

**REPORT OF THE
47th (BIENNIAL) GENERAL ASSEMBLY
Held in Tokyo at the Toshi Center Hotel
At the invitation of the Japan Captains' Association**

The 47th (Biennial) General Assembly was held on Thursday 26th & Friday 27th October 2023.

LIST OF DELEGATES

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

Hans Sande (Norway)	President
Willi Wittig (Germany)	Deputy President
Marcos Castro (Argentina)	Vice President
Alexandre Ribes (France)	Vice President
Koichi Akatsuka (Japan)	Vice President
Oleg Grygoriuk (Ukraine)	Vice President

(There were several changes to Executive Council during the meeting)

MEMBERS OF ASSOCIATIONS (Listed by country and alphabetically by surname except JCA)

Marcos Castro	CCUOMM & ExCo	Argentina
Marshall Dunbar	CMMC	Canada
Martin Björkell	FSOU	Finland
Annfinnur Garðalið	FSOA	Faroe Islands
Elias Zachariassen	FSOA	Faroe Islands
Willi Wittig	VDKS & Deputy President	Germany
Alexandre Ribes	HYDROS & ExCo	France
Koichi Akatsuka	JCA & ExCo & Honorary Member	Japan
Shinya Nakamura	JCA, President	Japan
Hiroki Kasai	JCA	Japan
Matsuda Horikazu	JCA	Japan
Nagata	JCA	Japan
Nakagawa Satoru	JCA	Japan
Matsuda Magumi	JCA	Japan
Shimizu	JCA	Japan
Hoshino	JCA	Japan
Omori	JCA	Japan
Yasuyuki Morimoto	JCA	Japan
Shigeru Kojima	JCA	Japan
Hiroki Kasai	JCA	Japan
Haruro Tajima	JCA	Japan
Hiroyuki Kyuko	JCA	Japan
Artis Osols	LSMA	Latvia
Gwee Bok Lee	KSMA	Korea
Mun Kun Chang	KSMA	Korea
Kyu Ho Bang	KSMA	Korea
Hans Sande	NMOA & IFSMA President	Norway
Victor del Prado	FILCAPTS	Philippines
Birol Bayrakdar	TOGMA	Türkiye

Aris Bostan	TOGMA	Türkiye
Özgür Doğan Güneş	TOGMA	Türkiye
Oleg Grygoriuk	MTWTU & ExCo	Ukraine
Christer Lindvall	Hon Mem and Past President	Sweden

Note: several of the JCA representatives attended online.

INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS

Dimitar Dimitrov	Bulgaria
Paul Owen	UK (Ind Mem & Secretariat)

HONORARY MEMBERS

Koichi Akatsuka	Hon Members & ExCo
-----------------	--------------------

SPEAKERS & GUESTS

Pradeep Chawla (formerly of AESM)	Hong Kong
Gen Goto (Tokyo University)	Japan
Tetsuya Kikyo (Nippon Foundation)	Japan
Noriaki Koyama (MOL)	Japan

SECRETARIAT

Commodore Jim Scorer	Secretary General
Captain Paul Owen	Assistant Secretary General

A list of apologies received is held at the IFSMA Office.

AGENDA ITEM 1 – IFSMA AGM

JCA President's opening address

The President of Japan Captains' Association, Captain Shinya Nakamura, welcomed all those present, this is the first time we have met face to face in four years and although the pandemic is not yet over, life is slowly returning to normal. The conflict in Ukraine continues and there will be a report on the situation tomorrow. He noted that it used to take eight hours from Scandinavia to Japan before the conflict but now takes much longer due to Russian airspace being closed to commercial flights, but the flights now take 12-14 hours, so he thanked all those travelling from Europe. He also noted that we have several presentations of seafarers' education on the agenda, he briefly introduced the seafarer education system in Japan.

IFSMA President's opening Statement

Captain Nakamura – San, Thank you so much for those kind words of welcome and thank you so much for inviting IFSMA here for our 47th General Assembly. This is the first time we have been able to get together in person since Helsinki in 2019 when we were looked after so well by Johan Ramsland and the Finnish Ships' Officers Union. Thank you for all you have organised for us and my Secretary General, Commodore Jim Scorer and his Assistant Secretary General, Captain Paul Owen, have told me how easy you have made the BGA for them and

they have greatly valued your attention to detail in everything you have done. This was witnessed by us all last night in the Harbour Boat Trip which was a very special occasion and showed off Tokyo to its best for us. IFSMA is delighted to be here in Tokyo with our colleagues from the Japanese Captains' Association and it is pleasing to see so many members here, particularly Captain Gee-bok Lee, President of the Korea Shipmasters' Association. We look forward to hearing his brief on their journey to becoming the latest member of our Federation later this morning. The quality of our programme offered would not have been possible without the considerable support of the Nippon Foundation, Mitsui OSK Lines and NYK Lines.

Delegates, two years ago at the Virtual BGA in London, I spoke to you from my office in Oslo as it would have been too complicated for me to fly to London as we were recovering from the COVID Pandemic. Since then, the recovery has been surprisingly fast and it shows the resilience and determination of our mariners and by early 2022 the crew changing issues were nearly back to normal and we started to breathe a sigh of relief and think that normality was beginning to return. How very wrong we were. When we awoke on 24th February to the news that Russia had invaded Ukraine with a direct assault on the capital Kyiv. The atrocities we have witnessed at the hands of the Russians is abhorrent, but we applaud the resolve and resilience of the Ukrainian people as they fight back to save their country and reclaim their sovereign territory and we must stand firm and support them in their endeavours and how we do that will be briefed by Jim Scorer when he talks to you about Membership issues later today. I am delighted that the Chairman of the Maritime Transport Workers' Trade Union of Ukraine, Oleg Grigoryuk, has been able to make it here today and he will speak to you more about what he and his Union have been doing to support their members and their families. Oleg, I am sure that I speak for all of our members when I say that our thoughts have been with you day and night as they are for the whole population of Ukraine.

Today we live in such an uncertain and dangerous world and our sympathies are with those that suffer from the problems of the increasing number of severe earthquakes, particularly in Türkiye and Morocco and the effects that Climate Change brings to our nations with increasing and unpredictable weather events around the world and most recently in Libya. The extreme volatility of our world was demonstrated yet again two weeks ago with the terrible terrorist attack by Hamas on Israel with the massacre of so many men women and children and the taking of hostages to use as human shields. It is in this very difficult environment that the maritime industry has to operate and it is you our shipmasters that lead our seafarers as we continue to keep trade moving around our troubled world. My fellow Shipmasters I applaud you for what you do unseen in the eyes of most of our nations.

Delegates, I think it is appropriate and always useful to remind ourselves on these occasions that IFSMA was formed, NEARLY 50 YEARS AGO, in 1974 by eight National Shipmasters' Associations to unite the World's serving Shipmasters into a single professional co-ordinated body. It is a non-profit making, apolitical organisation, dedicated solely to the interests of the serving Shipmaster and to uphold International Standards of Professional Competence of Seafarers commensurate with the need to ensure Safe Operational Practices, Preservation from Human Injury, Protection of the Marine Environment and Safety of Life and Property at Sea.

To those of you who are not familiar with the Federation, IFSMA was granted Consultative Status as a Non-Governmental Organisation by the International Maritime Organization (IMO) since 1975, which enables the Federation to represent the views and protect the interests of the serving Shipmaster, unfettered and unfiltered either by National Governments or by Shipping Companies. In 1993, IFSMA was placed on the International Labour Office's (ILO) special list of Non-Governmental International Organizations.

The IMO is the core of our business and our Shipmasters are robustly represented by our small Secretariat of Jim Scorer and Paul Owen. Jim always needs Shipmasters with current experience to assist him at the IMO, so I do urge you, our affiliated associations, to join us in attending IMO meetings. Some of you are well versed with our website, but I would just reinforce my words to you with a short film. (A film was shown emphasising the need for adequate crew numbers).

Delegates, in addition to the work done by IFSMA I want to highlight the many Shipmaster Associations and Maritime Unions that work tirelessly on your behalf. It is these organisations that help you in your hour of need and it is the Unions that hold the Collective Bargaining Agreements that negotiate on your behalf to improve your working conditions and pay awards. It is for this reason I have asked Captain Marcos Castro, president of the Centre for Overseas Captains and Merchant Navy Officers, to give you a short presentation before lunch today to show you what he has to do on your behalf having just completed his CBA talks with the Government of Argentina three weeks ago. On that note we will now proceed with the business of the day and I therefore declare the IFSMA 47th General Assembly now officially opened.

Election of the Executive Council for 2023-2027

The Secretary General proposed that, as there were the exact number of candidates for all vacancies in the Executive Council, an election was not necessary. There was no objection to this proposal. Therefore, the following were agreed to form the next Executive Council:

President	Hans Sande	Norway (NMOA)
Deputy President	Willi Wittig	Germany (VDKS)
Vice President 1	Marcos Castro	Argentina (CCUOMM)
Vice President 2	Niels Bergkvist Hansen	Denmark (DMO) [New]
Vice President 3	Martin Björkel	Finland (FSOU) [New]
Vice President 4	Alexandre Ribes	France (HYDROS)
Vice President 5	Shinya Nakamura	Japan (JCA) [New]
Vice President 6	Marcel van den Broke	Netherlands (Nautilus NL)
Vice President 7	Nils Brandberg	Sweden (MOA) [New]
Vice President 8	Mehmet Birol Bayrakdar	Türkiye (TOGMA) [New]
Vice President 9	Oleg Grygoriuk	Ukraine (MTWTU)
Vice President 10	Joseph Hartnett	USA (CAMM)

Report by Secretary General

See Annex for text of the Secretary General's Report

Strategic Plan 2024-2029 “Maintaining Course and Speed”

The Secretary General then presented the revised Strategic Plan 2024-2029 “Maintaining Course and Speed” on behalf of the President and the Executive Council. He explained the main changes. The Assembly approved the new Strategic Plan: See Annex for the new Strategic Plan.

Statutes and Bye-Laws revisions

The Secretary General presented the proposed amended Statutes and Bye-Laws article 8 and 12 which had previously been circulated to members. The amendments were approved without further changes as follows:

A. Article 8*Membership Applications*

- a. All applications for Membership shall be on standard forms, provided for that purpose by the Headquarters and shall include the names of the Association or Organisation, President and Secretary and the number of its active serving Shipmasters, afloat or ashore, including the Board and Management; for an Organisation mentioned under Article 7b. also the total number of Members and the name(s) of the person(s) representing the Shipmasters.

Industrial and Associate Members shall apply to Headquarters with their name, contact person and title, address, a statement outlining their maritime interests, the benefits they can offer to IFSMA Members, and the reason why they wish to join IFSMA.

The application shall be submitted to IFSMA, who will verify the applicant's willingness and ability to fulfil the obligations of the Federation to the Executive Council for approval; if in the country of the applicant there is already an Association Member of IFSMA in good standing and that Association registers an objection, the application shall not be approved on the first submission by the Executive Council. A second application may then be made and this shall be referred to all Members for election at the next General Assembly, a majority of two thirds of the votes in favour being required to make the application effective.

Other applications may also be voted upon at a meeting of the General Assembly if required by the Executive Council.

- b. The decision of acceptance for Individual Members will be taken by the Executive Council of IFSMA, who may delegate its authority to the Secretary General for this purpose.
- c. Membership will be granted after completion of a. and b. and after the current affiliation fee and subscription have been paid.

B. Article 12*Reinstatement*

- a. After Expulsion the reinstatement of an Association whose affiliation has been terminated under Article 10 can be effected only by a three-quarters majority vote at the next General Assembly.
- b. After Suspension - In cases other than following suspension for failure to meet financial obligations, application for reinstatement may be made at any time and shall be accepted, if the impediment to full Membership is shown to have been removed, by a three-quarters majority vote at the next General Assembly.

- c. In the case of an application for reinstatement after financial obligations have been met, the Principal Officers shall have power to effect immediate reinstatement.

Membership Issues

The Secretary General then moved on to the subject of membership issues.

See Annex for text of his report.

Treasurer's Report

The Assistant Secretary General, acting as Honorary Treasurer, introduced the annual financial reports for 2022.

He referred to End of Year 2022 statement and the 2022 Balance Sheet contained in the back of the Part A which had been approved by the Executive Council.

He introduced the End of Year 2022 figures first by drawing attention to the red column which showed the actual figures, the left column showed the approved budget and the right column the budget for 2023 approved by the Executive Council. He noted that expenditure was low due to a General Assembly not being held in that year. This produced a contribution of £32,112 which was added to our reserves. He then moved on to the Balance Sheet for 31 December 2022, this showed a balance of assets of £266,482 at the end of 2022.

He then referred to the Honorary Auditor's Report which was made by Captain Rodger MacDonald, a former IFSMA Secretary General who confirmed the figures for the income and expenditure.

The accounts were approved.

He then introduced the budget for 2024, this showed an income on £106,600 and expenditure of £106,500. The budget was approved.

Finally, he mentioned the new publication *The Master's Practical Guide to Maritime Law* which we jointly produced with the International Chamber of Shipping. There are costs to IFSMA, however, it is anticipated that our share of the sales income will more than cover our costs. He also mentioned the *IFSMA Shipmasters and Chief Engineer Legal Insurance Policy*, which, when implemented, should also provide us with income.

Appointment of Honorary Auditor for 2023 and 2024.

The current Honorary Auditor, Captain Rodger MacDonald, has agreed to continue in this role for 2023 and 2024. Members agreed to this appointment.

Confirmation of future venues for Biennial General Assemblies

Secretary General confirmed that it is planned to hold the next Biennial General Assembly in the *Faroe Islands during 2025*. He invited Captain Annfinnur Garðalið to brief the General Assembly on the venue. He showed: where Faroe Islands are located between Iceland and Norway, pictures of various places including the hotel and presented two short videos illustrating the beauty of this venue. It is best to visit during September. A video Introduction to Faroe Islands can be seen here: <https://youtu.be/fwWdUA1JAp0> See also Annex to this report, under Agenda 1, for print out of PowerPoint presentation slides.

The proposed venue for **2027 is Odesa in Ukraine**. (Agenda 10) Captain Oleg Grygoriuk was invited to brief the General Assembly on the situation in Ukraine. He took the meeting through the events since the war started in 2014 with the annexation of Crimea. There developed solidarity, partnership and support from all over the world which enabled them to provide a service and support seafarers. Their Odesa office opened in 2015 and they reopened the Kyiv office in 2017. They also suffered from the effects of the pandemic, but the real challenge started when Russia invaded Ukraine on 24th February 2022. They did their best to continue to operate and overcame communications problems amongst other things in a climate of huge uncertainty. An estimated 60% of the crews were on board at this time with the rest of them at home or travelling. He heard so many stories from them around this time. They organised evacuation from the occupied areas for the seafarers and their families. Most of their funds being used to support their members and families at this difficult time with some financial support from overseas organisations. Most of his members and their families are now located in neighbouring countries. The cadets who had almost obtained their bachelor's degree in the Kherson State Academy were transferred to Lithuania where they are able to continue their studies. He said that he was very grateful that his union had been given subscription relief by IFSMA, he anticipated that the situation would improve next year. See video here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZhMRGYb9GW0>

Report from Argentina by CCUMM President Marcos Castro.

He explained that recently he has been working with the government on personal tax relief for Argentine seafarers and he has had some recent success. This will enable senior Argentine seafarers to better compete in the regional crewing market.

The Master's Practical Guide to Maritime Law. (Agenda 12)

Martine Björkell (FSOU), who was a member of the Working Group, introduced this important new publication which was a joint collaboration by ICS and IFSMA. It was designed to be an international publication and much of it is based on international law. ICS has the expertise needed to publish, sell and distribute books. He took the meeting through the various sections contained in the book. A copy of the book was circulated to the meeting for scrutiny.

For more information on the contents and to purchase the book visit:

<https://publications.ics-shipping.org/single-product.php?id=91>

The book is available in both physical format and as an eBook. A discount for members is available.

See also Annex to this report, under Agenda 12, for print out of PowerPoint presentation slides.

The Secretary General said that all Member Associations will receive their own free copy of this important publication so they can promote the book to their members. They will be contacted after the meeting. He then presented a personal copy to our long-standing member, Captain Koichi Akatsuka and another copy to Captain Shinya Nakamura, President of Japan Captain's Association.

Introduction to Korea Shipmasters' Association

Captain Kwee-Bok Lee the President and Captain Mun-Kun Chang provided background information, stating that the association was only recently formed and earlier this year became a member of IFSMA. He gave thanks to JCA President, Captain Nakamura, for inviting them to the meeting. He mentioned the capsizing and sinking of the Korean Ferry MV *Sewol* with the loss of 304 lives, which led to the formation of the Korea Shipmasters' Association. They publish six technical books on subjects such as: shiphandling, stability, how to use anchors,

etc. and six research reports. They are involved with training for pilots and captains. They also hold seminars.

See Annex to this report for print out of PowerPoint slides presented.

AGENDA 2

Seafarer Training

The President introduced Captain Pradeep Chawla, who until recently was the Group Managing Director, QHSE and Training, with Anglo Eastern Univan Group based in Hong Kong where he oversaw QHSE and Training for 650 vessels with over 30,000 sea staff and 1,800 shore staff. He has held various posts in other organisations over the years and is currently the CEO and founder of Maritime Knowledge Ltd which provides Digital Learning Management Systems. He is also the Chairman of the GlobalMET association.

The paper covered how Education and Training is evolving with the changes in technology. Covid brought about a swift adoption of Virtual Instructor Led Training and the adoption of eLearning. Students and society in general absorb news and information through social media.

The paper discussed these changes and presented a viewpoint on the possible solutions on what the Future of Learning may look like.

See Annex to this report for print out of PowerPoint slides presented.

AGENDA 3

Student Maritime Cooperation

Presented by Captain Willi Wittig, IFSMA Deputy President. Associated Professor at Bremen University of Applied Sciences and President of IFSMA Association VDKS in Germany.

See Annex to this report for print out of PowerPoint slides presented.

AGENDA 4

Student Cooperation Experience

Presented by Captain Hans Sande, IFSMA President and President of NMOA in Norway.

See Annex to this report for print out of PowerPoint slides presented.

AGENDA 5

Progress at IMO Working Group on Maritime Autonomous Surface Ships (MASS)

Presented by Professor Gen Goto, Japan

See Annex to this report for print out of PowerPoint slides presented.

AGENDA 6

IFSMA's Views on Maritime Autonomous Surface Ships (MASS)

Presented by IFSMA Secretary General, Commodore Jim Scorer. See Annex for presentation text and also for print out of PowerPoint slides presented.

AGENDA 7***Proposal of Objective Criteria for Safety (Evaluation) of Automatic Collision Avoidance System.***

Presented by Captain Shinya Nakamura, President of Japan Captain's Association. See Annex for paper presented.

AGENDA 8***The Nippon Foundation "MEGURI2040" Fully Autonomous Ship Program***

Presented by Tetsuya Kikyo, The Nippon Foundation.

See Annex to this report for print out of PowerPoint slides presented.

See also video here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gNmz5QvQnIA>

AGENDA 9a***Is Profession of Ship Captain Easier Today?***

Presented by Captain Dimitar Dimitrov, Individual Member and CESMA President.

See Annex for text of presentation.

AGENDA 9b***ERASMUS Project***

Presented by Captain Dimitar Dimitrov, Individual Member and CESMA President.

See Annex for text of presentation and print out of PowerPoint slides.

AGENDA 10***Report from Ukraine by MTWTU President Captain Oleg Grygoriuk***

Covered in Agenda 1.

AGENDA 11***Controlling Fires in Electric Vehicles***

Presented by Captain Annfinnur Garðalið, President FSOU, Faroe Islands.

See Annex for print out of PowerPoint slides. See also:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PMNVWCzdSBQ> &

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L22Fc7s8_9Y

AGENDA 12***The Master's Practical Guide to Maritime Law***

See Agenda 1 and Annex for print out of PowerPoint slides.

AGENDA 13*Any other business***IMO Secretary General and IFSMA Honorary Membership**

There was agreement that we should invite the next IMO Secretary General, Mr. Arsenio Dominguez Velasco, to become an IFSMA Honorary Member. It was noted that every previous IMO Secretary Generals were also IFSMA Honorary Members.

AGENDA 14*Visit to MOL "Safety Operations Supporting Center"*

Members were invited to visit this very interesting centre. We were given a presentation and afterwards we were able to walk around the centre to view the various video displays and work stations.

See Annex for a print out of the PowerPoint slides.

The **BGA Dinner** was held at the Toshi Centre Hotel on the evening of 26th October and enjoyed by all present.

There being no further business, the General Assembly was closed at 1600 on 27th October.