



Secretary General's Report

Introduction

Good Day Everyone, this newsletter is slightly out of kilter with what was proposed in mid-2015. The reason behind this is to put the dates of publishing in line with the year and also in line with certain events that take place within IFSMA and its operation. There is a table on the last page of this edition showing the new scheduling and publication dates. I have added an additional column for the final dates when articles presented by members for inclusion can be accepted by the editorial staff. This is not grand standing but to have control and ensure that the publication is on time.

2014 has been a year of many changes for IFSMA and its progress towards becoming more recognizable and ensuring that more people and organizations are aware of what we are; what we stand for; and the work that we do. Regrettably, one of the problems that is arising is that an ever growing number non-members are requesting our assistance and families want us to take on cases of loved ones who find themselves in difficulties. It is just not possible. Members must come first, though we do try to give some assistance even though it is limited to non-members.

The following sections of this Newsletter are to give you an insight of what has changed and where your money has been spent.

IMO

IFSMA has one of the highest attendance rates of any NGO and better than a number of flag States. We do not just attend but make sure that we are involved in the production of papers, mainly by joint venture with other NGOs and flag administrations, but moving to producing more of our own papers.

In addition we make interventions that are direct and have meaning and purpose for our membership and also where possible for other seafarers.

IFSMA is also present on a number of working groups, correspondence groups and committees to ensure that the position of the master is protected.

Over the years IFSMA has built up a reputation for be un-biased and truly independent in its views and what it promotes. IFSMA does not make interventions, papers and other work just to be recorded, but more of being a voice demanding change and asking questions that others will not ask.

It should be noted that without the assistance of certain members who attend the IMO and support the Secretariat and do a lot of behind the scenes work that IFSMA is making progress and able to cover more work at the IMO. This is done without pay or even expenses and it is in gratitude to them. Reference is made to the associations who supply such members for these meetings in the Newsletters published throughout the year.

NGO Group

This was started 2 years ago by IFSMA and is growing in success. The concept behind this group was to have an informal forum where NGOs and other bodies concerned with Human Element issues can meet and discuss issues and raise new issues that they have experienced. IFSMA acts as the coordinator and hosts the twice yearly meetings. There are no office bearers, there is no agenda and there is no formal report. At this time there are 13 members' organizations and this is growing. From these meetings there has been a lot of sharing of views and expertise which have resulted in shared resources and co-development of planned work outputs.

Head Office

This has been totally refurbished and looks very good. This is not a personal observation but stated by those who have visited the office. There is no more expenditure to be made apart from paying the running costs. The work being done now is to change the office into a paperless office and much of this has been achieved by the process of changing hard copy archives into electronic databases. This work process is important and ongoing.

What everyone should appreciate is that as a member of IFSMA you can use this office and its resources if you are in London. Should you wish to hold a seminar, if you let us know in advance with the numbers attending we can organize meeting rooms and lay on catering etc. to meet your needs. The meeting room is free of charge and the catering costs are minimal.

At this time, I want everyone to be aware of the fact that Comite International Radio Maritime (CIRM) shares the office space with IFSMA. As well as sharing the costs of the office refurbishment they were of great assistance both with ideas and finances in creating the new office. This saved IFSMA a lot of expenditure and ensured a better final product.

IFSMA AGA 40

In 2014 IFSMA celebrated its 40th anniversary at Sandefjord, Norway. It was also a time for the changing of the guard as a number of persons from the Executive Committee stood down and others took their place.

Christer Lindvall and Bjorn Haave were recognized for the contribution that they made over the years to IFSMA and have become Honorary Members. It was also a time of reflection on the Honorary Members who had passed away. This should not be a sad time but more of a time of reflection of those from the past who put so much into IFSMA with their time and effort which makes the association what it is today.

From the AGA a number of processes have been implemented that will see IFSMA move in a slightly different direction but also supply more information and interaction with its membership. One of the items is this Newsletter where there is an update of what is taking place in IFSMA and to encourage member associations to report of items that they believe are of interest to the membership via this Newsletter. Of course, now that the Blog is up and running you may feel better at having an article placed there to see what dialogue is on the subject.

IFSMA AGA 41

In April of 2015, AGA 41 will be held at Vina Del Mar Chile. Much of the work has been completed and there are a few matters to be finalized which will take place at the Executive Council meeting on the 11 February 2015 in London.

Delegates wishing to attend the AGA should ensure that they book early and confirm reservations for flying to Chile. The main airport is Santiago International and from leaving the terminal it will be an additional 1.5 to 2.0 hours of travel to arrive at the hotel. Nautilus Chile will be assisting with some transportation to take people from the airport to the hotel but if this is missed then regrettably it is about US\$ 140.00 each way for a taxi. So as soon as you know your arrival date and time please inform Head Office and Nautilus so that the necessary arrangements can be made.

A full set of details will be circulated to all everyone for them to make their own choices on travel and apart from the hotel hosting the AGA there are a number of other hotels in the vicinity.

Delegates should also note the later that you leave it to book the more expensive the flights and hotel can be.

More information will be available to everyone shortly.

Projects

IFSMA is involved with a number of projects and this can only be achieved by members putting themselves forward and assisting the Secretariat and ExCo members. This is a thankless task of giving up time and putting in lot energy without payment for efforts made. At this time I would like to thank everyone who has done such work not only for

2014 and previous years but also for their commitment for 2015. Without such commitment IFSMA could not expand and be involved in such wide ranging work.

The Martha Project is moving forward and supplying a lot of information on fatigue and effects of what is taking place on board ships not just in short term tests. It is hoped that this will allow for Project Horizon to move to the Phase II with European funding.

The Mona Lisa 2 project is coming to an end and a new project is taking over. This is a European funded project and the first correspondence was for the President to take part. This is being processed to see who will attend and then we will move forward and be part of this project. Thank you to Christer Lindvall and Jorgen Loren who represented IFSMA on the Mona Lisa 1 and 2.

Criminalisation of the Seafarer

IFSMA is at the forefront of fighting this growing problem and as cases unfold there is an increase of cases where the master and other officers are being charged even before the investigation is completed is of major concern to everyone in the shipping industry. This work is now continuous and regrettably, it is not until such an event takes place and the person or persons are under the scrutiny of the law that they become aware of how exposed that they are. In the last 3 years only two cases that IFSMA are aware of was the person involved a member of IFSMA or a member association. All of the rest have been for people who regrettably find themselves in a terrible situation without the finances to employ lawyers to represent them. IFSMA does what it can and informs other organizations but its first responsibility is to its members and the financial constraints placed on it in such matters.

Piracy

It has not gone away and is spreading to various parts of the world. The sleeping problem of the Horn of Africa has not been resolved but should there be a reduction or withdrawal of the military in the area then it is possible that there will be a resurgence of this problem. It may be that the Armed Security Guards will become the mainstay of protecting the ships. This raises the question of whether the cost is sustainable or do other options have to be reviewed. A personal opinion on the matter is that piracy is here to stay for my lifetime and it will evolve. Forget that it is an opportunistic venture by poor people trying to get by. It is a business with parts of the function of this industry located in various parts of the world and not just where the acts take place.

One of the greatest upsurges has been in criminal acts against ships in national waters. This is endangering the security of ships while passing through or trading in certain areas.

The Refugee Situation

The Mediterranean Sea situation is becoming untenable and as responses are being made to try and control the

situation the people traffickers are changing their business model and increasing the profitability of the venture. The greatest problem faced is that these people have no regard for human life and are happy to leave people to die. The latest major case was the abandonment of an old coaster with 360 people on board. Most were women and children and the elderly. The crew stopped the ship and left the people on board, while they made their escape. What would have happened if the ship had not been detected and the people on board rescued?

Part of the ongoing problem is that merchant ships offering assistance under the law of the sea will have to cope with large numbers of people being on board. It is not a matter of picking up people in distress and being able to land them to safety. Countries such as Italy, Malta and Greece cannot cope with the influx of so many people. One of the problems that could return is to that of the 1980's where the Vietnamese Boat People were picked up and the ship had to carry them for months while negotiations were held as to where they would go and who would pay. In the meantime the ship had to operate and take care of these people and the industry did. No one wants to return to such times.

Another facet of this complex problem has been the effect of these matters on seafarers. In some cases seafarers are being assaulted by those they have rescued and one unconfirmed report was that the people rescued tried to hijack the ship and make it take them to a certain port. This is probably generated by fear, but should seafarers be expected to be exposed to such experiences. Another effect on seafarers is when they have tried to save people

but were not able to rescue all of them and watched as fellow human beings died.

All of this is out with the normal and expected working conditions for seafarers who do the best they can in a situation that is not part of the daily working life.

The UN-HCR – Initiative on Protection at Sea is working to find solutions to this complex problem. IFSMA is part of this and while sensitive to the needs of those in peril must protect the rights of the master and his/her crew. As matters progress, the membership will be kept up to date.

Publication Dates of Newsletter

<u>Issue</u>	<u>Publication</u>	<u>Last date of articles to be received for edition</u>
Jan/Feb	1st Week March	25 February
Mar/Apr	1st Week May	25 April
May/Jun	1st Week July	25 June
Jul/Aug	1st Week Sept	25 August
Sep/Oct	1st Week Nov	25 October
Nov/Dec	1st Week Jan	25 December

Remember this is your Newsletter and any relevant article will be reviewed and edited and then published in the Newsletter or if felt appropriate on the blog for members to comment on.

To everyone, it is hoped that 2015 will be a good year where you achieve your goals and all that they bring.

eLoran operational in UK

The General Lighthouse Authorities (GLAs) of the UK and Ireland announced October 31 the initial operational capability of UK maritime eLoran. Seven differential reference stations now provide additional position, navigation, and timing (PNT) information via low-frequency pulses to ships fitted with eLoran receivers. The service will help ensure they can navigate safely in the event of GPS failure in one of the busiest shipping regions in the world, with expected annual traffic of 200,000 vessels by 2020.

Ships carry 95 percent of UK trade, accounting for its strongly expressed concerns regarding GPS vulnerability to jamming and spoofing, and the leadership role it has taken in eLoran research and testing. The UK is the first country in the world to deploy the technology along its coastline, thronged with both passenger and cargo services. Deployment involved replacing the existing radio receiver equipment in two prototype reference stations at Dover and Harwich, and the creation of five new reference stations in the Thames, Humber, Middlesbrough, and Firth of Forth and Aberdeen in Scotland, on the North Sea where oil-laden vessels come from deep-sea drilling rigs.

Entirely independent of GPS, eLoran can provide navigation information for vessels as well as the timing data necessary to maintain the power grid, cell phones, financial networks, and the Internet in the event of an outage. Unlike space-based navigation, eLoran signals can also reach inside buildings, underground, and underwater.

Captain Ian McNaught, deputy master of Trinity House, commented, "eLoran provides a signal around 1 million times more powerful than those from satellite signals, providing resilience from interference and attack. The achievement of initial operational capability for the system at Dover and along the east coast of the UK is a significant milestone, providing for improved safety aboard appropriately equipped vessels. The maritime industry would now benefit from the installation of eLoran receivers on more vessels to take advantage of improved navigational safety."

"Telecoms, finance, energy, and other industries, which are subject to significant issues caused by the loss of timing signal provided by GPS, are recommended to take advantage of the enhanced reliability now available to address the over-dependence of key national infrastructure on vulnerable satellite systems," McNaught said.

eLoran technology is based on longwave radio signals and is independent and complementary to GPS.

Several other nations are consulting with the UK GLAs on eLoran. South Korea wants to establish an eLoran alliance with the UK while it pursues its own rollout of differential eLoran reference stations and new eLoran transmitters based on the latest technology. In 2012, South Korea was the victim of a 16-day GPS jamming attack by North Korea.

Full operational capability covering all major UK ports is expected by 2019.

Further information here: <http://tinyurl.com/l3uf4ch>

AMSA bans third vessel from Australian ports

The Maritime Labour Convention is starting to have an effect, as this report shows.

From the AMSA Website:

The Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) has issued a direction to Indonesian flagged multi-purpose ship MV Meratus Sangatta (IMO 9116797) not to enter or use any port in Australia for three months.

The ship has been detained three times since November 2012 and twice since November 2014. As a result it will not be allowed to re-enter Australian ports until April 6, 2015.

MV Meratus Sangatta was detained in Port Alma, Queensland on January 2 despite AMSA urging the ship's operator, PT. Meratus Line, to improve its performance following the banning of another of its vessels, Territory Trader, in Cairns in November last year.

AMSA Chief Executive Officer Mick Kinley said a complaint was received in accordance with the Maritime Labour Convention (MLC) ahead of an inspection of the ship last week.

"The recent detention found numerous failings in compliance with the MLC, which place the welfare of seafarers at risk," Mr Kinley said. "The more serious of these deficiencies included not having enough food and potable water for the next voyage, defective and insufficient refrigerated storage to safely store fresh food, defective laundry, sanitary and cooking facilities, as well as expired Seafarer Employment Agreements (SEA).

"AMSA, in line with its international obligations, treats any breaches of the MLC with the greatest of seriousness to ensure seafarer welfare and safety, and to protect Australia's marine environment."

Mr Kinley said ships operated by PT. Meratus Line would now be subject to inspections at every port call.

The vessel was required to rectify deficiencies identified during the inspection before it was released from detention from Port Alma.

The vessel is the third to be banned from Australian ports under the revised Navigation Act which came into effect in July 2013.

Free Training Video on Ebola Prevention Onboard Ships

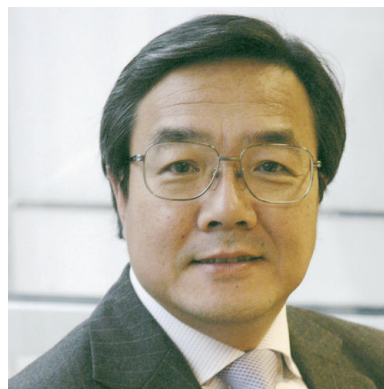
KVH Media Group is offering a free training video on Ebola prevention onboard ship.

The following link will take you to the download webpage:

<http://landing.kvh.com/estkvh>

IMO Rededication to Ferry Safety

The fire on the Norman Atlantic ferry and the capsizing of the South Korean ferry Sewol means ferry safety has much room for improvement, said International Maritime Organization Secretary-General Koji Sekimizu.



In a message on the IMO's Facebook page, Sekimizu said, "2014 will be remembered as another year of very serious maritime casualties involving passenger ships, with the tragedy of Sewol and the fire aboard the Norman Atlantic. IMO must take action to investigate these maritime accidents

and improve safety standards of passenger ships. In this context, I urge IMO member governments to review the current level of safety standards of passenger ships at the Maritime Safety Committee in June and discuss how we could strengthen our system and prevent such very serious maritime accidents involving passenger ships in future. I urge the authorities of Italy and Greece to accelerate the process of the casualty investigation and submit findings to IMO as soon as possible." The fire broke out on the Norman Atlantic's car deck December 28 as the ferry travelled from Greece to Italy, leaving at least 11 people dead. The ferry was towed to the Italian port of Brindisi in a 17-hour operation across the Adriatic Sea.

The Sewol capsized during a routine Incheon-Jeju trip on 16 April, leaving 304 of 476 passengers and crew dead or missing.

Sekimizu said, "The incidents over the holiday period involving the vessels Norman Atlantic and Blue Sky M have reminded us once again how perilous a voyage at sea can be. Although fundamentally different in nature, both saw human lives placed at risk in difficult and challenging circumstances."

The Blue Sky M, a cargo ship, was abandoned off Corfu, Greece, on 30 December and four migrants were found dead on the vessel.

Sekimizu added, "My deepest condolences go to all those who have been caught up in these incidents, especially those who have lost their loved ones. I should also like to express my sincere appreciation for all those who have been, and continue to be, involved in the rescue operations, notably the Italian and Greek authorities, and especially the two Albanian seafarers who tragically lost their own lives during the operation to secure the stricken ferry Norman Atlantic. As we begin the new year, we must all rededicate ourselves to ensuring the safety of all those who live, work and travel on the world's oceans."

Man Overboard Rescue

The link below to a video clip, taken by one of the passengers, shows how difficult it is to spot and rescue a man overboard.

<http://tinyurl.com/p3t2z5k>

According to the website CruiseJunkie.com, 22 people fell overboard from cruise ships in 2014. Hoegh

Hoegh Autoliner Grounding

A day in the life of Port Chaplains

Maritime welfare charities The Apostleship of the Sea (AoS), The Mission to Seafarers (MtS) and The Southampton Centre for Seafarers (SCS) have been speaking about their emergency work to support the crew of the *Hoegh Osaka*, in the aftermath of the rescue from a cargo ship that ran aground in the Solent last weekend.

Southampton Port Chaplain John Attenborough (MtS), said: "I received a call at around 11pm on Saturday night from the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) to tell me that a vessel had run aground in the Solent and that a maritime chaplaincy team was needed urgently to assist. Helicopters were bringing those rescued to the Southampton Vessel Tracking Service Station nearby. I immediately called Stephen Hulbert Manager at the Southampton Seafarers' Centre and we arrived at the Station at around midnight. 2 seafarers were already in hospital, and the rest of the crew were OK. It was a tense atmosphere, with police, paramedics and the coastguard making plans to secure the ship.

John Attenborough said "There is a tremendous amount of support being offered by the company. There have been offers of counselling and talks - whatever they need, wherever they are."

Describing the effects of the incident on the crew, Attenborough said that shock was the major issue affecting them, "Some seafarers were in tears, obviously physically and emotionally quite upset; some were shaking; some seafarers were just talking and talking, and some were just sitting very calm and very quiet, mulling things over."

Attenborough said attending to the emotional state of seafarers will be essential to ensure they are fit to engage properly with the incident investigation.

"There will be an investigation. It is important that people are in the right state of mind to be able to ask and answer the right type of questions that the investigation will throw up.

"If somebody is not in the right state of mind, then to not give the correct information could muddy the waters," said Attenborough.

He said delayed shock reaction made continuous welfare assistance provision essential.

"Some seafarers did not need us [immediately], but in the days after the event, those very worrying times in the very early hours of Sunday morning [when the accident was on their minds], and varying degrees of shock, reliving the story, have come out in the days afterwards," said Attenborough.

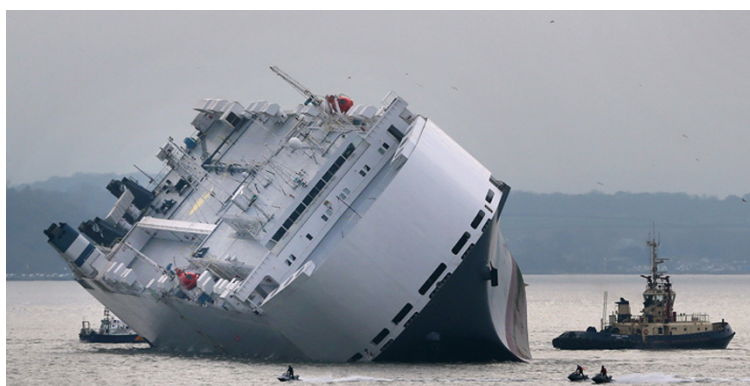
He said an essential service provided by the charities was communications to call families.

Our arrival to support the crew was crucial. We managed to speak with them all, and we offered to take the men to the Southampton Seafarers' Centre to make them more comfortable, get them urgently needed clothing and food, and to assist them to contact home. We arrived at the Centre at around 2am. Stephen Hulbert had called ahead to Centre Staff, who came in straight away. When we arrived there was hot soup, coffee, and sandwiches ready for them all, and Stephen's wife had bought in blankets, jumpers and socks. They were really needed. I made sure that all the crew could use my mobile phone. By 4am the shipping agents and the lawyers had arrived and arranged to transfer the men to a local hotel. "

Roger Stone, Chaplain (AoS), said: "Initially my role was to support the two injured seafarers at Queen Alexandra Hospital Portsmouth. I then assisted with taking the crew to visit their colleagues."

Roger and John have continued to work together spending the days and evenings with the crew.

Chaplain John Attenborough (MtS) said: "We were all there to make sure that there was continuity of care for the men – from rescue to hotel and ongoing this week. We have stayed with them every day to offer support. We have provided them with basics such as toothpaste, shaving kits, etc... and simple friendship. This emergency situation has been handled with great care, professionalism and energy by everyone involved."



Hoegh Osaka

New Guidelines for Rescue of Migrants at Sea

From the International Seafarers' Welfare and Assistance Network (ISWAN) Website.

In response to the continuing crisis in the Mediterranean, necessitating commercial ships to rescue tens of thousands of migrants and refugees during 2014, the International Chamber of Shipping (ICS), and ISWAN member, has published new Guidance on Large Scale Rescue Operations at Sea, which can be downloaded free of charge via the ICS website.

ICS Secretary General, Peter Hinchliffe explained: "The shipping industry fully accepts its humanitarian obligation to assist anyone at sea whose vessel is in distress. But the scale of the crisis involving thousands of people attempting to get to Europe in craft that are neither fit for purpose nor seaworthy has raised real concerns about the safety and health of ships' crews that may be involved in rescuing as many as 200 people at a time."

The challenges involved in rescuing large numbers of people and then accommodating them on board ship prior to disembarkation are enormous compared to conventional rescue operations. The ICS Guidelines are therefore intended to help shipping companies prepare for this eventuality, whilst taking full account of the safety and security of the ship should such large scale rescues be necessary. ICS says that experience has shown that advance preparations, and the development of effective procedures supported by regular drills, will prepare Masters and their crews to manage large scale rescue operations safely and successfully.

The issues covered by the ICS Guidelines include the provision of additional Personal Protective Equipment for ship's crew and the safe management and accommodation of large numbers of people on board with an emphasis on sanitation, hygiene and ship security. The Guidelines also refer to the need for companies to take full account of crew welfare in the aftermath of a large-scale rescue. The ICS Guidelines also contain useful references to relevant advice produced by the World Health Organization and the International Maritime Organization.

ICS also emphasises that Masters should not be expected to become involved in decisions about the legal status of the people they have rescued or whether they intend to apply for asylum.

"Notwithstanding the shipping industry's legal and humanitarian obligations to rescue people in distress at sea, it remains incumbent on the governments to find a solution to the current crisis which is placing a very difficult burden on ships' crews and the companies that have a duty of care for them." said Mr Hinchliffe, who will be participating at a high-level meeting on the migrants at sea crisis being hosted by the UNHCR in Geneva, in which the IMO Secretary-General will also be taking part.

Link to download the free ICS Guidelines
<http://tinyurl.com/onlxd7>

Nicaragua Canal – Construction Starts

On December 22 Nicaragua started the construction of Nicaragua Grand Canal, a 172-mile waterway to be constructed by Hong Kong-based HK Nicaragua Canal Development Investment Co Ltd (HKND Group).

This USD 50 billion project is expected to be completed in five years with the Canal becoming operational by 2020. According to the plans, the Canal will be between 230 metres and 520 metres wide and 27.6 metres deep, which would allow it to handle bigger ships than the Panama Canal.

According to HKND Group, the Canal project will include 6 sub projects: the Canal (including locks), 2 ports, a free trade zone, holiday resorts, an international airport and several roads. In addition, there will be construction of a power station, cement factory, steel factory and other related facilities.

Further information here: <http://hknd-group.com>

Confirmation of AIS Positions using Base Stations

The JRC, in collaboration with the Italian coast guard service, has developed a new method to verify whether ship positions reported with the Automatic Identification System (AIS) are correct.

This effective method does not need any additional sensors or technologies and it makes it possible to validate reported data and detect unintentionally incorrect, jammed or deliberately falsified information reported by ships.

The AIS system was originally designed to avoid collision between ships, but it is becoming a cornerstone of maritime situational awareness, allowing to know where ships are at sea. However, as reported in our Newsletter 002, AIS is prone to tampering and spoofing and the alteration of reported data is expected to increase in the future.

The new method entails AIS data verification that can be implemented within a generic network of AIS base stations. It combines a classic radio-location method based on Time Difference of Arrival (TDoA) with an Extended Kalman Filter (EKF) designed to track vessels in geodetic coordinates. It has been successfully tested using real data collected by AIS base stations. The results show a deviation between the estimated origin of detected signals and the broadcast position data in the order of hundreds of meters, therefore demonstrating the operational potential of the methodology.

Information from the EU Joint Research Centre website
<http://tinyurl.com/o69cq3>