

PRESS RELEASE BY THE INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF SHIPMASTERS' ASSOCIATION (IFSMA)

Thursday 26 January 2012

IFSMA RESPONSE TO COSTA CONCORDIA ACCIDENT

IFSMA wishes to record its profound sadness about the loss of passenger ship Costa Concordia and wishes to extend sincere condolences to the families of all passengers and crew who were victims of the accident

IFSMA also wishes to register its deep concern about the Costa Concordia accident, and in particular the subsequent rush to condemn the ship's master, and ship's owner Costa Crociere, before any investigation or criminal inquiry has been completed.

IFSMA believes the press and public vilification of the master is prejudicial and in serious breach of his rights to justice and a fair trial. IFSMA believes the way in which 'information' about the circumstances of the accident has emerged is in direct contravention of the principles of 'fair treatment', as set down in the International Maritime Organisation/International Labour Organisation guidelines - most notably the right to protection against coercion and intimidation from any source during or after any investigation into a maritime accident.

IFSMA is concerned that the vast amount of highly derogatory publicity about the master's alleged actions serves as another highly regrettable example of the criminalisation of the maritime profession and threatens to do considerable damage to the efforts to recruit and retain a sustainable supply of maritime professionals.

IFSMA also believes that the massive media speculation - much of it highly ill-informed - will serve to direct attention away from the long-standing concerns over aspects of the design, construction and operation of large passenger ships.