

Secretary General's Report

Good Day to Everyone,

2015 started with a number of major casualties, one of which started at the end of December. This was the "Norman Atlantic" and as per usual, the master has been charged with manslaughter and causing a shipwreck by the Italian authorities. Regrettably, a number of people died in the incident and this number will probably never be exact due to the fact that it is reported that a large number of stowaways were on the car deck where the fire was.

But this was not the only point. The captain of the "Costa Concordia" received 16 years and 1 month as a sentence. The industry is divided over whether this is just or not. The crew members of the "Sewol" presented their appeals and this will be decided upon in April. It should be noted that the Captain of the ship did not lodge an appeal and has accepted his 36 year sentence.

We have seen the "Hoegh Osaka" nearly capsize when leaving Southampton and being stranded on a sand bar. Because of the availability of the ship to the media this had more coverage than ships that had sunk elsewhere in the world.

The matter of 6on-6off raised its head again with a ship once more running up on the rocks when it should have turned to port. This was on the West Coast of Scotland and the radar display shows the vessel proceeding steadily along the course and missing the alter course point. The vessel continued on this course until it ran aground on the opposite side of the channel. So all in all this year has not started well.

IMO

The IMO has already had 3 sub-committee meetings which were PPR 2; HTW 2; and SDC 2. These meetings were supported by Nautilus International and NMOA who continue to lend manpower to IFSMA to be able to give proper coverage to these meetings. It is once again time to thank these associations along with DMO who sent one person to one meeting.

IFSMA makes interventions that are appropriate to the situation and where they are relevant to the ship master.

PPR 2: Intervention was prepared but due to the structure of the meeting this was not allowed

HTW 2: Intervention on the implementation of changes to the certification on eyesight tests will be the implementation of the 2010 Manila Amendments

SDC 2: Intervention on Watertight Doors Operation to save persons being crushed

- Intervention on Guidelines addressing the carriage of more than 12 industrial personnel on board vessels engaged in international voyages. People should have rights while under this particular situation.
- Intervention on Amendments to SOLAS and FSS Code to make evacuation analysis mandatory for new passenger ships. IFSMA believes that a full evacuation scenario be conducted using people and not be based on computer modelling.

While interventions were made and recorded it is becoming more difficult at the IMO to be heard. The IMO Secretariat is always helpful and supportive of IFSMA and this is greatly appreciated as it ensures that IFSMA follows the procedures at all times.

Executive Council Meeting

In early February a meeting was held in London. The President, Captain Hans Sande, presented questions that have to be met. One of the most important of these was communications and ensuring that the membership of IFSMA feels valued by being a member of IFSMA. The use of social media systems such as 'Facebook' which will be in operation by the time of the AGA 41 at Chile in April 2015, opens other avenues of interaction by the membership and assist in promulgating current issues

There is also a need to share experiences and knowledge so that all members in all countries can participate in the work of IFSMA.

Visits to Head Office

In February, 6 members of IIMM, the Irish Institute of Master Mariners, attended Head Office and the IMO during a 2 day visit to London. The feedback was that everyone enjoyed the experience which was expanded by Mr. Berty Nayna of the IMO who took time out show our Irish members around the IMO building which was completed with lunch at the IMO Restaurant.

This facility is open to all IFSMA members. The only thing asked for is advanced notice to register persons at the IMO.

Members visiting London are always welcome at the office. All that is needed is short notice so that a member of the Secretariat is available to make you welcome.

AGA 41 – Vina Del Mar, Chile

Work on this event is on-going and it is important that all members intending to be at the AGA confirm this as soon as possible. The AGA will take place on the 16 and 17 of April. The hotel where the event is taking place is now full but alternative hotels located nearby have been circulated to all members. The main concern is organizing travel between Santiago Airport and Vina Del Mar. We have been trying to coordinate the arrival and departure times so as to use buses and save costs. But this only works when there are a number of people available at the same time to reduce cost. If you arrive unannounced the cost for a taxi to Vina Del Mar is approximately US\$150.00 each way.

At this time I would ask all persons presenting papers to contact head office with the paper and hopefully PowerPoint presentation to back it up. This is so that electronic copies can be put together in order that the AGA runs smoothly as per the Agenda.

Ports of Refuge

This is an ongoing problem for shipmasters and recent event like the “Maritime Maisie” in the Korean Straits highlight the need for a more structured and rapid response to such events. The ship suffered a major collision and then fire. But drifted in the Korean Straits for over 100 days while a solution was found to this incident. The Government of Korea offered a port of refuge and the ship entered port and discharged the remaining cargo without incident.

IFSMA worked with Intertanko and others to bring a paper to the IMO to raise this issue and the need for a solution. This was side lined but the EC has brought forward a proposal which it is hoped will be used to progress this matter. The EC are in the late stages of putting together guidelines on Ports of Refuge. There is a potential timeline for this to be progressed but at the moment MSC 95 in June of this year will determine how it will progress.

Head Office

To stop the rumours that are abounding, I can confirm the following. The Marine Society is in negotiations to sell the current address to a developer and in return will have offices in the new office complex at the same address. Nothing has been finalized and no contracts have been signed. If or when this situation moves forward then all members will be updated as to the options open to IFSMA. There is a possibility that an office space may be available in the new building within the Marine Society offices but that is only a possibility. No one knows how this will play out but it will have an effect on the finances of the association.

Head Office Personnel

The Secretariat at this time is

- Captain John Dickie Secretary General
- Captain Paul Owen Assistant Secretary General
- Mr. Alex Farrow Office Manager

All are part time posts.

Alex has been awarded a 6 month extension to the current contract and this will take him up to the end of September 2015. A review will be held and if all parties are happy then a one year extension will be made available with the potential for three years. This is to give continuity to the working practices and to stabilize the administration of the association which will free up time for project work.

IFSMA Finances

At this time IFSMA is secure in its finances and this fiscal austerity will ensure that wherever possible savings will be made without compromising the service given to the membership. With the potential of additional expenditure being necessary due to the uncertainty of the current office, and to offset increase in membership fees any surplus made will be transferred into the associations reserve fund.

The intention is to keep the current level of membership fee in place for 2015 and 2016. Until matters are settled it is not possible to predict the fees for 2017 at this time.

There has been a lot of work carried out to reduce the cost of operating the office and construction of electronic databases for controlling costs and income make it easier to control cash flow.

Transfer of Archives and Folders to Electronic Format

This has been a major undertaking and is now in the final stages of completion. This work should soon be complete.

After discussion and negotiation IFSMA Head Office is conducting the transfer of the Archives and Folders of the history of the IIMM from hard copy to electronic format. This is achieved because head office has the equipment, software and experience of doing this work. In addition, the cost is a lot less than using a commercial company and the time frame is a lot shorter.

UNHCR – IMO – The Situation of Immigrants and Refugees in the Mediterranean Sea

This tragedy is unfolding and accelerating at an alarming rate. The reports by the media of the numbers involved are stunning, but the actual number of persons who drowned while trying to make this passage remains unknown. It does not matter whether these people are economic migrants or refugees escaping persecution they all deserve to be treated with respect.

The people traffickers are armed criminals who care little for the people that they transport. It is all about maximising the profit, at any cost.

Italy and Malta have borne the brunt of this assault but are being overwhelmed by the number of people involved compared to the resources that they have. While this is a global problem it is becoming localized as a European problem. There is no easy answer but in the meantime the crews on board ships trading this area are required to give assistance. Progress is being made on what to do, but it will take time.

New Fuel Switch Law for Hong Kong

The Air Pollution Control (Ocean Going Vessels) (Fuel at Berth) Regulation was published on March 13, requiring ocean-going vessels to use clean fuels while berthing in Hong Kong to improve air quality.

Compliant fuels required by the regulation are low-sulphur marine fuel (sulphur content not exceeding 0.5%), liquefied natural gas and any other fuels approved by the Director of Environmental Protection. Heavy fuel oil typically has an average sulphur content of 2.6 per cent.

It prohibits ocean-going vessels from using any fuel other than compliant fuel while at berth in Hong Kong, except during the first hour after arrival and the last hour before departure.

Shipmasters and ship owners must record the date and time of fuel switching and keep the records for three years.

If an ocean-going vessel uses technology that can achieve the same or less sulphur dioxide emission when compared with using low-sulphur marine fuel, the vessel may be exempted from fuel switching.

Shipmasters and owners who fail to switch fuel face six-months' jail and a HK\$200,000 fine, while those who fail to keep records face three-months' jail and a HK\$50,000 fine.

The new regulation will cut sulphur dioxide emissions by 12% and respirable suspended particulates by 6%, improving air quality and reducing health risks.

The Government will table the regulation at the Legislative Council on March 18 so it can take effect on July 1, 2015.

China Officially puts AIS Online and Real Time Data to be Public

From the PRC Maritime Safety Administration website: <http://en.msa.gov.cn/index.html>

The information service platform for Automatic Identification System (AIS) has officially been put online in China recently and data from its coastal and inland waters in real time will be made available to the public.

The Automatic Identification System (AIS) is an automatic tracking system, consisting of land-based station and vessel-based station for identifying and locating vessels by electronically exchanging dynamic shipping data such as position, course, and speed and static information like ship's size, cargo kinds with other nearby ships. The platform will also include weather and tidal information, as well as basic port details and integrated land and sea data. According to the MSA, the AIS integrated service of vessel traffic in real time can cover all of coastal and inland waters in China and some of the waters in the world.

According to the requirement of international convention and relevant standard, the MSA has built 402 land-based AIS stations in China, covering the whole country's coastal and inland river high-grade waterways and relevant waters.

Unauthorized Use of Satellite Phones Results in Incident

Steamship Mutual P&I Club risk alert on recent incident in Indian waters

The Steamship P&I Club has issued risk alert regarding a recent incident in India due to unauthorised use of a satellite telephone while a vessel was in territorial waters.

In accordance with DGS Order No. 02 of 2012 the unauthorised use of Thuraya, Iridium and other such satellite phones is banned in Indian territorial waters. The legislation for this is Section 6 of Indian Wireless Act and Section 20 of Indian Telegraph Act.

Club understands that port agents of vessels bound for Indian ports routinely make vessel Masters aware of this regulation and yet, despite this forewarning, in the recent incident referred to crew were allowed to use the phone to make a number of personal calls.

Shore monitoring of transmissions by the local authorities identified the vessel and local police/customs initiated an investigation. The maximum fine for breaching the regulation is INR 1,000 and/or imprisonment for three years for each crew member involved.

Moreover, it should be noted that breaches are seen as a state security matter resulting in a complicated and time consuming investigation. Severe delays/detention of the vessel are likely, over and above the crew potentially facing criminal proceedings.

The Club warns operators to be cautious to instruct their Masters to closely follow the instructions of DGS Order No. 2. It is also recommended that Masters keep such phones under their custody for as long as the vessel remains in Indian territorial waters.

Infographic: Maritime Crime Figures for 2014

The following link will take you to a page which shows piracy and kidnap statistics for 2014. <http://tinyurl.com/pmqxcnq>

Follow the Rules

An Australian court fined a master of a coal ship AUD8,500 (USD6,239) on 17th February for attempting to navigate the Great Barrier Reef without a pilot.

Taiwanese national Lu Chih-Ming was arrested in a joint operation between the Australian Federal Police and the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority officials, who boarded bulk carrier China Steel Developer on 15 February when it docked at the Port of Newcastle.

Police charged the 66-year-old ship master for attempting to sail his vessel without a pilot through Hydrographer's Passage, a compulsory pilotage area of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park.

Master's Night Orders

From the London P&I Club, Stop Loss bulletin 63

The ship inspection department's Ship Inspection Forms consider various aspects of ship management during routine inspections. The Master's night order book is one of those inspection checks which has been noted as generating an increasing number of "negative findings".

The value of Master's night orders should not be underestimated in the quest for efficient and safe performance of the ship, particularly during port calls.

Invariably, deep sea Masters function as "day-workers", and with an early morning ETA at the pilot station, there is a great deal for the ship's officers and crew to prepare after a long voyage. Efficient planning in advance can help an operation to be carried out in a controlled and safe manner with the minimum of stress for all parties. The Master's night orders are traditionally a set of bespoke instructions for the overnight bridge officers to digest and act upon to ensure that by the time a ship reaches the pilot station, all required crew are at their stations and all physical preparations are made, and the ship is in all respects ready to enter port.

When writing night orders, the points below could be among the instructions which may be considered by the Master:

- *Call the Master with sufficient time available to appraise the full navigational situation and to develop proper night vision before reaching the pilot station or taking the con.*
- *Call pilot station to confirm ETA and berthing prospects.*
- *Ensure that day crew are called at a reasonable time so items such as anchors are cleared, pilot boarding arrangements are safely in place, and flags/call sign are ready to be run up.*
- *Call duty engineer to ensure that engines are on standby suitably in advance of engines being required for manoeuvring.*
- *Ensure that bridge manning is increased as required.*
- *Ensure that mooring ropes are prepared.*
- *Ensure that bridge arrival checklists are completed and required systems checked.*

Space Weather

'Space weather' describes changing environmental conditions in near-Earth space.

Magnetic fields, radiation, particles and matter which have been ejected from the Sun can interact with the Earth's upper atmosphere and surrounding magnetic field to produce a variety of effects. Major impacts include possible interruptions to radio communications and GPS, disruption of power grids and damage to spacecraft.

All you ever wanted to know about space weather - here:

<http://tinyurl.com/kof8r48>

UKHO launches expanded range of e-NPs

A further Flag State approval for the use of e-NPs in place of paper equivalents

UKHO has recently published an expanded range of ADMIRALTY e-Nautical Publications (e-NPs).

e-NPs are official ADMIRALTY Nautical Publications in a convenient electronic format, bringing improved efficiency, accuracy and access to information that bridge crews need. Containing the same certified data as their paper counterparts, e-NPs are devised to meet SOLAS carriage requirements, can therefore be used in place of their paper equivalents and are approved by the Flag States of 80% of ships trading internationally.

The ADMIRALTY e-NP portfolio has been significantly expanded, with eight more official nautical publications newly available in the e-book format in the first quarter of 2015. This range includes Sailing Directions (74 volumes), Mariners Handbook (NP100), Ocean Passages of the World (NP136), The Nautical Almanac (NP314), Guide to ECDIS Implementation (NP231), Policy and Procedures (NP232) and more.

Building on the success of e-NP Version 1.0, UKHO has also issued Version 1.2 which contains several substantial improvements, including the saving and printing of the e-NP Certificate and Snapshot improvements allowing users to print pages and Notice to Mariners (NMs) in one easy function. This permits bridge crews to select specific e-NP pages to reinforce passage planning, as well as aiding port inspections by clearly showing when an e-NP was last updated with weekly NMs. All e-NPs can be read using the ADMIRALTY e-Reader software, which is supplied at no extra cost.

Christine Trickett, Senior Product Manager - Publications, at the UKHO commented:

"We have worked hard to further expand and improve our range of e-NPs whilst retaining the same familiar look as all ADMIRALTY Nautical Publications. With the recent addition of Sierra Leone, the Flag States of 80% of ships trading internationally have now approved the use of e-NPs in place of their paper equivalents, meaning that the vast majority of bridge crews can have easier access to an even wider range of essential navigation information in electronic format. For example, weekly Notices to Mariners can be added in seconds."

Captain Hailwood, a renowned expert on ECDIS and integrated bridge procedures, has delivered the UKHO ECDIS seminars for the past three years. Captain Hailwood's recent blog highlights that Paris Memorandum of Understanding data shows that 'deficiencies in nautical publications' are the second most common reason for the detention of ships. Captain Hailwood explains that mariners using e-NPs can help avoid such circumstances by using the NMs application, which can be downloaded and applied to electronic publications immediately with a quick certificate display.

This program makes it easy to check and demonstrate an update status to the necessary authorities during an inspection, proving that a vessel's publications are up-to-date.

Skuld Warns of Stowaways In African Ports

Vessels gangway is the best defence for vessel's calling at South African ports

The Skuld P&I Club warns that stowaways continue to present a serious risk for vessels calling at African ports. The Club argues that the best and perhaps only line of defence is the vessel's gangway when at port in South Africa.

That means strict control of all persons coming on board, with production of a valid access permit. The rule must be: no permit - no access.

Where situations are chaotic and / or many persons are seeking access at the same time, the master of the vessel needs to prioritise the safety of the vessel and her crew, as well ensure ISPS compliance is adhered to in practice.

If that means slowing things down or even calling a halt, then the master should do so. Absent particular charterparty provisions, such a step would not mean the vessel would be off-hire because of a step taken by the master to ensure the continued safety of the vessel and her crew.

The Association's correspondents have found that in many cases stowaways gained access to a vessel by simply walking up a gangway unchallenged or blending in to stevedore gangs.

The Skuld P&I Club recommends the following further steps in order to manage the risks of this issue:

- ensure there is advance understanding on the part of chartering and operations teams about the particular risks of any upcoming fixture or voyage
- charterparty terms should be clear about responsibility for cargo operations, stevedores and stowaways
- vessel's officers and crews should be briefed in advance about specific issues in respect to any given port of call
- ISPS compliance should be demonstrated in practice, and drills and exercises properly recorded in the vessel's logs
- latest information about port conditions should be sought in advance from local shipping agents
- the Ship Security Officer (SSO) should assess the situation and prepare the vessel in light of such updates
- vessel access control, in particular gangway checks should be planned and discussed with the crew in advance
- particular attention should be paid to the likely number and purpose of visitors and workers that may come to the vessel
- during time at anchorage and at berth, regular checks should be made against the presence of unauthorised

persons on board

- prior to departure a further search should be undertaken
- if possible and available, a security company with search dogs should be used to check the vessel (but please keep in mind the sensitivities of any muslim seafarers on board)

See also the London P&I Club news
<http://www.londonpandi.com/club-news/news-alerts/>

AMSA Bans Ship for One Year

Information from Sea-Web news

In a new first, Australian port state control has outlawed a ship from Australian ports for a full 12 months.

Indonesian-flagged container ship Red Rover was directed not to enter any Australian port for a year after being detained by the Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) three times since September 2014 for Safety Management System failures.

The most recent detention was on 28 January when the vessel was found to lack effective passage planning or use appropriate charts and publications, AMSA reported.

It is the third vessel operated by PT Meratus Line to be banned from Australian ports for repeatedly failing to meet safety standards despite repeated advice by AMSA.

Sister ships MV Meratus Sangatta was banned earlier this month and the Territory Trader in November last year – both for breaches of the Maritime Labour Convention (MLC).

“A lack of effective passage planning is extremely unsafe, particularly in areas like the Western Australia coastline,” AMSA CEO Mick Kinley said in a statement released on Saturday. “Like the Great Barrier Reef, this coastline has environmentally sensitive areas such as Ningaloo Reef and Houtman Abrolhos Island.”

Ningaloo Reef has International Maritime Organization endorsed ‘Area to be Avoided’ ship routing measures, he said.

All PT Meratus Line vessels are now subject to inspections at every port call, Kinley warned.

The dangers of poor safety management systems and navigation breaches were highlighted in December when the final report into the grounding of the MV Rena off New Zealand pointed the finger to poor ship management and the master taking short cuts.

In July 2014, Australia detained and fined the Hong Kong-flagged MV Bulk Ingenuity for wandering off course on the World Heritage Great Barrier Reef after failing to carry required charts and on World Maritime Day Kinley announced Australia had ‘zero tolerance’ for safety breaches.

Australia has the power to ban ships indefinitely under the Australian Navigation Act that came into force in July 2013.

Meanwhile, DNV GL analysis of MLC-related deficiencies found by the port state control in the first 12 months of the Seafarers' Bill of Rights coming into effect has found Australia and China to carry out most detentions under the Tokyo MoU (60%), with Bulgaria, Russia and Spain responsible for most detentions for MLC breaches under the Paris MoU (40%)

The 2013 VGP Requirements

The 2013 Vessel General Permit (as defined by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)) requires the use of an environmentally acceptable lubricant for all oil to sea interfaces for vessels unless technically infeasible. The intent of this requirement is to reduce the environmental impact of lubricant discharges on the aquatic ecosystem by increasing the use of environmentally acceptable lubricants for vessels operating in waters of the United States.

The potential impact of lubricant discharges – those not from accidental spills -- to the aquatic ecosystem is substantial. The majority of ocean going ships operate with oil-lubricated stern tubes and use lubricating oils in a large number of applications in on-deck and underwater, or submerged, machinery. Oil leakage from stern tubes, once considered a part of normal “operational consumption” of oil, results in millions of litres of oil being released to the aquatic environment every year. Where the discharge can't be reduced or eliminated, it only makes sense that we reduce the potential environmental impact of those discharges.

Use of environmentally acceptable lubricants results in discharges that biodegrade more quickly and are less toxic than their traditional mineral oil counterparts. For all applications where lubricants are likely to enter the sea, environmentally acceptable lubricant formulations including using vegetable oils, biodegradable synthetic esters or biodegradable polyalkylene glycols as oil bases instead of mineral oils can offer significantly reduced environmental impacts from those applications.

What will the lubricant reporting obligations be for the new permit requirements?

As part of their annual report, vessel owner/operators will have to indicate whether or not their vessel use environmentally acceptable lubricants for oil to sea interfaces and provide the brand information for the products used. If a vessel does not use an environmentally acceptable lubricant in a given oil to sea interface, they must report to EPA why they have not done so on their annual report.

If the use an environmentally acceptable lubricant was technically infeasible, the vessel owner/operator must document in their record keeping documentation the basis for that determination and report the use of a non-environmentally acceptable lubricant to EPA in their annual report.

For purposes of requirements related to environmentally acceptable lubricants, technically infeasible means that no environmentally acceptable lubricant products are approved for use in a given application that meet manufacturer specifications for that equipment, products which come pre-lubricated (e.g., wire ropes) have no available alternatives manufactured with environmentally acceptable lubricants, products meeting a manufacturers specifications are not available within any port in which the vessel calls, or change over and use of an environmentally acceptable lubricant must wait until the vessel's next drydocking.

The World VTS Guide

The World VTS Guide has been designed to give Shipmaster, navigators, and interested persons, clear and concise diagrammatic and written information regarding the navigational requirements of the VTS Centres of the world. Particular attention has been paid to communications requirements as the World VTS Guide has being designed to be used in close proximity to the onboard VHF set.

VTS systems operated by participating Authorities are described in near uniform format, whether the systems are coastal, harbour or riverine. Associated services are also described, but only so far as they concern communications and procedural requirements. Commercial considerations are not described in detail.

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Coastline detail is shown in diagrammatic form, and is NOT for navigational use. Original coastlines have been taken from the appropriate official charts, with the authority of the appropriate Hydrographic Offices, to whom acknowledgement is made.

<http://www.worldvtsguide.org>

Access to the World VTS Guide website if free of charge for Shipmasters, there is no need to register.

IFSMA is a member of the World VTS Guide Advisory Board.

The IFSMA Website

The new design for the IFSMA Website is still undergoing improvements. Interesting articles are frequently added to the IFSMA Log pages and, when published, this newsletter will also be available to read and/or download from the website.

A new area has just been added 'IMO Reports'. It is intended to add a summary of the proceedings after the various IMO Meetings to keep members informed of what happens and any intervention that the IFSMA team made.