

Number 72, January 2024

IF SMA

NEWSLETTER

The Shipmasters' International Voice



Ships at anchor in Gulf of Panama in mid-December waiting for passage though the Panama Canal.



Taboga Island

Taboguilla Island

Credit: European Union, Copernicus Sentinel-2 imagery



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Readers are reminded that the opinions expressed in the IFSMA Newsletter are those of the various authors and providers of news and are not necessarily in accord with IFSMA policy.

Secretary General's Message

I have always tried to start the beginning of my new year in January with positive thoughts and hope for the future. I am afraid that we are in a very troubled world where Russia continues to wage a totally unjustified war on Ukraine and the instability in Gaza bubbled to the surface again with an outrageous attack by Hamas on innocent people in Israel. Following the enormous retaliation by Israel, this then spilled over into the Middle East.

As I write this today, New Year's Day, attacks by the Houthi rebels on shipping in the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden have increased with the use of drones, anti-ship missiles, helicopters and small fast boat attacks attempting to damage or hijack and take hostage any merchant vessels seeming to be vulnerable targets, not only those that the Houthis state have Israeli links.

I am pleased to see that the US has formed a Task Force under the name of Operation Prosperity Guardian, coordinated from the US Headquarters in Bahrain and currently is supported by twenty States. The number of warships in the area is increasing in an attempt to counter the threats posed by the Houthi attacks from the Yemen. Many shipping companies have suspended transits through the Red Sea to the Suez Canal and this is starting to have a significant impact on world trade, causing delays and increased costs.

The threats to shipping in the NW Indian Ocean, Gulf of Oman and the Strait of Hormuz is also significantly increased and this is likely to remain so for some considerable time. I therefore ask that if you are operating in these areas please impress on all your crews the need to remain vigilant and for all your bridge teams to maintain a very good lookout for any unusual events at all times.

I am in constant touch with the International Chamber of Shipping and others in the international maritime community to obtain the latest information and to keep you informed accordingly. Rest assured that there is much work going on behind the scenes to ensure your safety as you keep world trade moving.

Thank you for all you do at sea; we at IFSMA will do whatever we can ashore to assist you.

Do not hesitate to contact Paul or me if you need any help or information.

Be cautious and keep safe.

Jim Scorer
Secretary General

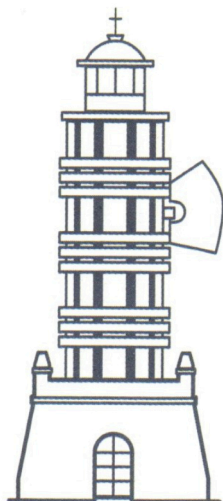
From the News Editor

A Brief Atlas of the Lighthouses at the End of the World

By González Macías

This 160-page volume is published by Picador, the literary imprint at Pan Macmillan (<https://www.panmacmillan.com/picador>), Price £20.00, ISBN 978 1 5290 8714 7.

A compiler was once asked to provide a critical review of a lighthouse book and found himself saying that the lighthouse book to end all lighthouse books had yet to be published.



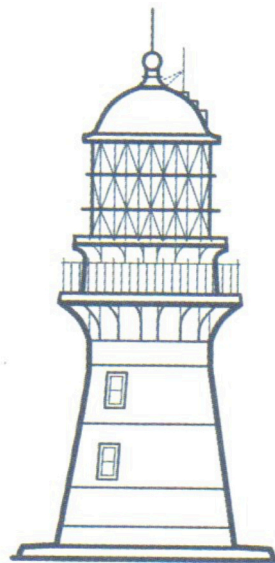
Guardafui Lighthouse, Somalia, marking the Horn of Africa. Constructed between 1924 and 1930, deactivated in 1957.

The ultimate book would need be an expanded Admiralty List of Lights (that would be fifteen regional volumes) with every engineers' drawing produced of the fixed aids to navigation and accompanied by a selection of photographs taken down the years, with chart extracts. It would be a veritable pharological encyclopaedia, a true *vade mecum* or *Enquire Within Upon Everything*. Such a publication is probably impossible to create, and that is before you assemble the text. Remember, the full series of fifteen volumes of British Admiralty Lists of Lights and Fog Signals carries information on more than 90,000 structures around the world. Macías's work goes some way to fulfilling the need to extend content of lighthouse literature bibliography.

As we have heard so often before there is something impressive and functional in the architecture of lighthouses. They have been the homes and workplaces of men and women whose romantic guardianship has saved countless lives from cruel seas. As that way of life fades away their stories are still being told and this is all to the good.

Within these covers one reads of the lot of a blind lighthouse keeper tending a light in the Arctic Circle, to the efforts of an intrepid young girl saving ships from wreck at the foot of her father's lighthouse, and the plight of the lighthouse keepers marooned from shore

for forty days. Here is an impressive *portmanteau* of illuminating stories that will transport the reader to the world's most isolated lighthouses. González Macías is the latest author to have chronicle their lot.



Stephens Island Lighthouse, New Zealand, at the northern tip of South Island. Constructed 1891-1894, automated 1989.

On the extremities of six continents the light stations studied by Macías are listed here, alphabetically:

Adziogol; Amédée; Aniva;
Bell Rock; Buda; Cabo Blanco;
Clipperton; Columbretes; Eddystone;
Eldred Rock; Evangelistas; Flannan Isles;
Godrevy; Great Isaac Cay; Grip;
Guardafui; La Jument; Klein Curaçao;
Lime Rock; Longstone; Maatsuyker;
Matinicus Rock; Navassa; Robben Island;
Rocher aux Oiseaux; Rubjerg Knude; San Juan de Salvamento;
Smalls; Stannard Rock; Stephens Island;
Svyatonosky; Tillamook Rock; La Vieille;
Wenwei Zhou.

With thirty-four entries that explore a tiny portion of man's endeavour the volume is dedicated to those who once served on an isolated lighthouse and to the people who have contributed to collecting and passing on their stories.

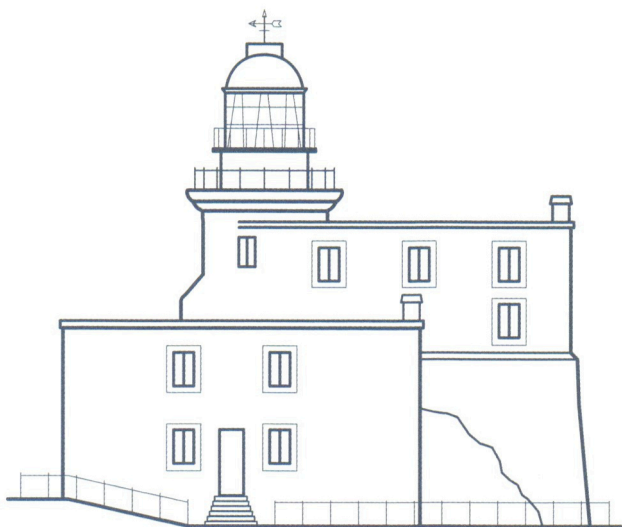
The text is accompanied by illustrations, chart extracts, drawings and many interesting facts. The title is taken part from *The Lighthouse at the End of the World* by Jules Verne.

A Brief Atlas of the Lighthouses at the End of the World is a fine example of the way in which the pharological story is told. These days, in the early 21st century, the story is still being told by the keen authors assisted by the world's aids to navigation services and sources of illustrations. Long may this continue. Without doubt industrial archaeology is gaining ground as a topic for study.

José Luis González Macías is a Spanish writer, graphic designer and publisher. In 2003 he published several short stories and poems which received the

Letras Jóvenes award. Soon after he became interested in graphic design and, since then, has worked for museums and cultural institutions designing books and other graphic material.

Along with Lia Peinador, he runs Ediciones Menguantes, a small publishing house based in León in northern Spain.



Wenwei Zhou Lighthouse, People's Republic of China. Constructed 1890 – 1892, automated 1986.

A fan of maps since he was a child, in *A Brief Atlas of the Lighthouses at the End of the World* Macías has combined his passion for words and images in these introductions to remote lighthouses. The work has been translated from Spanish by Daniel Hahn.

Illustration per A Brief Atlas of the Lighthouses at the End of the World by González Macías ©.

The IMO Digest

A summary of some of the news received with grateful thanks from the excellent IMO Media service in recent weeks.

Illustrations per www.imo.org ©

IMO and African SAR

Latest developments on search and rescue (SAR) procedures, techniques and equipment were discussed at a workshop for representatives from five regional maritime rescue coordination centres (MRCCs) in Africa.

The event in Cape Town was held from 13 to 17 November. Here was a chance for the countries taking part – Kenya, Liberia, Morocco, Nigeria and South Africa – to hear about recent changes brought about by modernization of the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS) and about new mobile satellite services.

SAR in W, S & E Africa

The regional approach to the provision of SAR services in western, southern and eastern parts of Africa was first proposed at IMO's Conference on Search and Rescue and the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System, held in Florence, Italy in 2000.

Five MRCCs established

It recommended the establishment of five MRCCs along the African coastline to work with 26 sub-centres on the continent and nearby island States to provide search and rescue coverage in an area of the world that had hitherto lacked an effective search and rescue and GMDSS infrastructure. These MRCCs were subsequently established, with IMO support.



Senior-level officials responsible for SAR in the five regional MRCCs updated their counterparts on the status of implementation of SAR services within their respective regions. Further activities relating to sub-regional technical cooperation addressing specific needs will follow, it is understood.

Director of the South African SAR, Mr Chueu Terrence Mabuela, opened the workshop. It follows the 30th meeting of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO)/IMO Joint Working Group on Harmonization of Aeronautical and Maritime SAR, also held in Cape Town, from 6 to 10 November.

Annual Joint group meetings

The Joint group meets annually to harmonize maritime and aeronautical SAR, including developing updates to the IAMSAR Manual* which contains guidelines for a common approach to the organization and provision of search and rescue services.

To read more about IMO's work on search and rescue readers are invited to see below**.

* <https://tinyurl.com/4uuxbfn4>

** <https://tinyurl.com/j9wmpnux>

Capacity building and managing risks of biofouling

A series of training courses has taken place in several regions, designed to build capacity by increasing awareness of marine biofouling and the damage it can cause as a vector for the transfer of invasive aquatic species from one marine ecosystem to another.

Detailed introduction

The *Introduction to Marine Biofouling: Impacts and Management of Risks* course provided those who took part with a detailed introduction to biofouling, along with management solutions and technologies available to tackle it.

Topics covered include antifouling coatings, marine growth prevention systems, and technologies such as in-water grooming and cleaning designed to address biofouling challenges. Additionally, the course delved into the key components of the revised and recently adopted 2023 IMO Biofouling Guidelines¹ and offered an overview of the status of national regulations globally.

The training course, developed by the sister-project GEF-UNDP-IMO GloFouling Partnerships project², was intended for partner countries of the Accelerating Transfer of Environmentally Sound Technologies through demonstration pilots to reduce biofouling and related emissions' (TEST Biofouling)³ project.

Caribbean, Pacific and Africa delivery

The courses were delivered by the Maritime Technology Cooperation Centres (MTCCs) in the following regions:

MTCC Caribbean delivered a four-day virtual training course to Suriname (12-15 September) and to Jamaica (30 October-2 November);

MTCC Pacific delivered the course in-person to Tuvalu (11-13 October);

MTCC Africa delivered training both online and in-person in Lagos, Nigeria to Comoros, Nigeria and Somalia (31 October-3 November).

More than 150 course participants took part, including representatives from countries' transportation and fisheries ministries, maritime administrations and port authorities, women in maritime organizations, climate and environment agencies, and training institutions.

China and Malaysia next

Most project partnering countries have now completed this training, as intended, by December 2023. It is anticipated the training course will soon be delivered to participants in China and Malaysia.

Norwegian funding

TEST Biofouling is a four-year project (2022-2025) funded by the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (Norad) and implemented by IMO.

The course is available on the IMO e-learning platform⁴.

¹ <https://tinyurl.com/2u37p327>

² <https://www.glofouling.imo.org/>

³ <https://tinyurl.com/yc3bka6n>

⁴ <https://lms.imo.org/moodle310/>

IMO-Singapore Single Window for Facilitation of Trade (SWiFT) project

System handover, Port of Lobito, Angola

The completion of the pilot Single Window for Facilitation of Trade (SWiFT) project has been marked with a ceremony to hand over a newly developed generic Maritime Single Window (MSW) platform to the Port of Lobito in Angola.

Single online portal

The new Maritime Single Window digital system allows the electronic submission, through a single online portal, of all information required by various agencies to ensure efficient clearance of ships during port calls. This was reported by the IMO news service on 21 November



The handover ceremony on 20 November followed a week-long user acceptance testing session held from 13 to 17 November and organized by the Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore (MPA) involving officials from the IMO, MPA and Port of Lobito.

Maritime Single Windows mandatory from January 2024

In just a few weeks' time – from 1 January 2024 – it will be mandatory for ports around the world to operate Maritime Single Windows for the exchange of information required at the point of a ship's arrival, during its stay and at departure.

This change is in line with international shipping's aspirations to accelerate digitalization and decarbonisation of the sector and is the result of amendments to the FAL Convention¹.

The SWiFT project

The SWiFT project is one of IMO's strategic partnerships with donors. It was established by IMO and Singapore in March 2021 to support medium-size ports facilitate in establishing secure digital interconnectivity with counterparts worldwide, to meet their mandatory obligations under the FAL Convention.

Collaboration to support digital transformation

Under the SWiFT project, IMO and MPA worked closely with relevant Angolan stakeholders, including the Port of Lobito and Agência Marítima Nacional, to develop a functional generic MSW platform configured to the needs of the Port of Lobito.



The Port of Lobito Maritime Single Window has been handed over, marking the end of the IMO/Singapore SWiFT project.

Mr Julian Abril, Head of the IMO's Facilitation Section commented: *'With single window for data exchange requirements under the Convention on Facilitation of International Maritime Traffic becoming mandatory in ports from 1 January 2024, the lessons and experience gained from the SWiFT project will contribute towards the implementation of MSWs globally.'*

Mr Gavin Yeo, MPA Deputy Director (Sectoral Systems Development), added: *'The MSW platform developed under the SWiFT Project draws from Singapore's experience in the implementation of our national MSW, digitalPORT@SGTM.'*

'MPA is pleased to have partnered IMO and the Port of Lobito on this digital transformation journey, which has the potential to enhance the efficiencies for international shipping, port operations and global supply chains.'

ITCP

The SWiFT Project was supported by Singapore via in-kind contributions and by IMO via the Integrated Technical Cooperation Programme (ITCP) which assists countries in building their capacities to enable effective compliance with the Organization's regulatory framework.

The initiative builds upon an earlier successful project coordinated by IMO that saw successful delivery in 2019 of a Maritime Single Window system in Antigua and Barbuda².

For more information

In order to see how the shipping and ports' sectors can realise opportunities that the operation of an MSW platform can bring, and potential approaches to designing and implementing one, readers are invited to see the link below at footnote ³.

About the Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore (MPA)

MPA was established on 2 February 1996 with the mission to develop Singapore as a premier global hub port and international maritime centre, and to advance and safeguard Singapore's strategic maritime interests. MPA is the driving force behind Singapore's port and maritime development, taking on the roles of port authority, maritime and port regulator and planner, international maritime centre champion, national maritime representative and a champion of digitalisation and decarbonisation efforts at regional and international fora such as at the IMO.

MPA partners industry, research community and other agencies to enhance safety, security and environmental protection in our waters, facilitate maritime and port operations and growth, expand the cluster of maritime ancillary services, and develops maritime digitalisation and decarbonisation policies and plans, R&D and manpower development.

MPA is responsible for the overall development and growth of the maritime domain and Port of Singapore.

In 2022, Singapore remained one of the world's busiest transshipment hubs with a container throughput of 37.3 million TEU.

¹ <https://tinyurl.com/mv9aj77j>

² <https://tinyurl.com/3n8eubyt>

³ <https://tinyurl.com/2sjnre4v>

New IMO SG Confirmed

It was reported on 30 November that the IMO Assembly had approved a decision of the Council to appoint Mr Dominguez Velasco as Secretary-General with effect from 1 January 2024.

Dominguez Velasco will take up the office of Secretary-General on 1 January 2024 for an initial term of four years, ending on 31 December 2027. He becomes the Organization's tenth elected Secretary-General.

The outgoing Secretary-General, Kitack Lim, congratulated his successor on his appointment. He said: *'I am confident that the Membership as a whole has made a wise decision, and that Mr Dominguez Velasco will ably lead the Secretariat in promoting the*

mandate of the Organization and in the delivery of its objectives.'

Mr Lim pledged to work with Mr Dominguez Velasco to ensure an orderly and successful hand-over and, in what he called a 'symbolic act of transition and succession', he handed a comprehensive briefing paper to Mr Dominguez to assist him in his preparation for the role of Secretary-General.

Addressing the Assembly, Dominguez Velasco said: *'You have my full commitment to build on the great work that has been done by my predecessors, taking what is already a significant and influential organization, to be an institution that will thrive in delivering its full agenda, from safety to decarbonisation, from digitalization to the human element; an International Maritime Organization that not only looks towards the future, but does more in embracing change, diversity, inclusion and transparency; one that is dedicated to its people, from all the very professional staff that form the IMO Secretariat, to our seafarers worldwide and perhaps most importantly, a dedication to the younger generations, the ones we are obliged to hand over to, to hand over a planet that is a better place to live in.'*

He concluded: *'I want to reiterate how much I am looking forward to leading IMO, to continue working with all of you, an extraordinary group of people who have demonstrated time and time again that we can deliver, by listening and understanding each other, sharing our aims and concerns. I am very lucky to start with an already great team of professionals in the Secretariat who also want what is best for the Member States and all our stakeholders.'*



Mr Kitack Lim handed a comprehensive briefing paper to Mr Dominguez to assist him in his preparation for the role of Secretary-General.

Arsenio Dominguez Velasco is currently Director of IMO's Marine Environment Division, a post he has held since January 2022. He joined the IMO Secretariat in 2017 as Chief of Staff to the Secretary-General, Kitack Lim. In 2020 he was appointed as Director of the Organization's Administrative Division.

His maritime career began in 1996 as a port engineer at Armadores del Caribe in Panama, then becoming a Drydock Assistant Manager at Braswell Shipyard.

In 1998 Dominguez Velasco moved to London to join the Panama Maritime Authority as Head of the Technical and Documentation Regional Office for Europe and North of Africa. He went on to represent Panama in a variety of roles at the organization, culminating in his appointment as Panama's Ambassador and Permanent Representative to IMO between 2014 and 2017.

During this time Dominguez Velasco chaired IMO's Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC), and in 2015 he chaired the Technical Committee of the twentieth session of the IMO Assembly. He has also chaired the Maritime Security – Piracy and Armed Robbery Working Group under the auspices of the IMO's Maritime Safety Committee.

IMO at COP 28

IMO's Camille Bourgeon (*pictured, centre*) presented the organization's update at COP 28, to the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA). Readers are invited to see the submission below at footnote ¹. This was reported by the IMO on 30 November.



An introductory piece titled IMO at COP 28 is available below at footnote ².

The 2023 IMO GHG Strategy: defining the global level-playing-field for shipping decarbonisation, the IMO-UNCTAD-IRENA side event at COP 28 is to be found at footnote ³.

UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)

The fifty-ninth session of the UNFCCC Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA 59) was held in Dubai, UAE, from 30 November to 12 December.

In representing IMO Camille Bourgeon said:

'Thank you Chair.

'I am pleased to report that in July this year, IMO Member States adopted the 2023 IMO Strategy on reduction of greenhouse gas emissions from ships in a historic moment of unanimous commitment to reducing greenhouse gas emissions from the shipping sector.

'The IMO Strategy foresees reaching net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by or around, that is close to, 2050, taking into account different national circumstances. The Strategy also defines the reduction pathway towards net-zero, namely by reducing emissions by at least 20%, striving for 30%, by 2030, and by at least 70%, striving for 80%, by 2040.

'In response to the urgency of addressing the climate crisis, IMO Member States also agreed that by 2030, at least 5% of the energy used by the global shipping fleet should comprise of zero or near-zero greenhouse gas emission fuels and technologies which will drive rapid action in this decade.

'IMO Member States also agreed to develop binding measures to effectively deliver on these reduction targets, which are set to be adopted in the autumn of 2025 with entry into force in 2027.

'To that purpose, IMO is developing measures that would require the gradual reduction of the greenhouse gas intensity of marine fuels in combination with a global maritime greenhouse gas emissions pricing mechanism.

'IMO's global ruleset will promote the energy transition of shipping by incentivizing technological innovation in the sector, by scaling up the production of clean and renewable marine fuels and by attracting investments in port and bunkering infrastructure.

'IMO is equally committed to creating opportunities for all States in the decarbonisation of maritime transport in contributing to a just and equitable transition. For that reason, we have initiated a comprehensive assessment of possible impacts on the global fleet, on world trade and on States of the proposed measures to ensure that shipping's net-zero future will leave no one behind.

'As the number of ships using alternative fuels rapidly increases, a 'just transition' of the almost two million seafarers serving global trade is at the core of IMO's climate discussions. IMO is actively working on the necessary measures that will ensure the safety of ships using new fuels and technologies and the seafarers.

'IMO Member States have clearly mapped out the net-zero future of global shipping in IMO's 2023 greenhouse gas Strategy. We are now keen to collaborate within the UN family, with the private sector, the energy and port sectors to deliver on the ambitious targets in our Strategy.

'Thank you.'

¹ <https://tinyurl.com/4dah2hdz>

² <https://tinyurl.com/4wdf8fre>

³ <https://tinyurl.com/bdznxcym>

IMO elects new Council

It was announced on 1 December that the IMO Assembly had elected following States listed below to be Members of the Council for the 2024-2025 biennium.



There are three categories of Council membership:

Category (a): Ten States with the largest interest in providing international shipping services (listed in alphabetical order):

China, Greece, Italy, Japan, Liberia, Norway, Panama, the Republic of Korea, the United Kingdom and the United States.

Category (b): Ten States with the largest interest in international seaborne trade:

Australia, Brazil, Canada, France, Germany, India, the Netherlands, Spain, Sweden and the United Arab Emirates.

Category (c): Twenty States not elected under (a) or (b) above, which have special interests in maritime transport or navigation and whose election to the Council will ensure the representation of all major geographic areas of the world:

Bahamas, Bangladesh, Chile, Cyprus, Denmark, Egypt, Finland, Indonesia, Jamaica, Kenya, Malaysia, Malta, Mexico, Morocco, Peru, the Philippines, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, and Türkiye.

IMO Council; Chair and Vice-Chair

The newly elected Council met following the conclusion of the 33rd Assembly, for its 131st session, on 7 December, and elected its Chair and Vice-Chair for the next biennium.

IMO Assembly

The 33rd Assembly of IMO met in London at IMO HQ from 27 November to 6 December 2023.

Highest governing body

All 175 Member States and three Associate Members are entitled to attend the Assembly, which is IMO's highest governing body. The intergovernmental organizations with which agreements of co-operation have been concluded and international non-

governmental organizations in consultative status with IMO are also invited to attend.

The Assembly normally meets once every two years in regular session. It is responsible for approving the work programme, voting the budget and determining the financial arrangements of the Organization. It elects the Organization's 40-Member Council.

The Council is the executive organ of IMO and is responsible, under the Assembly, for supervising the work of the Organization. Between sessions of the Assembly, the Council performs the functions of the Assembly, except that of making recommendations to Governments on maritime safety and pollution prevention.

IMO International Maritime Prize

Presented to Anneliese Jost

Tribute to Captain David Bruce

Anneliese Jost has been presented with the prestigious International Maritime Prize for 2022. Ms Jost was honoured at the annual IMO Awards Ceremony, held in London on 27 November. The ceremony followed the first day of the 33rd session of the IMO Assembly (A33) which took place from 27 November to 6 December.

Ms Jost was nominated for the award by the Federal Republic of Germany for her contribution, in particular, to maritime safety. The International Maritime Prize has been presented annually since 1981 to an individual or organization considered to have made a significant contribution to the work and objectives of IMO.

During her distinguished maritime career, after graduating in mechanical engineering with a specialisation in shipbuilding, Ms Jost was Chair of the IMO Sub-Committee on Ship Design and Equipment, and on Ship Design and Construction, a role she held for an impressive ten years.

Before handing Ms Jost the silver dolphin trophy, IMO Secretary-General Kitack Lim remarked on how valuable her immense technical expertise in the field of maritime safety had proven to IMO, and he commended her deft chairing of the IMO technical sub-committees.

Addressing Ms Jost, Mr Lim said: *'Anneliese, your impact on the maritime world and on IMO's work has been outstanding. It is my utmost pleasure to extend my heartfelt congratulations and present you with this year's prestigious International Maritime Prize.'*

Ms Jost thanked the IMO Council for selecting her as the recipient of this year's Prize and expressed her gratitude to colleagues for their support over the years. She highlighted the challenges she had faced in the early years of her career as a female engineer in the maritime field.

Anneliese Jost went on: *'Eventually, Member States began to elect female officers in IMO. These days, officers are elected without consideration of gender. I hope this attitude will continue throughout all ranks in future, including for the Secretary-General, while IMO continues to play its vital role to facilitate global trade.'*

Remembering Captain David Bruce

A special certificate was presented to the widow of the late Captain David Bruce, Permanent Representative of the Republic of the Marshall Islands to IMO, whose death was announced in October, in recognition of his work with IMO.

As recognition for the significant contribution of the late Captain David Bruce to the work of IMO, a special certificate was presented by the IMO Secretary-General to his wife, Alison.

Captain Bruce's links with the Organization go back almost fifty years. He was the Permanent Representative of the Republic of the Marshall Islands to IMO, as well as Senior Deputy Commissioner of the Republic of the Marshall Islands and Republic of the Marshall Islands Maritime Administrator. In varying degrees, Captain Bruce was involved with nearly every IMO initiative and standard concerning the safety, security and environmental performance of international shipping.

Secretary-General Lim said Captain Bruce's knowledge, expertise and wisdom made him a great friend to all at IMO, and that his commitment and dedication would always be remembered.

Anneliese Jost

Until her retirement in January 2023, Anneliese Jost had worked in maritime safety for almost forty years. Most recently she had led Germany's IMO audit team. Prior to that, Ms Jost was with Germany's Ministry for Digital and Transport, initially as Assistant Head of the Maritime Safety Division before, in 2006, becoming its Deputy Head.

Anneliese Jost was born in Munich. She attended Hanover Technical University of Applied Sciences in Germany and, in 1985, graduated from the University of Michigan, USA, with a degree in mechanical engineering with a specialisation in shipbuilding.

Her early career included periods as a construction supervisor in the field of hydraulic engineering in Berlin, and as a surveyor of newly-built ships in the ship safety department of the classification society Germanischer Lloyd in Hamburg.

Ms Jost's relationship with IMO has been lengthy. She led the German delegation, during which time she acted as a technical expert to various IMO bodies and was responsible for several studies that helped with the development of IMO regulations.

In 2006, Anneliese Jost became Chair of the IMO Sub-Committee on Ship Design and Equipment, and on Ship Design and Construction, a role she held for an impressive ten years. During this time, mandatory

measures were adopted on the towing of wrecked ships. She also oversaw discussions on mandatory, verifiable maintenance of life-saving appliances and on the Code of Safety for Special Purpose Ships. Additional requirements for navigation in polar waters were established, too, which subsequently formed the basis for the Polar Code, adopted in 2014.

Other positions she held at IMO include that of Chair of the Working Party on Subdivision, Stability and Load Lines (WPSSLL) of the International Association of Classification Societies (IACS).

Other awards

The event on 27 November also honoured exceptional bravery at sea.

IMO-Republic of Korea Sustainable Maritime Transport Cooperation (SMART-C) Programme

Agreements signed

IMO and the Republic of Korea have signed a suite of agreements to formally establish and boost the IMO-Republic of Korea Sustainable Maritime Transport Cooperation (SMART-C) Programme. This was reported at the end of November.



The goal of the KRW 25.5 billion (approx. US\$20 million) SMART-C Programme is to promote sustainable maritime transport systems and a sustainable marine environment, by building knowledge and developing technical capacity in developing countries via long-term thematic projects.

Long-term programming

It is understood that this Official Development Assistance (ODA) funding will ensure long-term programming of several technical cooperation projects under a SMART-C Framework Agreement signed on 28 November.

SMART-C agreements

Two more project-specific agreements were also signed under this Framework Agreement, namely: SMART-C Leaders project agreement; and SMART-C GHG project agreement. Three Projects were already initiated under the SMART-C programme, namely SMART-C Women, SMART-C Traffic and RegLitter.

The agreements were signed by IMO Secretary-General Kitack Lim and the Minister of Oceans and Fisheries of the Republic of Korea, Mr Seung-hwan Cho (for the framework agreement) and the Director General of the Maritime Affairs and Safety Policy Bureau, Mr Jonguk Hong, for the other agreements. The signing took place as IMO met for its 33rd Assembly (A 33).

SMART-C Framework Agreement

The Framework Agreement formally establishes the IMO-Republic of Korea Sustainable Maritime Transport Cooperation (SMART-C) Programme.

SMART-C Leaders

Capacity-building on Implementation of IMO Conventions and Professional Training for International Maritime Leaders (2023-2027). The goal of the project is to improve the Pacific SIDS' capacity in ship inspection/Port State Control (PSC)/Flag State Inspection (FSI) and help the country's implementation of the corrective action plan (CAP) established after its audit under the IMO Member State Audit Scheme (IMSAS).

SMART-C GHG

Capacity building in two Asian pilot countries for developing National Action Plans and implementation of the IMO GHG Strategy with the help of GHG Emission Data from Maritime Sector (2023-2027). This project aims at the implementation of the maritime GHG reduction regulations by building relevant capacity for baseline emission data collection, management, and analysis, in accordance with the 2023 IMO GHG Strategy.

Projects already initiated under the SMART-C programme include:

SMART-C Women

Strengthening Women's Competencies in the Sustainable Maritime Transport Sector through upgrading skills related to Maritime Digitalization and Marine Environmental Protection (2023-2026). The goal of the project is to contribute to the achievement of gender equality through the increase of employment opportunities for women in the maritime sector in developing countries, in the Asia and Pacific regions, and the provision of training to help them advance their careers in related industries. Specifically, the project will provide female officials in beneficiary countries with online and in-person training that will strengthen their competencies in environmental and digital technologies to prepare them for the emerging opportunities within the maritime sector, while also supporting them to acquire new educational qualifications through fellowships at the World Maritime University (WMU).

RegLitter

Regional Litter Project (2023-2027). The objective of the project is to prevent and reduce marine plastic litter from sea-based sources. It will build on the work

implemented under the GloLitter Partnerships Project with further expansion of the activities in Asia and possibly other regions in future.

SMART-C Traffic

Development of a SMART-Maritime Traffic Management System and Improvement of Related Operational Capability in a Pilot Developing Country (the Philippines) (2023-2026). The goal of the project is to develop, operate and pilot trial a web-based e-Navigation service that can efficiently analyse and manage maritime safety information in an internet-based environment.

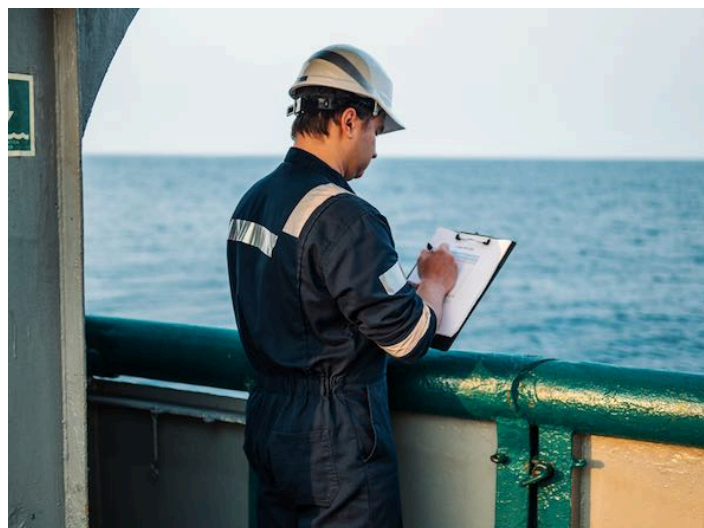
IMO implementation

IMO's Department for Partnerships and Projects will be coordinating the implementation of the projects, in close cooperation with IMO's Technical Cooperation Division and with technical backstopping from Marine Environment Division, Maritime Safety Division and Legal Division.

Training seafarers for a decarbonised future

A new project is set to develop a training framework to equip seafarers with skills as shipping transitions to zero greenhouse gas emissions. This was reported by IMO in early December.

The Project will work to prepare seafarers for zero or near-zero emissions ships, helping the global shipping industry to decarbonise and ensuring a just transition for seafarers. The aim is to equip seafarers with skills and provide guidance for trainers and the industry.



WMU and LR involvement

The World Maritime University (WMU), an IMO global research, education and training institute based in Malmö, Sweden, and Lloyd's Register will develop two training packages: one for all seafarers, irrespective of their roles, and another for officers with higher-level responsibilities, as well as an instructor handbook for maritime training institutions.

Funding

The Project will be co-funded by IMO through its technical cooperation funding, including the IMO GHG TC Trust Fund; and by the Lloyd's Register Foundation. The project is a collaborative project with the Maritime Just Transition Task Force.

Seafarers are at the core of the shipping industry. This training is vital to ensure a successful transition to a new shipping landscape emanating from overall climate action and the implementation of the 2023 IMO Strategy on Reduction of GHG Emissions from Ships¹.

To test in Asia

Once developed, the Baseline Training Framework for Seafarers in Decarbonisation will be first tested in Asia through a programme led by WMU, with support from the IMO-established Maritime Technology Cooperation Centre (MTCC) Asia and other partners.

It is reported that the aim is to then make the packages available globally to all the established MTCCs and other appropriate organizations. The packages will also be available to IMO Member States, for potential use by maritime education and training (MET) institutes to develop their programmes, as appropriate.

A 'train the trainer' programme will also be developed to assist METs further. The timeline is to develop the training materials by mid-2025.

At COP

The Project was announced as the 2023 UN Climate Change Conference (COP 28) met in Dubai from 30 November to 12 December. IMO was at COP 28 and was involved in a number of events.²

The Maritime Just Transition Task Force was formed at COP 26 in 2021 by the International Chamber of Shipping (ICS), the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF), the United Nations Global Compact, ILO and IMO.³

Training need

The genesis of this initiative goes back to a project initiated by IMO in the Philippines in 2021 to improve the safety and energy efficiency of its domestic ferry fleet. The need to train seafarers was identified as one of the follow up actions. IMO developed a thematic project to assist the Maritime Education and Training (MET) Institutions in Asia, particularly in seafarer-supplying countries, to develop specific training on energy efficiency for seafarers. The aim would be to assist all the MET Institutions around the globe.

The Maritime Just Transition Task Force has identified that up to 800,000 seafarers may require additional training by the mid-2030s to handle zero carbon fuels.⁴

The IMO Secretariat invited the Maritime Just Transition Task Force to join in IMO's project to develop a Baseline Training Framework for Seafarers in Decarbonization, recognizing the benefits of joining efforts.

¹ <http://tinyurl.com/2xcxr2x2>

² <http://tinyurl.com/4wdf8fre>

³ <http://tinyurl.com/4k3pepah>

⁴ <http://tinyurl.com/5bpjhfd>

IMO Assembly 33rd session, 27 November - 6 December 2023

Adoption of strategic plan, budget and resolutions

The IMO Assembly met for its 33rd session from 27 November - 6 December 2023.

For the first time, plenary sessions of the Assembly were live-streamed*.

IMO awards event

On the first day of the Assembly, 27 November, IMO hosted the annual IMO Awards Ceremony. Details can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/y53dza7e>

Strategic Plan

The Assembly adopted the Strategic Plan for the six-year period 2024 to 2029.

The eight strategic directions are:

- SD 1: Ensure implementation of IMO instruments supported by capacity development.
- SD 2: Integrate new, emerging and advancing technologies in the regulatory framework.
- SD 3: Respond to climate change and reduce greenhouse gas emissions from international shipping.
- SD 4: Continue to engage in ocean governance.
- SD 5: Enhance global facilitation, supply chain resilience and security of international trade.
- SD 6: Address the human element.
- SD 7: Ensure the regulatory effectiveness of international shipping.
- SD 8: Ensure organizational effectiveness.

Budget and work programme

The Assembly adopted the Organization's budget and work programme for 2024 and 2025.

The Organization's results-based budget for the 2024-2025 biennium is £83,653,000 comprising an appropriation of £40,923,000 for 2024 and an appropriation of £42,730,000 for 2025. This will be largely financed by contributions from Member States, of £73,153,000, comprising £35,572,000 for 2024 and £37,581,000 for 2025.

Election of members of the IMO Council

A new 40-Member IMO Council for the 2024-2025 biennium was elected. Read more here: <http://tinyurl.com/4dy2jfud>

The newly elected Council met on 7 December (for the Council's 131st session) and re-elected its Chair: Mr Victor Jiménez. (Spain) and Vice-Chair: Mrs Amane Fethallah (Morocco).

Appointment of the Secretary-General

The Assembly approved the appointment of Mr Arsenio Antonio Dominguez Velasco (Republic of Panama) as IMO Secretary-General, for an initial four-year term starting on 1 January 2024.

The Assembly adopted an Assembly Resolution on Appreciation of the Services to the Organization of Mr Kitack Lim.

Other resolutions

The Assembly adopted a number of resolutions on key aspects of the Organization's work, including:

- Guidelines on places of refuge for ships in need of assistance.
- Recommendations emanating from the joint action group to review the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the world's transport workers and the global supply chain (JAG-TSC).
- Survey Guidelines under the Harmonized System of Survey and Certification, 2023.
- 2023 Non-exhaustive list of obligations under instruments relevant to the IMO Instruments Implementation Code (III Code).
- Procedures for port State control, 2023.
- 2023 Guidelines on the implementation of the ISM Code by Administrations.
- The enhancement of multilingualism.
- On the impact of the Russian armed invasion of Ukraine on international shipping.
- Implementation of the Hong Kong International Convention for the Safe and Environmentally Sound Recycling of Ships, 2009.
- Urging Member States and all relevant stakeholders to promote actions to prevent illegal operations in the maritime sector by the 'dark fleet' or 'shadow fleet'.
- Enhancing the framework of the fight against organized crime in the maritime sector.

IMO Assembly

The Assembly is open to all 175 IMO Member States and three Associate Members. It is also attended by observers from intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations.

The Assembly is the highest Governing Body of the Organization and meets once every two years in regular sessions, but may also meet in an extraordinary session, if necessary. The Assembly is responsible for approving the work programme, the budget and determining the financial arrangements of the Organization.

The Assembly also elects the Members of the Council. In addition, the Assembly adopts certain resolutions

emanating from the five IMO Committees and endorses actions of the Council with respect to the admission of new intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations as observers. The Assembly also adopts amendments to certain treaties, if so provided therein.

Assembly opening

The meeting was opened by the outgoing President, HE Antonio Manuel R Lagdameo, Permanent Representative of the Philippines to the United Nations. The incoming President, HRH Prince Khalid Bin Bandar Bin Sultan Al-Saud, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Saudi Arabia to the United Kingdom, addressed the Assembly.



The Assembly was addressed by the Secretary-General of the IMO Mr Kitack Lim and Lord Davies of Gower from the host country Government, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

The 33rd Assembly elected its officers:

President of the Assembly: HRH Prince Khalid Bin Bandar Bin Sultan Al-Saud, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Saudi Arabia.

First Vice-President: HE Ms. Saida Muna Tasneem, High Commissioner and Permanent Representative of Bangladesh to IMO.

Second Vice-President: HE Mr Juan Carlos Gamarra Skeels, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary and Permanent Representative of Peru to IMO.

Committee 1

Chair of Committee 1: Ms Gillian Grant of Canada, Chair of the Legal Committee.

Vice-Chairs: Mr Burak Aykan of Türkiye and HE Captain Ian Finley of the Cook Islands.

Committee 2

Chair of Committee 2: Dr Harry Conway, Alternate Permanent Representative of Liberia to IMO and Chair of the Marine Environment Protection Committee.

Vice-Chairs: Dr Anita Mäkinen of Finland and Admiral Cristiano Aliperta of Palau.

Credentials Committee

Chair of the Credentials Committee: HE Mr Giampaolo Bensaia of San Marino.

*The Assembly agreed to live-stream to the public its public plenary meetings, commencing from the start of the current session, with the following exceptions: any time a vote is cast (not limited to voting by secret ballot); any matter related to the appointment of the Secretary-General; and any other discussion the Assembly may decide should be in a private meeting.

IMO bids farewell to Secretary-General Kitack Lim

During the meeting of the IMO Assembly held from 27 November to 6 December the body adopted a resolution commending outgoing IMO Secretary-General Kitack Lim for his services.

Appreciation

The resolution on Appreciation of the Services to the Organization of Mr Kitack Lim commended his leadership and the many achievements of IMO during the past eight years, including the landmark adoption of the 2023 Strategy on the Reduction of Greenhouse Gas Emissions from Ships.



At left outgoing S-G Kitack Lim with his successor Arsenio Dominguez.

Furthermore, the resolution noted, among other achievements, his tireless resolve to secure inter-agency collaboration for the development of appropriate responses to the humanitarian crisis impacting the well-being of seafarers caused first by the Covid-19 pandemic and then by geopolitical conflicts including the armed conflict in Ukraine.

S-G Emeritus

In adopting the resolution, the IMO Assembly designated Mr Kitack Lim as Secretary-General Emeritus of the Organization with effect from 1 January 2024.

A farewell event at IMO HQ on 6 December saw the launch of the IMO history book, *Safer shipping, cleaner seas - A celebration of 75 years of IMO*, an initiative of Secretary-General Lim.

Portrait unveiled

To mark the conclusion of his tenure as IMO Secretary-General, a portrait of Kitack Lim was unveiled at a farewell event by HE Mr Yoon Yeocheol, Ambassador of the Republic of Korea and Permanent Representative of the Republic of Korea to IMO. Painted by marine artist Robert Lloyd, it will be displayed at IMO HQ, alongside the portraits of other former IMO Secretaries-General.

Tributes

Those who paid tribute to Secretary-General Lim at his farewell celebration included Katy Ware, Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to IMO, as host country to IMO; Víctor Jiménez Fernández, Chair of the IMO Council Alternate Permanent Representative of Spain to IMO; and Captain Ian Finley, Permanent Representative of the Cook Islands to IMO and President of the Maritime Attachés and Representatives Club.



After cutting a cake to mark the evening's celebrations, Mr. Lim thanked all the Member States and Secretariat, along with industry and seafarer bodies, for their ongoing support throughout his tenure.

The final remarks came from incoming Secretary-General Arsenio Dominguez Velasco, who took over the position of Secretary-General on 1 January 2024. Mr Dominguez acknowledged Mr Lim would be a hard

act to follow. The evening concluded with a pyrotechnic display on the IMO roof terrace.

To improve Polar Code training

Key recommendations proposed

Argentina, along with co-sponsors Canada, Chile, Georgia, Malaysia, Philippines, South Africa and Türkiye, tabled fourteen recommendations with the IMO's Sub-Committee on Human Element, Training and Watchkeeping (HTW)¹, aimed at enhancing training programmes for seafarers who operate in polar waters. This was reported by the IMO news service a few days before the Festive break in December.

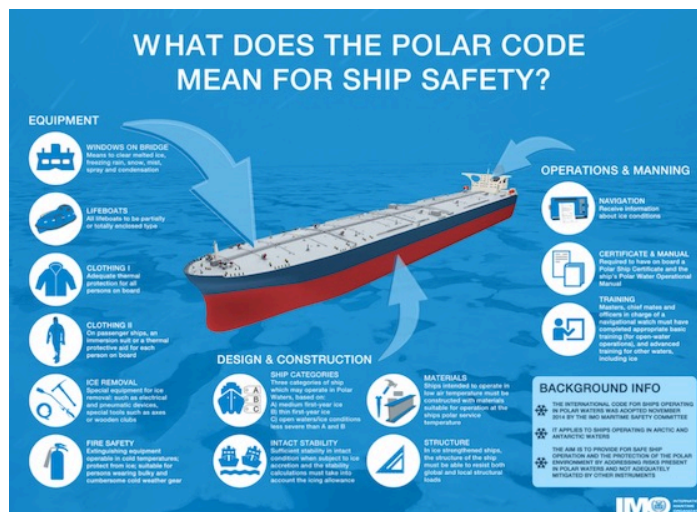
Among these documents were recommendations:

- To issue manning and training guidelines for pleasure yachts and fishing vessels operating in polar waters.
- To review and revise the competency standards for seagoing personnel and instructors
- To update current training courses on the Polar Code and seafaring in polar conditions.
- To leverage e-learning to deliver training.

The recommendations stemmed from an international workshop to review lessons learned over five years of delivering mandatory training since 2019, including on the implementation of the International Code for Ships Operating in Polar Waters (Polar Code)².

The Polar Code

The Polar Code is mandatory for ships operating in the inhospitable waters surrounding the two poles, covering safety and protection of the environment, and training of seafarers.



The workshop, held from 31 October to 3 November 2023 in Buenos Aires brought together twenty-four participants from fourteen countries (Argentina, Canada, Chile, China, Denmark, Finland, France, Georgia, Malaysia, Panama, Philippines, South Africa, Türkiye and Slovenia).

Experts' contributions

Those present included highly experienced training instructors, seafarers, and maritime administration representatives with expert knowledge in the application of Polar Code provisions within their areas of responsibility.

Many delegates had participated in one of the five Regional Train-the-Trainer Workshops, held between 2019 and 2022. Discussions covered best practices in implementing training programmes and improving the delivery of specific training, based on IMO Model Courses 7.11 and 7.12³ on Basic and Advanced Training for Ships Operating in Polar Waters.

Comprehensive review

Host country Argentina, along with several co-sponsors, submitted the findings and recommendations to the HTW Sub-Committee, to be considered during the comprehensive review of the 1978 International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (STCW Convention)⁴ and the Seafarers' Training, Certification and Watchkeeping Code (STCW Code).

It was reported that the comprehensive review aims to adapt the Convention and Code to new technical developments in shipping, environmental protection and climate change.

The next session of the Sub-Committee (HTW 10) is scheduled for 5 – 9 February 2024.

¹ <https://tinyurl.com/4pz98pww>

² <https://tinyurl.com/253bjvji>

³ <https://tinyurl.com/3e2dfh8r>

⁴ <https://tinyurl.com/y754d62v>

EMSA - Annual Overview of Marine Casualties and Incidents

In early November the European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA) issued the latest edition of the Annual Overview of Marine Casualties and Incidents.

Download

This 66-page document is now available to download here: <https://tinyurl.com/ya3yydht>

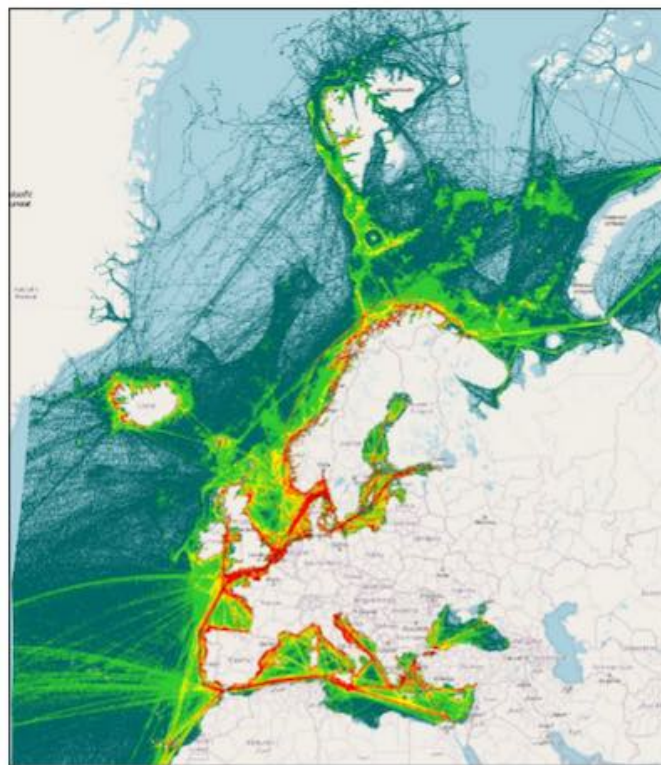
A positive year

It is reported that 2022 was a positive year in terms of the reduction or stabilisation of many accident indicators, such as the number of occurrences, ships lost, fatalities or injuries.

More than 200 casualties and incidents each month

In 2022, it is reported that 2,510 marine casualties and incidents were reported, representing a reduction of 182 marine casualties and incidents in comparison

with the year 2021 and 84 marine casualties and incidents in comparison with the year 2020.



Traffic density around Europe 2022.

Overall, the total number of marine casualties and incidents reported in the period from 2014 to 2022 was 23,814 with an annual average of 2,646.

The number of casualties and incidents in 2022 is 5.1% under the annual average and under the average of 2,670 occurrences before the pandemic.

Moreover, after a peak of 106 very serious casualties reported in 2018 and a total of 75 in 2019, the number of very serious marine casualties was 51 in 2020, 58 in 2021 and 44 in 2022, confirming the reduction in the trend.



In 2022, the total number of ships involved in marine casualties and incidents was 2,701, decreasing 212 ships in comparison with 2021 and 94 ships in 2020.



Photo credit by BSU (Germany)

Decreasing trend

This decreasing trend applies to cargo ships and fishing vessels. The Overview presents statistics on marine casualties and incidents which involved ships flying the flag of one of the EU Member States, occurred within EU Member States' territorial sea or internal waters as defined in UNCLOS, or involved substantial interests of EU Member States, as reported by Member States in the EU database for maritime incidents EMCIP (European Marine Casualty Information Platform).

Editorial note:

This article is based on material kindly provided by the European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA) and is extracted from EMSA Newsletter No221 of November 2023.

EMSA ©.

AI set the tone at Europort

A multidisciplinary panel of maritime-industry representatives discussed the opportunities and challenges of artificial intelligence in shipping during the thought-provoking Opening Summit of Europort 2023 held in Rotterdam from 7 to 10 November.

Exploring artificial intelligence in the maritime industry, the Opening Summit of Europort 2023 set the scene for a four-day event expected to welcome upwards of 25,000 visitors and more than 1,000 exhibitors from over 70 countries.

Proceedings began with an introductory keynote speech and presentation crafted – much to the surprise of the audience – by artificial intelligence.

More specifically, the speech was generated by an AI model using input from Constant Brinkman, Co-founder of Dead End Gallery – the world's first AI-generated art gallery. In a conversation with Summit host Geert Maarse, Brinkman addressed the

controversy surrounding AI art, contending that humans can use AI to make better art.

Comment

The idea that AI can help humans to perform their jobs more effectively was echoed by the speakers in the Opening Summit's panel discussion. *'I fully believe that AI has a huge part to play in the maritime industry – but only with humans at the heart of it,'* said Shane McArdle, CEO of Kongsberg Digital, adding: *'When you put this technology in people's hands, that's when innovation happens.'*

Elpi Petraki, President of WISTA International, added, *'AI can be used to achieve fast, efficient crew training – for a safer environment on board vessels and to help those supporting from on shore.'*

According to Sander Haas, Head of Business Engineering and Transformation at Samskip, the widespread adoption of AI in shipping requires buy-in from the highest levels of the industry. *'Leaders of both companies and regulatory bodies need to embrace AI,'* he said, adding: *'They need to see the possibilities as well as what is needed to bring it in, including new people with new ways of working and thinking.'*

Another crucial factor in ensuring the industry can extract AI's full potential is gender equality, said Petraki: *'We need to give women the chance to work with AI; not for the sake of women but for the sake of the industry – because more inclusive teams make better teams.'*

While the panellists were largely optimistic about AI in the maritime industry, there were some words of caution from Ilyaz Nasrullah, Digital Strategist & Programme Manager at SMASH!, who urged ship owners to have realistic expectations over what the technology can help to achieve. *'AI requires a lot of data and money, and only big companies have that,'* he added. *'Without government intervention, there is no chance for smaller players to catch up.'*

Nasrullah's caution was shared by Nathan Baker, Chief Technology Officer at SeaBird Technologies – the company responsible for the world's first official electric raceboat championship, E1. Baker, who was joined on stage by SeaBird Founder Sophi Horne, commented: *'AI will definitely have a massive impact in the marine industry. However, I would urge companies to take a step back and see where they want to deploy it – because it's not going to help everywhere.'*

With the Europort 2023 Opening Summit showcasing a variety of opinions on artificial intelligence and the opportunities and challenges it presents, the essence of the debate was captured in the AI-generated introductory keynote: *'While AI can process vast amounts of data and make predictions, it lacks the empathy, the creativity, and the nuanced decision-making abilities that humans possess.'*

Record draft at Port of Felixstowe

MV *Mumbai Maersk* has set a new record for the deepest draft vessel to call at Hutchison Ports Port of Felixstowe.

The 20,568 TEU capacity ship arrived at the English East Coast port on 11 November from Bremerhaven with a draft of 16.8 metres and sailed 24 hours later with a draft of 17.0 metres.

This record was set just four weeks after the UK's largest container port announced the completion of a £130m project to deepen the approaches to the port and its main container berths.

Sixteen to eighteen metres increase

The depth of the approach channel was increased from 14.5 metres to 16.0 metres and Berths 8&9 increased from 16.0 metres to 18.0 metres below chart datum.

Commenting on the improvements, Robert Ashton, Chief Operating Officer at the Port of Felixstowe, said: *'There has been a steady increase in recent years in the number of the latest generation of mega-vessels serving the main shipping route into Europe. The Port of Felixstowe is the best located UK port for these huge ships and, working with our partners at Harwich Haven Authority, we deepened the main approach channel and Berths 8&9 to cement further that advantage.'*



Mumbai Maersk set a new record at the Port of Felixstowe sailing with a draft of 17.0m.

'The deeper channel provides a level of access matched nowhere else in the country. It not only allows deeper vessels to call but also more ultra-large ships to be handled on each tide. With a short channel, close to the pilot station and ports of North Europe it is better for service, cutting emissions and reducing costs.'

Can now handle 24,000TEU vessels

The port's Berths 6&7 were upgraded in 2022 to provide four berths capable of handling the latest 24,000 TEU capacity vessels.

Sarah West, Chief Executive of Harwich Haven Authority, which has responsibility for the main approach channel and oversaw the recent dredging project, commented: *'The deepening of the approach channel was both a significant technical challenge and a major financial investment for the Authority. We were delighted with the outcome and are hugely encouraged to see that it is already paying dividends. Harwich Haven and the Port of Felixstowe are the main gateway for UK containerised trade and by working together we will ensure we continue to offer the right facilities and highest levels of service to our mutual customers.'*

Mumbai Maersk operates on Maersk Line's AE10 service between Europe and Asia.

IUMI Statistics

The International Union of Marine Insurance (IUMI) represents 43 national and marine market insurance and reinsurance associations.

Operating at the forefront of marine risk, it gives a unified voice to the global marine insurance market through effective representation and lobbying activities. As a forum for the exchange of ideas and best practice, IUMI works to raise standards across the industry and provides opportunities for education and the collection and publication of industry statistics. IUMI has its HQ in Hamburg and traces its roots back to 1874.

The IUMI corporate video is here: <https://iumi.com/>

Analysis of marine insurance market trends

In September IUMI presented its analysis of marine insurance market trends at its annual conference in Edinburgh.

All lines of business reported an uplift in their global premium base for 2022 with the total reaching US\$35.8 billion, representing an 8.3% increase on the previous year.

Global income was split by region: Europe 47.7%, Asia/Pacific 28.4%, Latin America 10.3%, North America 8.5%, Other 5.1%.

By line of business, the largest share was commanded by transport/cargo at 57.3% followed by global hull 23.4%, offshore energy 11.5% and marine liability (other than P&I covered by IG clubs) 7.7%.

Offshore Energy

Global premiums in the offshore energy market for 2022 were reported as US\$4.1 billion, an increase of 7.3% on 2021. There now appears to be an upward trend in the premium base following a prolonged reduction to the bottom of the trough in 2019. In this market, premiums mirror the oil price which has been relatively strong since late 2020 and more so in 2022. However, oil prices began to fall in 2023 which might herald weaker returns for offshore energy insurers this

year and in 2024. There tends to be a lengthy lag between oil price changes and activation/deactivation of offshore assets.

Losses in this sector remain low and relatively stable but the youngest underwriting years will continue to develop and this will be reflected in the loss ratios. This sector remains in a fragile balance with reduced premiums (but now rising) and a modest claims impact. Risks and claims resulting from unit activation have the potential to disrupt the balance.

Cargo

Cargo insurance returned a global premium base for 2022 of US\$20.5 billion, an 8.3% growth on last year. There was growth in all regions especially in Europe and North America although the Asia/Pacific region experienced a slowdown, likely due to the combined effect of economic conditions and major Asian currencies weakening against the US dollar. That said, the changes in each region's fortunes might also be connected with where the insurance contract resides, geographically. It should be noted that exchange rate fluctuations tend to impact most heavily on this sector and so direct comparisons with earlier years cannot be exact.



Cargo premiums have demonstrated positive market development over a number of recent years and, in the main, tend to follow the trends in world trade. Global trade, in terms of value and volume, rebounded

strongly post covid and further growth is projected, however forecasts do differ.

Recent underwriting years, including 2022, have returned to a more normal, that is to say flatter, pattern in terms of loss ratios following a few years of extraordinary upwards claims adjustments. Loss ratios for 2022 are starting at their lowest level since 2015 and, although they will develop, this is positive and may indicate a sustainable improvement for this line of business.

However, cargo underwriters continue to be concerned with a number of persistent challenges such as mis-declared cargoes, vessel fires, accumulation of risk in single locations, climate change, and political tensions. Added to this, a return to pre-pandemic activity, inflation and the growing number of natural catastrophes (nat-cats) are likely to impact on the future claims environment.

Ocean Hull

Global premiums relating to the ocean hull sector increased by 5.7% in 2022 to reach US\$8.4 billion. With the exception of Latin America which suffered a sharp downturn, all other regions reported an upturn. Whilst the distribution of premiums across the regions was relatively static, the Nordic countries enjoyed a marked increase, possibly due to their activity in covering war risks.

The year 2022 saw a continued growth in the world fleet as well as its overall value and this, coupled with reduced market capacity has impacted positively on the premium base.

The gap between total gross tonnage/number of vessels and global premiums – which opened markedly from 2011 to 2018 – has closed slightly since 2020 and now appears to be relatively stable.

Claims frequency had a long-term downward trend but has shown some increase after the extraordinary dip in 2020, following a return to pre-Covid vessel activity. Average repair costs have seen some upward trend probably due to the impact of inflation. Major losses were moderate in recent years with the exception of fires but 2023 has seen an uptick including, again, a number of severe fires.

With the exception of Latin America, loss ratios in all regions are experiencing a downward trend and have done so for the past three years. As with cargo, loss ratios for 2022 are starting from their lowest point since 2015 which is very positive for hull underwriters.

With high value sectors such as containers and cruise ships now fully restored post-Covid and the rise in major losses seen, so far in 2023, it remains to be seen how sustainable the current relatively low loss ratio pattern will be.

A note of caution

IUMI's total world-wide premium includes data from all relevant marine insurance markets. Care should be taken when making comparisons with earlier figures as data coverage varies in different years and a number of figures will be updated retrospectively. Similarly, the presented loss ratios for hull, energy and cargo do not encompass all countries per region, and underwriting year results do develop over a couple of years due to a time lag in claims reporting and payments.

When interpreting statistics, caution should always be applied regarding what the data actually relates to.

Global sums or averages

IUMI stresses that all figures released by IUMI's Facts and Figures Committee are global market sums or averages. While these reflect the average performance of the marine insurance market, individual companies' or countries' results may differ substantially. As with all averages, individual underwriting units may over or underperform compared with the average. IUMI does not make any statements about what actual applied premium rates were or should be. The aim of IUMI is solely to provide data as available and raise awareness for the importance of a critical evaluation of the risks covered.

IUMI Publications

For IUMI statistics readers are invited to see here:

<https://iumi.com/statistics/public-statistics>

NATO's Naval Alliance in action

Exercise Dynamic Mariner

Italian Navy as NATO Response Force (Maritime) element for 2024

In early November in the Mediterranean NATO Exercise Dynamic Mariner 23 was concluded.

Participants and observers alike reflected on the significance and success of this major maritime exercise. With its focus on joint maritime operations, interoperability, and crisis response, Exercise Dynamic Mariner played a pivotal role in strengthening international alliances and improving collective security.

The exercise was carried out between 23 October and 6 November and overlapped with the Italian-led Exercise Mare Aperto 23-2, which was closing as I wrote this on 17 November.

MARCOM lead, Italian host

Led by NATO Allied Maritime Command (MARCOM), and hosted by Italy, Exercise Dynamic Mariner was vital training for the Italian Navy, as it prepares to take

over the NATO Response Force Maritime element (NRF/M) from Türkiye in 2024.

To quote Commander MARCOM, Vice Admiral Mike Utley of the Royal Navy: *'The NRF Maritime is part of NATO's very high readiness force. It is immediately ready to respond to changing circumstances, and that can be anything from humanitarian disaster relief, right up to crisis and warfighting, so it has to be ready for all circumstances. The Italian Maritime Force has done a great job getting themselves ready.'*

Thirty warships

A wide range of advanced naval assets took part in Exercise Dynamic Mariner. They included approximately thirty warships including Italian aircraft carrier ITS *Cavour*, submarines, helicopters, aircraft including AV-8B Harriers and F-35B Lightning II Joint Strike Fighters, as well as more than 6,000 troops, staff officers and observers from fourteen Allied nations – Belgium, Canada, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Spain, Türkiye, the UK and the US.

SNMCMG2

Standing NATO Mine Countermeasures Group Two (SNMCMG2) of which have heard much down the years also took part in the exercise. Italian minehunter ITS *Gaeta*, Spanish minehunter ESPS *Tambre* and French minehunter FS *Capricorn* were joined by Italian ships ITS *Chioggia* and ITS *Alghero* for the duration of the exercise. All were operating under the Commander SNMCMG2 in ITS *Stromboli*.



While engaged in a wide range of mine warfare training activities, they actually discovered several historic items of unexploded ordnance – demonstrating the relevance of this training to the real world. In cooperation with local authorities, they took immediate action to render the area safe once more for all shipping.

Lead-through ops

The ships also completed lead-through operations – where a vessel leads a second safely through a simulated minefield – and a simulated boarding operation on a suspect merchant vessel.

Ex Dynamic Mariner: a dynamic approach

As the exercise name suggests, a dynamic approach to maritime security was central to its objectives. The

scenarios and training all played a vital role in preparing participating nations for a diverse range of security threats, ranging from humanitarian disaster to terrorism, cyber-attacks and sabotage of undersea infrastructure – all of which require a multi-dimensional and adaptive response.



Illustrations per NATO MARCOM
NATO ©.

Exercise Dynamic Mariner 23 fostered collaboration, interoperability and crisis response excellence between Allies, playing a key role in maintaining peace and security on the high seas.

Commander-in-Chief of the Italian Fleet, Vice Admiral Aurelio De Carolis, added by way of reflection: *'It is a very realistic scenario, because we are testing both our capability to provide maritime security to the Mediterranean, but also our ability to project capabilities ashore.'*

'Dynamic Mariner is about not only moving ships in the blue waters, but also entails operating in the green and brown waters, conducting mine warfare operations and projecting an amphibious force into the crisis area in order to be ready to deploy a landing force ashore, when ordered. In this fashion, besides striving to achieve the operational objectives of the exercise, we are also training for the real-world scenario.'

NATO's forthcoming force transition

On the 1 July 2024, the NATO Response Force will transition to the Allied Reaction Force (ARF), under NATO's New Force Model.

Southern Ocean - MPV Everest engine room fire

Risks and challenges of operating in harsh, remote conditions

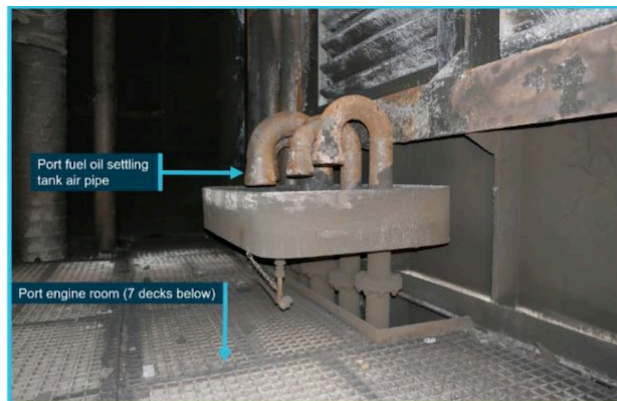
ATSB report

A fire on board a multi-purpose vessel chartered by the Australian Antarctic Division while transiting the Southern Ocean highlights the risks and challenges of operating in harsh, remote conditions. A report by the

Australian Transport Safety Bureau was issued on 24 November.

On 5 April 2021, the 145 metres loa *MPV Everest* was en route from Antarctica to Hobart with 37 crew and 72 Australian Antarctic Division (AAD) staff on board when a fire broke out in its port engine room.

The fire was contained and eventually extinguished using the engine room water mist fixed fire-extinguishing system after about 2.5 hours, and there were no reported injuries or pollution as a result of the fire.



Source: ATSB

Most of the port engine room's power generation and machinery was substantially damaged, leaving the ship with just two of its six diesel generators operational.

Comment

In the words of ATSB Chief Commissioner Angus Mitchell: *'Although MPV Everest berthed safely in Fremantle eight days after the fire, it required multiple stops at sea for ongoing repairs, and for an extended portion of its voyage the nearest assistance was many days away.'*

Several factors

The final report from the ATSB's investigation into the accident details a number of factors, including technical faults, inappropriate watchkeeping practices, characteristics of the ship's integrated automation system, crew fatigue, and the design of the ship itself, contributed to fuel oil overflowing into the engine room. The ignition of this overflowing fuel oil, either as a result of contact with a hot surface or an electrostatic discharge resulted in the fire.

Among eight safety issues identified, the ATSB found the ship's classification society, Bureau Veritas, had approved the ship's fuel oil settling tank's air vent pipe being positioned within the engine room's exhaust ventilation casing.

Mitchell explained: *'While this air pipe was not designed for the egress of fuel, this incident demonstrated that it was a possibility, and international regulations specified that air pipes for fuel oil tanks must discharge to a safe position on the open deck.'*

'However, Bureau Veritas' design approval processes had not identified any potential risks with the positioning of this air pipe in MPV Everest's engine room ventilation casing and consequently, had approved the design, which contributed to the overflowing fuel entering the engine room.'

While not contributing to the fire itself, the remaining seven safety issues were found to have increased the level of risk in the accident.

Manning

Mitchell added: *'Among these issues, the ATSB found that MPV Everest's managers, Fox Offshore, had not ensured the ship was adequately manned, equipped or prepared for the hazards and challenges of operations in the Southern Ocean and Antarctica.'*

Figure 8: Fire damage inside the port engine room



Source: ATSB

'Additionally, the ship's safety management system was neither sufficiently mature for its operations, nor had it been effectively implemented on board.'

Preparedness

The investigation also concluded that the AAD's pre-charter due diligence was ineffective in properly assessing the suitability and level of preparedness of the ship, its crew and safety management system for operations in Antarctica.

The AAD has advised the ATSB that an independent review of its procurement process and shipping standard operating procedures had led to several areas of process improvements, which are further detailed in the final report.

In addition, the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (under which the AAD operates) advised the ATSB it had initiated a number of changes to the way it identifies, engages with, and manages chartered ships and their managers/operators.

Concluding comment

In conclusion Mitchell commented: *'In the event of an abandonment, factors such as distance, weather, and availability of suitable search and rescue assets would have made any potential rescue of MPV Everest's complement extremely challenging, with a successful outcome far from assured.'*

'The risks and challenges of operating in the harsh, remote conditions of the Southern Ocean and Antarctica are most effectively mitigated by ensuring that ships that venture into these waters are operated at the highest levels of preparedness in terms of crewing numbers, expertise, equipment availability and readiness, and emergency response.'

The final report

To read the final report: *Engine room fire on board MPV Everest, Southern Ocean, 5 April 2021*, published on 24 November, readers are invited to see here: <https://tinyurl.com/379kzu6y>

The lifeboat market

VIKING Life-Saving Equipment, a global leader in maritime safety provision, announced towards the end of November that it is launching an innovative range of lifeboats and davits which set new standards for compact and lightweight lifeboats.



By challenging traditional lifeboat design, the 40- and 52-person VIKING Norsafe Totally Enclosed Lifeboats (TEL) have been designed and constructed in response to an increasing industry demand for space- and weight-saving boats for typical crew capacities.

It is understood that major shipbuilding clients have requested alternative concepts for vessel types – especially for Offshore Support Vessels (OSVs) – where onboard space for the lifeboat and davits is at a premium.

A shorter and wider hull

VIKING's response is the 'VNJY' range of lifeboats, which feature a minimal deck footprint, while optimizing capacity and serviceability. In addition, the VNJY features a shorter and wider hull than usual and incorporates an innovative forward steering position that allows for additional space on board.

Weight saving

Using significantly less materials in manufacturing, the new VNJY lifeboats also deliver lower height and weight (up to 400 kg lighter) and are designed to achieve a reduced carbon footprint compared to previous models. The lower weight also reduces loads and the required capacities for the gravity- or hydraulic-powered davits used to launch and recover lifeboats.

DNV certification

VIKING report that the design is certified by DNV to meet SOLAS and LSA requirements.



First deliveries, due in the second quarter of 2024, will feature on vessels whose flag states require EU Marine Equipment Directive verification or USCG certification.

With regard to logistics two VNJY lifeboats can be shipped on a single 40 ft flat rack. Manufactured in a modular design, the VNJY is reported as being easy to adapt to new sizes and requires reduced maintenance.

Serviceability has been further enhanced by the positioning of engines and the hydrostatic release for on-load release hooks. For boats installed in vessels carrying hydrocarbons and where fire protection is necessary, the new range will come complete with a compressed air system and external seawater deluge.

Operation Deep Freeze

USCGC *Polar Star* goes south

On 15 November US Coast Guard Cutter *Polar Star* departed Seattle for transit to Antarctica in support of Operation Deep Freeze.

Operation Deep Freeze (ODF) is an annual joint military mission to resupply the United States Antarctic stations in support of the National Science Foundation (NSF), the lead agency for the United States Antarctic Program (USAP). This marks the twenty-seventh year for *Polar Star* to render support.

Each year, the *Polar Star* crew breaks a navigable channel through ice, allowing fuel and supply ships to

reach McMurdo Station, which is the largest Antarctic station and the logistics hub of the USAP.

To quote Captain Keith Ropella, *Polar Star*'s CO: *'Operation Deep Freeze is a unique and important mission that Coast Guard Cutter Polar Star undertakes each year.'*

'This mission requires year-round effort from the crew to prepare this 47-year-old cutter for the 20,000 nautical mile round trip and extreme environmental conditions we will face. We have an incredible and dedicated team; I could not be more excited or more proud to make this journey with them.'

The US Coast Guard is recapitalizing its polar icebreaker fleet to ensure continued access to the polar regions and to protect the country's economic, environmental, and national security interests. Each year, the crew is asked to put forth an immense amount of time and effort to prepare the cutter for their annual deployment in support of ODF. *Polar Star* completed the third of five planned phases of the service life extension project (SLEP), costing \$15.6 million over a 132-day maintenance period.

Vice Admiral Andrew Tiongson, Pacific Area commander added: *'The US Coast Guard is pleased to continue partnering with the National Science Foundation and the US Antarctic Program to enable a durable U.S. presence on Antarctica and across the Southern Ocean.'*



Illustration: United States Coast Guard News ©.

'Our commitment to the Antarctic region is unwavering, and we have been pleased to increase our maritime cooperation with like-minded members of the Antarctic Treaty, as well as investing in new technologies and vessels to ensure our presence is enduring.'

Joint Task Force-Support Forces Antarctica, provides the US Department of Defence support to the NSF and the USAP through ODF. Every year, a joint and total force team works together to complete a successful ODF season.

Active, Guard, Reserve service members from the US Air Force, Army, Coast Guard, and Navy work together to forge a strong JTF-SFA that continues the

proud tradition of US military support to the US Antarctic Program.

The US Coast Guard provides direct logistical support to the NSF and maintains a regional presence that preserves Antarctica as a scientific refuge.

ASGARD: The ultimate response to maritime spoofing attacks

The global shipping industry, the backbone of the world economy, is particularly vulnerable to a range of security threats. One of those threats is GNSS spoofing.

GNSS is a critical technology used in maritime navigation systems. It enables vessels to determine their position, speed and time by receiving signals from satellites. Unfortunately, malicious actors can rather easily spoof these signals to provide unreliable or even fake positioning information.

Such false information can cause a ship to change course, which is exactly what happened to *Atria*, a 37,500-ton tanker, in 2017. The ship's captain thought he was near Gelendzhik Airport – at least that's where the ship's GNSS coordinates told him. In reality, it was positioned just off the port of Novorossiysk, about 20 nautical miles (37 kilometres) from the airport. *Atria* was by no means alone, at least twenty other nearby and equally unaware ships were in the same location.

Not only can spoofing lead to accidents and other safety hazards, it also opens the door to potential threats to national security. In 2019, Iran seized a UK-flagged oil tanker located in the Strait of Hormuz on the grounds that it had violated international law. After careful analysis of the ship's positioning data, it was confirmed that spoofing was involved.

Protection by detection

These are by no means isolated incidents. Spoofing attacks happen all the time and around the world. In an increasingly sophisticated landscape of aggression, they'll likely happen more often and be even more complex.

Without proper countermeasure methods, spoofing attacks will continue to pose a serious threat to maritime safety. The challenge is that in order to mitigate a spoofing attack, a ship first needs to be aware of the attack.

Enter ASGARD, the ultimate anti-spoofing weapon for maritime security.

Co-funded by EUSPA and coordinated by Saab and GMV, the ASGARD project is developing cutting-edge technology to counter ongoing GNSS spoofing activities. *'ASGARD functions using a protection by detection strategy,'* says Ana Cezón, who heads the Advance Navigation Division at GMV. *'It is designed to detect and prevent GNSS spoofing attacks in real*

environment, ensuring that ships can navigate safely and securely.'

GMV and Saab are two leading companies with a long-standing reputation in the field of maritime communication and navigation.

Leveraging the Galileo OSNMA service

At the heart of this protection by detection strategy is a multi-constellation, anti-spoofing GNSS receiver that leverages the Galileo Open Service Navigation Message Authentication (OSNMA) service to authenticate the navigation message. The free access service complements the Galileo Open Service (OS) by delivering authenticated data, assuring users that the received Galileo navigation message is coming from the system itself and has not been modified.

Thanks to its use of the OSNMA service, Galileo satellites can send a key and digital signature that the ASGARD receiver uses to verify the authenticity of the signal via its own public key. If the receiver detects a signal that cannot be authenticated, it immediately alerts the operator of a potential spoofing attack and prompts them to take alternative measures to validate the vessel's position.

The system also offers an innovative integrity solution that ensures the reliability and safety of the system.

Ensuring the safety and security of crew and cargo

Still in development, ASGARD will soon undergo real-time testing where it will be put through a series of spoofing attacks to ensure it delivers within set specifications. Once complete, the system is expected to have a significant impact on the maritime industry, improving safety and security for both vessels and crews.

'ASGARD will provide an effective response to spoofing attacks by ensuring that vessels stay on course and are not lured off by attackers,' says Peter Bergljung, Head of Strategy at Saab. *'With ASGARD, vessel owners and operators can have peace of mind knowing that their vessels are equipped with cutting-edge technology that provides protection against spoofing attacks and helps ensure the safety and security of the crew and cargo.'*

Once certified according to maritime safety regulations (SOLAS) and maritime standards (IEC), ASGARD is also expected to boost the uptake of Galileo within the maritime sector.

Editorial note:

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Red Sea risks rising rapidly

By Michael Grey, IFSMA Honorary Member

What do we think of one of the world's main trade routes suddenly coming under attack from drones, missiles, pirate militia and hijackers? The fact is that nobody other than those whose ships customarily use this vital waterway have even noticed, media attention being focused almost entirely on the landside activities in Israel and Gaza. But this interconnected and peripheral problem is of vital importance, if the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden are not to become maritime war zones, with grim effects upon so many international trades.

The pictures of the gleaming NYK car carrier *Galaxy Leader*, following her hijacking by Iranian-backed Houthi militia, steaming into Hodeidah roads, escorted by triumphant rebels in speedboats, ought, above all else have shown the world that these people mean business. We were treated to a video, helpfully provided by the apparently well-funded Houthi PR wing, showing the bewildered crew of the ship being lectured by some uniformed official, said to be the naval chief of staff, but might be better described as a local pirate commander.

Since then, there have been attempted seizures of ships said to have a connection, however tenuous this might be, to Israel, missile attacks on both merchant ships and warships. Ships have already been diverted, which is not something done easily, bearing in mind the costs and extent of any diversion. It is a situation with the potential to become far worse, if this is not nipped in the bud. There is just no way the world can tolerate any group of armed and dangerous rebels setting themselves up to decide which ships are to be permitted through an international sea lane, and those chosen to be attacked.

One has to ask where the intelligence is located, which facilitates this apparent discrimination between ships which might conceivably have some connection in their beneficial ownership and others. Are shadowy figures ploughing through the pages of the Lloyd's Confidential Index or making multiple requests to those keeping public companies' records? It is a nasty reminder of the bad old days, when there was a general Arab boycott of Israeli shipping and the measures that this required to keep shipping operating, reminiscent of the confidentiality required in wartime.

It is also worth thinking that such a situation as is developing, sends a grim message about the very transparency that we are all encouraged to foster. It might be suggested that the undoubted benefits of AIS are menaced when it enables hostile forces such useful access to potential targets. We already have the tanker fleet carrying sanctioned Russian cargoes cheerfully switching off their identification systems, in contravention of international rules, but with important safety implications. These are all good reasons to sort out this menace afflicting the Red Sea, with what extreme prejudice might be necessary, once and for all. Failing that there is no doubt that seafarers' lives will be put at risk and we will be on the road to the

same sort of measures, requiring armed protection and convoying, that were found necessary in the 1980s Gulf confrontation. But before we get to that extreme situation, the world might have noticed.

Law on your side

The co-operation between the International Chamber of Shipping and the International Federation of Ship Master's Associations to produce *The Master's Practical Guide to Maritime Law* must be surely welcomed. It is designed, not as a text book for people whose eyes are already being ruined by the number of words they must read, but a helpmeet to assist in navigating common legal pitfalls they inevitably meet in their professional lives. It brings real-world and contemporary issues to the fore and benefits from the experience of several serving shipmasters who were involved in its production. It is obviously worth checking out with either of the two organisations.

Michael Grey is former editor of *Lloyd's List*

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Understanding seafarer roster patterns and fatigue on vessels

The UK Department for Transport (DfT) commissioned the Behavioural Insights Team (BIT) and Transport Research Laboratory (TRL) in February 2023 to conduct a research project on seafarer roster and shift patterns on Ro-Ro and Ro-Pax vessels, focusing on the impact roster patterns have on seafarer fatigue.



It is important that the shipping industry is aware of the causes of seafarer fatigue on ro-ro or ro-pax vessels.

Photo: Ambrose Greenway ©.

This project involved a literature review of 124 papers and qualitative research, specifically eight interviews with industry stakeholders, and a roundtable with eight industry stakeholders.

It is understood that the report issued provides details on the methodology, limitations, key findings, and recommendations for further research.

Objectives

The four objectives of this research were to understand:

1. The various types of seafarer roster and shift patterns and how they differ by route and operators, and the consequential impacts of different roster patterns on seafarer fatigue and welfare.
2. The quality and duration of rest available to, or experienced by, seafarers, and the consequential impacts on seafarer fatigue and welfare.
3. The factors that are taken into consideration when designing roster and shift patterns and why.
4. What measures, if any, are taken by ferry operators to manage seafarers' shorter-term "sleepiness", longer-term fatigue, potentially reduced vigilance, and the effectiveness of these measures.

Methodology

The 124 papers were identified based on careful consideration of the search terms and databases used. After being evaluated based on inclusion criteria, 21 papers were reviewed in full. There were two caveats to the evidence.

Firstly, there was a lack of recent research on seafarer fatigue specifically in relation to Ro-Ro and Ro-Pax vessels, as most studies published within the last three years (which were given priority based on the evidence review inclusion criteria) have focused on other types of vessels.

Three years was chosen as the most appropriate period on which to focus the evidence search to account for any developments which have occurred as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Secondly, the recent literature primarily focussed on day-to-day shift patterns rather than week-by-week roster patterns.

These findings are one of two sets of research that will form part of the evidence base for updating the Seafarers' Charter.

A literature review involves reading all existing information on a topic in order to ascertain the current status of that topic and to discover new or previously overlooked insights on a topic.

Fieldwork between February and May 2023 was conducted by the external research bodies of the: (a) Behavioural Insights Team, for more see here: <https://www.bi.team/> and (b) the Transport Research Laboratory, for more see here: <https://trl.co.uk/> This research was commissioned by the Department for Transport.

The document *Understanding seafarer roster patterns and fatigue on vessels* is available here: <https://tinyurl.com/36te4y3c>

At IFSMA

Under the topic of Safety Management we strive to promote the removal of Shipmasters from the Watchkeeping Roster so that they are able to fulfil their responsibilities as Master, as required by International Legislation and, at the very least, influence removal of the Shipmaster from the Master/Mate 6 on, 6 off roster by the implementation of improved Deck Officer Manning Levels in ships.

We aim to raise awareness and reduce the administrative burden of the Shipmaster and bring to the attention of the shipping industry its responsibilities to meet the objectives of the ISM Code.

Editorial note:

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USCG security boarding

Port of Guam

It was reported on 7 December from Santa Rita, Guam, that the US Coast Guard Sector Boarding Team, a key component of US Coast Guard Forces Micronesia/Sector Guam, had conducted the previous day a thorough security boarding of the 380 ft loa motor vessel *Papa Mau*, flagged from Antigua Barbuda, at the Port of Guam.

This general cargo vessel, which had earlier arrived from Pohnpei in the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), was meticulously inspected upon reaching Guam and found to be in full compliance.

The fact the port in Pohnpei is working to meet US International Port Security Standards but has not yet achieved this status, and the vessel crew took no other advance notice or security actions necessitated this boarding.

Matching crew to manifest

It is understood that the operation ensured the vessel's crew complement matched its manifest and other security measures were in place. This step is crucial for maintaining the high maritime safety and security standards that the US Coast Guard and the Port of Guam uphold.

Collaboration

This operation comes after the US Coast Guard International Port Security (IPS) Program's successful bilateral exchange with FSM in Chuuk and Pohnpei. Held from 15 to 19 October this initiative aimed to enhance compliance with the International Ship and

Port Facility Security (ISPS) Code. This collaboration underscores the mutual commitment to maritime safety and environmental stewardship in the Pacific region.

Petty Officer 2nd Class Christopher Bruce, leading the Sector Boarding Team (SBT) as the boarding officer, praised his team's efforts: *'Our team's professionalism and flexibility are key in providing essential services to ensure maritime security in Micronesia. We are committed to maintaining safe and secure maritime routes, vital for the region's prosperity.'*

Contributing to USCG Pacific presence

The US Coast Guard Sector Boarding Team in Guam is pivotal in safeguarding the port's security. Working in synergy with other units, including the Joint Rescue Sub-Center and fast response cutters, the team significantly contributes to the US Coast Guard's robust presence in the Pacific.

Ensuring smooth maritime commerce and security

US Coast Guard Forces Micronesia/Sector Guam is renowned for its comprehensive approach to executing various statutory missions. These include search and rescue, defence readiness, and protection of living marine resources. A significant focus remains on ensuring smooth maritime commerce and security of ports, waterways, and coastal areas.



Illustration per US Coast Guard Forces Micronesia/Sector Guam.

USCG ©

The ISPS Code, integral to these operations, is a vital global standard for maritime security. Instituted post-9/11, it aims to detect and prevent security threats in international maritime transport. The Federated States of Micronesia, as a signatory to the SOLAS convention, is actively working towards full compliance with the ISPS Code.

Future biannual visits

Looking forward, the US Coast Guard International Port Security Program plans to conduct biannual visits to FSM. These visits are pivotal for fostering collaboration and ensuring continuous progress in meeting ISPS compliance.

One cannot overstate the strategic value of Guam as a hub for the US Coast Guard's operations in the region. As a gateway to the Pacific, Guam is crucial in bolstering maritime security and facilitating safe and efficient maritime commerce.

Commitment

As FSM continues its journey towards ISPS compliance, the US Coast Guard role in ensuring port security and fostering international maritime cooperation remains more critical than ever. Through these collaborative efforts, the US Coast Guard and its partners in the Pacific are setting a solid example of commitment to maritime safety, security, and stewardship.

Maersk's Asia - Europe trade lane

Deployment of first large methanol-enabled vessel

It was announced from Copenhagen on 7 December that A P Moller – Maersk is about to launch the first of its eighteen large methanol-enabled vessels currently on order.

On 9 February 2024, the new vessel will enter service on the AE7 string connecting Asia and Europe, which includes port calls in Shanghai, Tanjung Pelepas, Colombo and Hamburg (see all port calls footnoted below at *), with Ningbo being its first destination.

This container vessel built by Hyundai Heavy Industries (HHI) in the Republic of Korea has a nominal capacity of 16,000 TEU and is equipped with a dual-fuel engine enabling operations on methanol as well as biodiesel and conventional bunker fuel.

Maersk has set a Net-Zero greenhouse gas emissions target for 2040 across the entire business and has also set tangible and ambitious near-term targets for 2030 to ensure significant progress. Maersk has secured sufficient green¹ methanol to cover the vessel's maiden voyage and continues to work diligently on 2024-2025 sourcing for its methanol-enabled vessel fleet.

To quote Karsten Kildahl, Chief Commercial Officer at Maersk: *'Deploying the first of our large methanol-enabled vessels on one of the world's largest trade*

lanes, Asia - Europe, is a landmark in our journey towards our Net-Zero target.

'With the vessel's capacity of 16,000 containers, this will make a significant impact in our customers' efforts to decarbonise their supply chains, and we are looking forward to introducing more methanol-enabled vessels on this and other trades during 2024.'

It is understood that ahead of its deployment, the vessel will be named at the shipyard at the end of this month.



Two sister vessels will be deployed in the first half of 2024 with naming events taking place in Yokohama and Los Angeles.

Maersk expects to take delivery of four additional sister vessels in the second half of 2024.

At the time of deployment of the first large vessel, it will be the only second container vessel in the world that can sail on green methanol, the first being the feeder vessel *Laura Maersk* which entered service in September 2023.

An overview

Maersk have provided a forecast of Maersk vessels on order:

- Maersk has 24 container vessels on order.
- All vessels currently on order will be equipped with dual-fuel engines and will be able to operate on green methanol.
- Twelve of the vessels on order have a capacity of 16,000 TEU.
- Six of the vessels on order have a capacity of 17,000 TEU.
- Six of the vessels on order have a capacity of 9,000 TEU.
- Since 2021, Maersk has had a policy of only ordering new vessels able to operate on green fuels.

***About Maersk's AE7 service string**

The AE7 string connects Asia and Europe through the Suez Canal. The AE7 string has the following port calls: Ningbo, Shanghai, Nansha, Yantian, Tanjung

Pelepas, Colombo, Port Tangiers, Felixstowe, Hamburg, Antwerp, London Gateway, Le Havre, Port Tangiers, Jeddah, Abu Dhabi and Jebel Ali.

1Green fuels

Maersk defines green fuels as fuels with low to very low GHG emissions over their life cycle compared to fossil fuels.

Different green fuels achieve different life cycle reductions depending on their production pathway. By low this refers to fuels with 65-80% life cycle GHG reductions compared to fossil fuels. This covers, for example, some biodiesels.

Very low refers to fuels with 80-95% life cycle GHG reductions compared to fossil fuels.

Auckland Transport's innovative electric ferries

Early in December it was reported that ABB had secured a contract with Auckland Transport (AT) to deliver the maritime world's first megawatt charging system (MCS) to recharge electric ferries using the same interface as trucks and airplanes. Lowering the barrier to entry, the standardized and highly adaptable system is expected to improve electric vessel competitiveness against fossil-fuelled counterparts.

As part of its Mission Electric initiative, AT has ordered two 200-seat all-electric ferries and two 300-passenger hybrid-electric ferries and is expected to become the largest electric ferry fleet operator in the Southern Hemisphere by 2030.

Replacing conventional, diesel-operated ferries, the new ferries are estimated to help AT cut diesel use by 1.5 million litres, and CO₂ emissions by 4,000 metric tons per year, equivalent to the annual emissions generated by about 90 diesel buses.

Nathan Cammock, Programme Director, Auckland Transport, commented: *'It is incredibly exciting to lead the way with modern, low-emission public transport. Our new Auckland-owned ferries will bring greater passenger capacity, improved accessibility and a more consistent customer experience. They will rely on modern charging infrastructure to deliver on these capabilities.'*

While ferries carry only 6% of public transport users in Auckland, their diesel engines produce 20% of the city's public transport greenhouse gas emissions¹. New Zealand has set decarbonisation goals by including a 2050 net-zero emissions target in its Zero Carbon Act. Given its responsibility for public transport infrastructure around the Hauraki Gulf, AT has chosen to electrify its ferry network using the CharIN megawatt charging system standard.

ABB will work with local partners to deliver, engineer and install five complete charging solutions during 2024 and 2025 at several ferry terminals. Each

system will feature a pair of 1.65MW chargers, consisting of a transformer, ACS880 converters, MCS plugs and cable management on the ferry pontoons.

The chargers will deliver over three megawatts of direct current (DC) power to sustain the short turnarounds and high-power demands needed to maintain an efficiently operated ferry fleet. The connectors will be handled by crew during passenger turnarounds.

The Auckland installation will also be the first MCS supplied by ABB to benefit from the standardized plug-in interface, although the group has been delivering shore-to-ship power for over twenty years since an initial contract with Princess Cruises in Alaska. The Auckland solution will be similar in charging capacity to ABB's landmark project to support ten all-electric ferries for public transportation provider Transtejo Soflusa in Lisbon.



EV Maritime EVM200 ferry for Auckland Transport.

Image credit: EV Maritime Auckland Transport©.

Palemia Field, Ferry Segment Manager, ABB Marine & Ports added: *'Ferries connect communities and have a significant impact on the environment. There is a well-known MŌori proverb which says 'ka p¹ te ruha, ka hao te rangatahi', or 'once the old fishing net is worn, it is put aside to make way for the new fishing net'.*

'Electrification is crucial and we must move away from emissions-generating technologies. Noise- and emission-free operations benefit both the broader and local communities, while passengers onboard enjoy improved travel comfort thanks to less vibration.'

As the electrification of the global ferry fleet increases, ABB expects more operators to opt for a standardized interface that is familiar from other industries, it has been reported.

Electric ferry orders made up 37% of the maritime battery capacity deliveries between 2019 and 2022, according to research published by IDTechEx².

A 2023 forecast from Spherical Insights³ suggests that the market for all types of electric ships will double in value by 2030 over a 2021 baseline, to surpass \$10.5 billion.

¹Thorwaldson, L., & Knight, A. (2023). *New Zealand's experience of transitioning to a zero-emission public transport fleet – a research note* (Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency research note 010) page 22.

² <http://tinyurl.com/32pssz45>

³ <http://tinyurl.com/mrynebbs>

InterManager: Deaths in enclosed spaces must be prevented

With eight deaths over the previous seven days to 14 December in enclosed spaces on ships, InterManager (<https://www.intermanager.org/>) has called on the shipping industry to work together to improve safety in these challenging onboard areas.

Eight deaths in seven days

Three seafarers and five shore workers died in week ending 16 December in accidents in enclosed spaces, bringing the known deaths to a total of 31 for the year 2023, although the reporting process can be slow, it is recorded.

InterManager, the international trade association for the ship and crew management sector, keeps records of these incidents on behalf of the wider shipping community, sharing them with regulators in its role as a non-governmental organisation (NGO) member of the IMO. These statistics reveal that since 1996 no fewer than 310 people lost their lives in enclosed spaces: 224 seafarers and 86 shore personnel in 197 accidents.

A review of regulations

Thanks to lobbying by InterManager and other industry stakeholders, the IMO has committed to review and strengthen regulations relating to enclosed space entry aboard ships.



*Illustration per www.intermanager.org
InterManager ©.*

InterManager Secretary General, Captain Kuba Szymanski, commented: *'One death is too many but eight in seven days is ridiculous. This is an industry-wide issue which everyone in the shipping community must work together to resolve.'*

'We have crew members and shore workers placed under unrealistic time pressures to conduct high-risk tasks such as tank cleaning, and we have confusing instructions which vary from ship to ship as to what procedures and protocols must be followed.'

'It is not enough to blame the seafarers and offer additional training. Accident investigations must delve deeper into why people make the decisions they do and examine what external pressures impact those decisions. And ship architects and builders must work harder to design out these hazardous spaces where possible. No-one should lose their life doing their job.'

IMO Resolution A.1050 (27)

The IMO subcommittee relating to the Carriage of Cargoes and Containers is in the process of revising Resolution A.1050(27) to ensure the safety of personnel entering enclosed spaces on board ships, with a target completion in 2024. Resolution A.1050 (27) concerns the *'Recommendations for entering enclosed spaces aboard ships.'*

InterManager strongly believes that the scope of the revision needs to be broad and comprehensive in order to take into account both the human element and ship design factors that have contributed to previous enclosed space incidents. Captain Szymanski said in conclusion: *'This is what's needed to mitigate against, and hopefully prevent, such incidents occurring in the future.'*

Comprehensive education

By Michael Grey, IFSMA Honorary Member

If you are looking for a good argument with marine professionals, the IMO's Standards of Training Certification and Watchkeeping Convention always offers a good starting point. It is topical today, as a comprehensive review of the Convention, which first standardised maritime training in 1978 is now under way. The important word is "comprehensive", although this itself is open to a certain amount of interpretation, as "major" revisions have taken place in 1995 and 2010, with amendments, best described as tidying up, in intervening years. The determination to make the current changes more of a root and branch affair has been in gestation for a number of years.

The sheer number of important and influential parties who have a stake in this convention and any changes that might be needed is one of the reasons why such improvements are not undertaken lightly. There are what might be considered the ultimate customers of the convention in the seafarers who will be expected to fulfil its obligations, with their representative organisations. There is a powerful and disparate interest group in the training "community." whose job it

is to provide the colleges and courses, the equipment and educational sources which are needed to train and validate the capabilities of the world's seafarers.

There are ship owners and operators, who have a vested interest in both the end product of competent seafarers and the costs which they may incur in this provision. And there are governments which themselves may or may not opt to provide training facilities but anyway are ultimately responsible for fulfilling their Convention obligations. And there is IMO itself, which might be described as the facilitator of the Convention and any changes that might be required as time and technology progress.

There can be no doubt that both the means and methods of training seafarers have changed quite dramatically since 1978. You just have to consider what can be done by simulators, virtual reality equipment, distance learning these days, always supposing that such amazing advances are widely available. And this is one of the problems that must be confronted as the revision is contemplated – that in a world where there are wide differences between the richest and poorest countries, the capability to provide a universal standard of training varies greatly.

You have states where the government invests in large and sophisticated training ships, and subsidised establishments where very well-trained seafarers can be turned out for the delectation of the domestic industry. Others where there is private provision, possibly run by well-funded industry players, or more basic educational establishments, which reflect very great differences in the facilities they offer to their students, simply because of what each is able to afford. And it is this everlasting inequality that has arguably bedevilled the STCW Convention, which cannot prescribe standards that are simply impractical in many parts of the world, where there may be plenty of willing candidates, but limited facilities to train them. So, something that might be described as a happy medium generally emerges, which possibly satisfies few, leading its critics to suggest that standards have arrived at a Lowest Common Denominator.

It is also important for the standards to keep up with the reality, and in an era when technical advances come thick and fast, this itself is a problem for those doing the revision. Are there areas of knowledge that can be dispensed with as technically redundant? Do navigators still need a knowledge of celestial navigation just in case the hackers or sunspots strike? What training must be given to reflect a new digital age, environmental sustainability, the challenges of new fuels, different types of machinery and new ship operating methodology.

How is specialist knowledge for specialist ships and cargoes going to be dealt with in the syllabus? How, indeed, is the simulator to be integrated into the demands for practical experience aboard real ships? How can safety culture be inculcated, blame culture outlawed and how should rather less prescriptive matters like leadership and equality be taught, to a worldwide workforce that embraces so many different cultures? And how might the crewing structures of

ships yet to be built require new and different skills?
Too many questions

It is a tremendous challenge which faces all those involved with this review of STCW, because they need to get it right, and the fast-changing shipping world that depends upon it will not wait.

A first class and comprehensive synopsis of the STCW Convention and the various areas which are being currently examined, with a view to possible changes is to be found in the Nautical Institute's current Seaways journal. It is well worth reading.

Michael Grey is former editor of *Lloyd's List*

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Ghana Ports & Harbours news

Record bulk loading

News has been received that in early November the Ghanaian port of Takoradi successfully berthed and record-loaded a 295-metre loa capesize manganese carrier, *CS Salubrity*, Hong Kong-flag, 180,301dt, built 2014, at the port's dry bulk terminal (DBT), with a draft of 16 metres and a quay length of 800 metres.



The port of Takoradi's dry bulk terminal is said to be the deepest of its kind in West Africa and is equipped with an automated conveyor loading system

The Acting Director of Port, Takoradi, Peter Amo-Bediako, who witnessed the historic pilotage and berthing of the capesize vessel, was enthused about the significance of the successful berthing of the vessel at the automated Terminal. He revealed that four or five such vessels were expected in the port before the end of 2023.

Pilotage simulator training

The pilots, led by the Harbour Master, Captain Richmond Quayson, said the Authority underwent

critical simulator training leading up to the subsequent successful berthing of *CS Salubrity*.

The Operations Manager of Ghana Manganese Company, Sheikh Issah Salifu Taylor, expressed delight at the ship's loading rate.

The record loading of the vessel was made possible not only by the automated conveyor loading system but also the meticulous planning and round-the-clock cargo loading by the DBT operations team.

Ports Award competition

Early in December the Ghana Ports and Harbours Authority (GPHA) swept four awards at the seventh African Ports Awards competition held in Lagos under the auspices of the Port Management Association of West and Central Africa (PMAWCA). This was reported on 15 December.



GPHA won the award for best port in Integrated Management System Policy, while the port of Tema won the award for best port in import and export and container traffic. The Director-General of GPHA, Michael Luguje, received a special incentive award.

Transshipment to DRC

In week ended 8 December the Port of Tema successfully turned around seven items of railway rolling stock received from Japan. Following some minor maintenance work ashore the cargo was transhipped to the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Port calls

The Chief Executive Officer of Meridian Port Services (MPS) Ltd., Mohamed Samara, has confirmed that, beginning this month, January 2024, the Port of Tema will become the first port of call in West Africa under a Maersk-CMA-CGM West Africa Express (WAX) service on the Far East-West Africa trade route. There was an existing direct call by Mediterranean Shipping Company (MSC), at the port.

*Illustrations per www.ghanaports.gov
Ghana Ports ©.*

Threats to shipping

On 12 December the then Secretary-General of IMO said: *'The recent reports of threats made to commercial shipping in the Red Sea are extremely alarming and unacceptable. Commercial shipping should never be a collateral victim of geopolitical conflicts. Any attack on commercial shipping is contrary to international maritime law, including laws which protect the freedom of navigation. Any action which might adversely affect shipping engaged in international trade must be avoided.'*

'Ships, cargoes and seafarers must be protected at all times. I invite Member States to work together to ensure unhindered and safe global navigation, everywhere, as a prerequisite for maintaining the world's supply chains, and in line with the framework of the Djibouti Code of Conduct.'

A week later S-G Kitack Lim added: *'I condemn attacks against international shipping in the Red Sea area and I reiterate the strong commitment of the IMO to protect seafarers, ships, and cargoes, which is of the utmost importance to ensure the safety and security of global supply chains. Attacks against international shipping in the Red Sea area are not acceptable. Ships must be allowed to trade worldwide unhindered, in accordance with international maritime law.'*

'The rerouting of commercial shipping by several globally operating companies is a direct response to the current threat. These measures are aimed at protecting seafarers from harm and minimizing the potential economic impact on world trade, which is highly dependent on shipping.'

'The IMO Secretariat is closely monitoring developments and communicating with relevant stakeholders, including the shipping industry, IMO Member States, and United Nations partners.'

'Once again, I invite Member States to work together to ensure unhindered and safe global navigation and the well-being of innocent seafarers everywhere. This is a prerequisite for maintaining the world's supply chains and is in line with the framework of the Djibouti Code of Conduct.'

The ICS view

On 15 December the International Chamber of Shipping issued a statement on the Red Sea ship attacks: *'The Bahamas flagged Galaxy Leader, operated by Japanese company NYK, and owned by British Company Ray Car Carriers was seized by Houthi forces on 19 November. Subsequently there have been an increasing number of attacks against merchant ships.'*

'ICS deplores the actions of the Houthis in the strongest terms and calls for the immediate cessation of these attacks. These are unacceptable acts of aggression which threaten the lives of innocent seafarers and the safety of merchant shipping.'

'These attacks are a flagrant breach of international law. States with influence in the region should, as a matter of urgency, work to stop the actions of the Houthis in attacking seafarers and merchant ships, and de-escalate what is now an extremely serious threat to international trade.'

'Currently 12% of global trade passes through the Red Sea.'

'ICS lauds the actions and presence of naval forces so far in intervening against the aggressors and hopes and expects further commitments of the same nature in the very near future. Furthermore, the full maritime security architecture in the region should be brought to bear to end these attacks and protect our seafarers and merchant shipping.'

'Industry will continue to provide guidance to shipowners and operators, and work with military powers in the region to mitigate the threat to shipping presented by the Houthis.'

Commentary

Inchcape Shipping Services issued reports daily through to the New Year regarding the security situation for shipping in these waters. It was understood that several ultra-large containerships which had been stuck in the Red Sea between the Houthis in the south and a Suez transit to the north got underway and owners were prepared to pay another canal toll and to transit through the Mediterranean and down the west coast of Africa, then round the Cape of Good Hope in order to take passage to Asia. Some unscheduled steaming that represents!

Operation Prosperity Guardian

A coalition of ten countries led by the US inaugurated Operation Prosperity Guardian to defend navigation in the Red Sea as many oil majors, container lines and bulk owners suspended Suez Canal transits and/or opted for longer re-routing around the Cape of Good Hope.

On 23 December a significant incident was reported in the Indian Ocean involving the *Chem Pluto*, a Liberia-flagged chemical/products carrier. The vessel was struck on the stern by a UAV, causing a fire in the cordage locker. Some structural damage was reported, and water was taken inboard. However, the fire was extinguished although with crew casualties. It was reported at the time that the Israel-affiliated vessel had last called at a Saudi Arabian port and was destined for India at the time of the incident.

By 24 December *The Daily Telegraph* was reporting that Iran had threatened to close the Strait of Gibraltar and the Mediterranean Sea unless Israel stopped bombing Gaza. This was at the same time as the US had indicated that Tehran was deeply involved in attacks on shipping.

In an earlier report the paper had pointed out that the Houthis had been ignored for a decade and were now threatening to throw global trade into chaos after they (the Houthi militia) had launched a string of missile

attacks on ships making innocent passage in the Red Sea, activities which prompting oil giants to halt shipments.

According to Africa Ports & Ships (www.africaports.co.za) in the Festive break more than 100 ships had commenced diverting round Africa. All the major container carriers confirmed their ships diverted round the Cape of Good Hope, a journey that can take up to a fortnight longer.

These container lines include CMA CGM, Hapag-Lloyd, HMM, Maersk, MSC, Ocean Network Express (ONE), OOCL, and Yang Ming.

Additionally, many tankers were also being diverted – BP Tankers among them.

At that point it appeared likely that naval assets were to come from Combined Task Force 153 which was operating in the Red Sea. Nine States agreed to be part of Operation Prosperity Guardian with the US. These were: Bahrain, Canada, France, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Seychelles, Spain and the UK. HMS *Diamond* will lead the Royal Navy's contribution to Operation Prosperity Guardian.

At the end of 2023 Egypt and its Suez Canal stood to lose the most from a prolonged period of ships diverting away.

Industry analyst Xeneta reported at the end of December that consumers around the world were expected to pay the price for the crisis in the Red Sea. Data at the end of December showed spot rates in the ocean freight shipping market spiked by 20% in a week after major shipping liner companies announced they were avoiding the Red Sea.

It was estimated that vessels re-routed via the Cape of Good Hope, not only had to endure an extra ten days sailing time but would incur an additional US\$ 1 million cost in fuel for every round trip between the Far East and Northern Europe and return. Additional shipping capacity in the region of one million TEU was forecast to be engaged to make up the shortfall of potential boxes in the wrong place.

Ultimately extra costs incurred would be passed on to consumers.

At the time of writing Inchcape Shipping Services were issuing daily bulletins on Suez Canal and Red Sea traffic. These are currently available on subscription at no charge at: <https://www.iss-shipping.com/subscribe/>

Australia's strategic fleet

On 15 December the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) condemned Shipping Australia Limited (SAL) for consistently opposing the Australian government's plan to establish a strategic fleet of Australian-flagged vessels.

Chris Given, Chair of the ITF's Cabotage Task Force, said SAL's stance is: *'Short-sighted and detrimental to Australia's national interests.'*

Given added: *'SAL, which represents major international shipping lines – including Evergreen, MSC, K-Line, HMM, CMA CGM, Maersk and Hapag-Lloyd – seems to be more concerned with the profits of foreign multinationals than with the well-being of Australia's economy, security, and maritime industry.'*

'Maritime cabotage is essential for Australia's domestic trade, national security, and environmental sustainability. It also creates jobs and develops skills in the maritime sector.'

'SAL's opposition to a strategic fleet is nothing more than an attempt to protect the interests of its overseas members at the expense of Australia's national interests.'

SAL represents major international shipping lines operating under Flag of Convenience registers that prioritise minimal regulations, no or low taxes, and maximum flexibility in seafarers' wage and working conditions to maximise profits.

Given noted that SAL's recent article comparing Australia's cabotage policies to Chile's decision to liberalise its maritime sector is misleading.

Given continued: *'Despite the clear benefits of a national fleet, SAL has recently published an article advocating against the government's plans to enhance cabotage regulations, drawing parallels with Chile's decision to liberalise its maritime cabotage.'*

'However, it is crucial to note that the ITF met with Chilean government representatives who reaffirmed their commitment to supporting national seafarers and maintaining their national cabotage, collaborating with the ITF and its affiliates for any necessary improvements.'

Given commended other nations, such as Thailand and South Africa, for recognising the importance of strengthening national trade by introducing national shipping lines for domestic routes.

'In contrast to SAL's stance, South Africa, like Australia, took proactive measures during the Covid-19 pandemic, acknowledging the vulnerability of their supply chains to disruptions in essential imports and exports. South Africa's response involved the development of the South African Shipping Company Bill, aimed at creating and managing a strategic fleet of vessels under the South African Ship Register.'

Given emphasised that SAL's opposition to a national fleet is driven by a desire to prioritise the highest profits for multinational shipping companies, rather than fostering a level playing field that benefits the Australian economy and its citizens.

He concluded by saying: *'The ITF commends the Australian government for its efforts to fortify cabotage, recognising its integral role in the nation's well-being. We urge SAL to wake up and reconsider its narrow perspective and support policies that promote the sustainable development of Australia's maritime industry.'*









