the protection of normally occupied machinery spaces), would your members in general support this conclusion or would they oppose it? If they would oppose it, what would be the primary reasons for that opposition?

It is my hope to provide a draft report to the US EPA in March 2003 and your input on this matter would truly be helpful. The views of your organization and your members are important to those considering the need for use controls on carbon dioxide total flooding fire extinguishing systems employed in normally occupied spaces.

Thank you in advance for any input you can provide.

Regards, Bob Wickham

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See IFSMA Web Site for study document:- *Carbon Dioxide as a Fire Suppressant: Examining the Risks*

SOLAS Amendments

SOLAS and mandatory Codes - amendments entered into force on 1 January 2003

The following amendments to IMO Conventions and Codes entered into force on 1 January 2003:

December 1998 amendments to the Seafarers' Training, Certification and Watchkeeping Code.

The amendments to the Seafarers' Training, Certification and Watchkeeping Code, which are aimed at improving minimum standards of competence of crews sailing on ships carrying solid bulk cargoes, entered into force on 1 January 2003.

The amendments concern section A-II/1 and A-II/2 under "Cargo handling and stowage at the operational and management levels" and relate to minimum standards of competence of crews, in particular relating to loading and unloading of bulk carriers, since these procedures have the potential to put undue stresses on the ship's structure, and inspection and assessment of damage to the cargo spaces, hatch covers and ballast tanks.

June 2001 amendments to the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS), 1974, as amended and to the INF Code The amendments to SOLAS Chapter VII - Carriage of Dangerous Goods - and to the International Code for the Safe Carriage of Packaged Irradiated Nuclear Fuel, Plutonium and High-Level Radioactive Wastes on Board Ships (INF Code) entered into force on 1 January 2003. The amendments align both instruments with Amendment 30 to the International Maritime Dangerous Goods (IMDG) Code.

June 2001 amendments to the International Code of Safety for High-Speed Craft

The amendments to the International Code of Safety for High-Speed Craft (1994 HSC Code) entered into force on 1 January 2003. The amendments bring the provisions for navigational equipment of the 1994 HSC Code in line with the relevant provisions of the 2000 HSC Code (which entered into force on 1 July 2002 for craft built after that date).

The amendments relate to requirements for carriage of voyage data recorders and for the provision of automatic identification systems (AIS).

Faeroe Islands Join IMO

Faeroe Islands becomes Associate Member of IMO

The Faeroe Islands has become an Associate Member of IMO, following the deposit with the United Nations of notification to this effect by Denmark.

IMO now has 162 Member States and three Associate Members, which are: Faeroe Islands; Hong Kong, China; and Macau, China.

Notes:

In its notification to the United Nations, deposited on 3 December 2002, Denmark notes that the Faeroe Islands is a part of the Danish Realm with a wide measure of home rule in legislative and administrative affairs. With effect from 1 January 2002, legislative and administrative powers were transferred from the authorities of the Realm to the Faeroe islands in a number of additional fields including matters related to safety at sea, and the Faeroe Islands Home Government expressed its strong desire to become an Associate Member of IMO.

And Finally - Actual Headlines

Kids Make Nutritious Snacks.
Teacher Strikes Idle Kids.