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IFSMA NEWSLETTER

The Shipmasters' International Voice

USCGC Sycamore
Exercise Argus, Nuuk, Greenland
See page 24

UNITY FOR SAFETY AT SEA
IFSMA

International Federation of Shipmasters' Associations (IFSMA)

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Readers are reminded that the opinions expressed in the IFSMA Newsletter are those of the author and not necessarily in accord with IFSMA policy.

Secretary General's Report

Summer is in the UK with a vengeance as we have just recorded our hottest and driest June since the UK records began in the late 1800s. We have had record floods around the world and Canada is currently suffering from serious fires across their country with more than 80,000 square miles of land being burnt.

It is therefore appropriate that as you read this we have just started discussions on Climate Change at the Marine Environment and Protection Committee (MEPC) at the IMO where we are hoping that agreement will be reached on reduction in greenhouse gasses from ships so that we can keep within the Paris Accord and not go above the 1.5°C increase in average temperatures by 2050 and achieve a Net Zero for shipping by this date.

I will report next month how it went. June has been dominated by the Maritime Safety Committee (MSC) where progress was made with the development of the IMO Code on autonomous ships, MASS. IFSMA was extremely busy in this area where we had three papers tabled on the Joint Working Group on MASS which majored on the role of the Shipmasters and the legal context in which MASS will operate.

This work continued in the Working Group at MSC and I thank David Appleton of Nautilus International who leads for IFSMA on MASS and is strongly supported by Andrew Higgs on international law. We hope to have this work complete by 2025, but I will ensure that a presentation to update you will be given to you at the BGA in Tokyo in October.

May I remind you that the dates for this year's BGA are 26 and 27 October and the Japanese Captains' Association have put on a wonderfully interesting programme for us. There will be a support programme for our partners and family members who accompany us. We will be giving a warm welcome to our newly formed Association from the Republic of Korea who will be joining us formally for the first time as a fully-fledged member of IFSMA. I look forward to seeing you there, so please book early. Paul has sent out all the BGA information. If in doubt please contact us.

With my best wishes to you all.

Jim Scorer
Secretary General

From the News Editor

Maritime London: An Historical Journey in Pictures and Words

This a hardback book by Anthony Burton, published by Pen & Sword Transport with 144 pages and +65 colour and 65 monochrome illustrations

ISBN: 978 1 39909 287 6. Price £2.50.

London's maritime history from the establishment of the Roman city of Londinium to the present day is considered in this volume over eight chapters with an introduction, bibliography and the customary list of acknowledgements plus index. For a publication about a city and its river with a great following of students, tourists and the inquisitive there is also a list of places to visit and preserved ships within or close to its waters.

Cutty Sark, the famous tea clipper at her permanent berth in Greenwich. On her maiden voyage in 1870 she carried general cargo to Shanghai returning with tea. The round trip took eight months.

Here are discussed the many different aspects of life on the Thames and its connecting waterways and canals and its people. Burton deserves credit for his depth of research. There was a time when the River Thames, known by its trade as the London River, was the main highway for the city, when licensed watermen plied their trade carrying passengers and goods in a wide variety of craft, the forerunner of the water taxi sculling up, down and across.

The Thames was for many centuries a major ship building centre and the story includes the construction of some iconic vessels from Henry VIII's flagship *Henri Grâce à Dieu* (Henry, Thanks be to God), also known as Great Harry) to Isambard Brunel's great steamship *Great Eastern*.

London was also until recently the country's most important port. In the days of sail, the Port of London was crowded with vessels and it was not until the early nineteenth century that major enclosed docks were built. Vast cargoes were shipped and landed here at docks used to the middle of twentieth century as trade moved down river.

A crowded scene near Limehouse, by Thomas Serres (1759-1820). Note the lighter laden with hay, a small boat being sculled and a narrow boat being loaded by the quay.

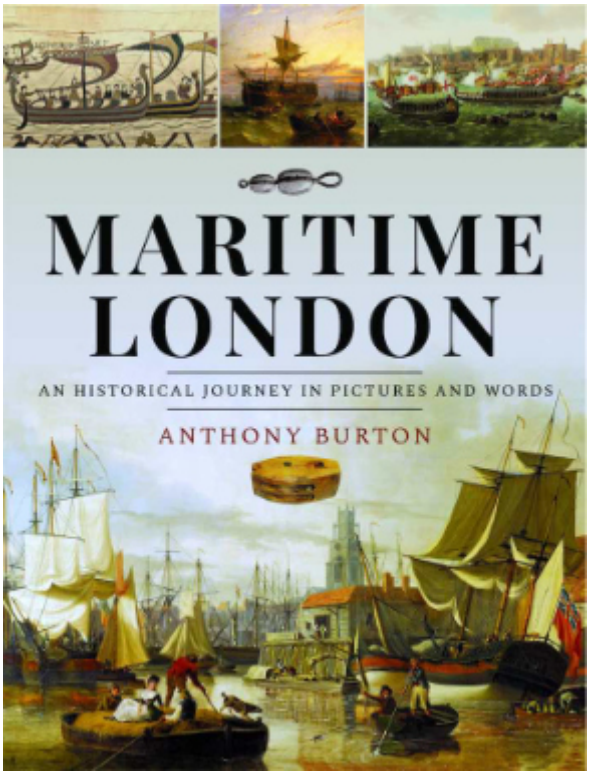
The early nineteenth century also saw London connected to the rest of England through a network of canals. Other topics covered by Burton include the lifeboat service (the RNLI), the London Fire Brigade and former Thames Division of the Metropolitan Police (now the Marine Policing Unit). The result is a colourful pageant that highlights the vital role London's waterways played in the life of the capital and, or course, the nation's economy.

Maritime London: An Historical Journey in Pictures and Words can be held up as an introduction to a great port city for those studying mercantile history or the naturally curious. It was here that Samuel Pepys wrote his diary while in the Navy Office as Clerk to the Acts to the Navy Board, near the Tower of London; at Trinity House as Master and as Secretary of the Navy with a professional interest in shipbuilding at Deptford yard.

Excursion steamer by the Thames Embankment, from an old post card.

Here, too, in the City of London (where the Lord Mayor is still Admiral of the Port) the Honourable East India Company had its being after it was granted a charter of incorporation by Elizabeth I in 1600. The HEIC or John Company's ships were constructed at Blackwall

on the north or Essex bank or at Deptford on the opposite, south, or Kent side of the Thames. Wherever you go today in the City of London you are never far away from streets recalling trades or places: India, Muscovy, Rangoon, Ropemaker or Sugar, to name a few.



When I started out as a junior scribe in the City of London more than half a century ago ships were still loading and discharging cargoes in the reach between London Bridge and Tower Bridge. The warehouses nearby on the Kent, or south, side were called the Nation's Larder, being a repository of imported foodstuffs. There was the huge Billingsgate fish market on the opposite bank, since moved out of town. Further upstream there was daily mist on the water, indicator of a cold store. Certainly before the Second World War, the Port of London had warehouses for the many commodities it handled, some no longer traded in quantity such as furs, carpets, tobacco and ivory. The Hudson's Bay Company was in the City from to 1670 to 1970.

Anthony Burton has been writing about the history of transport and technology for fifty years. His books include *Remains of a Revolution*, *The Railway Builders*, *The Locomotive Pioneers* and biographies of Thomas Telford, George and Robert Stephenson and a biography of Marc and Isambard Brunel. He has worked extensively in TV and most recently as historical adviser to the Discovery Channel series *Industrial Revelations*, *More Industrial Revelations* and *On the Rails*.

Pen & Sword

For more information of Pen and Sword's titles readers are invited to see here: www.pen-and-sword.co.uk/

Illustrations kindly provided by Pen & Sword Transport ©.

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 ©

Statement on the migrant shipwreck off Greek coast:

IMO Secretary General Kitack Lim

On 16 June IMO Secretary-General Kitack Lim said:

'*I am profoundly saddened by the reports of the tragic loss of life off the coast of Greece, after a boat carrying hundreds of people reportedly capsized and sank. It is a sad fact that thousands of people undertake dangerous sea crossings in unsafe vessels putting their lives in the hands of unscrupulous operators – who have little regard for mandatory regulations such as the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS) or the International Convention on Maritime Search and Rescue (SAR).*

'*I commend the efforts of the Greek authorities and the teams involved in the search and rescue operation, saving many lives. It is important for us to recognize the commendable efforts of the coast guards, navies, search and rescue agencies and other vessels that continue to rescue those in distress at sea, acting in the best spirit and tradition of seafaring.*

'*Every life lost at sea is one too many. IMO will continue to work with others in the United Nations system, like the Inter-Agency Group on the protection of refugees and migrants moving by sea, to address the complexities of this humanitarian issue and the unsafe practices associated with the transport of migrants by sea.*

'*I wish to offer my deepest condolences to all those impacted by this latest tragedy*.'

Continued support for seafarers

ILO D-G and IMO S-G pledge

IMO Secretary-General Mr Kitack Lim welcomed International Labour Organization (ILO) Director-General, Mr Gilbert Houngbo, to IMO HQ on 22 May to discuss matters impacting seafarers and intensify the already close cooperation between the two UN agencies.

Ukraine: Stranded ships and seafarers

The two principals discussed the situation of ships and their crews stranded in Ukrainian ports since the outbreak of the military conflict and explored initiatives to facilitate safe departure of ships and their crew from Ukrainian ports.

MLC 2006

The meeting appreciated the ongoing close cooperation with industry and affected flag states and

emphasize the need for updated information regarding the number of ships and the situation of the crew concerned to identify required action. The meeting highlighted the importance for the relevant parties to continue observing ILO's Maritime Labour Convention, 2006, as amended (MLC, 2006).

Matters of mutual interest

The principals also discussed issues of mutual interest, in particular the close cooperation concerning the role of the human element in shipping and the need to ensure decent working conditions for all seafarers.

STCW and the ISM Code

Further, the meeting discussed developing synergies in the field of technical cooperation.

These included the need to enhance flag and port State inspections of ships with respect to social responsibilities and labour rights. To this was added the promotion of the MLC, 2006, as an internationally binding instrument closely connected to IMO's International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (STCW), 1978, and the International Safety Management (ISM) Code.

There were also shared concerns with respect to manning and fatigue; fair treatment of seafarers, including abandonment, criminalization and bullying and harassment.

It was agreed that there would be regular consultations held between the two Secretariats.

To raised the profile of shipping and seafarers

The IMO and ILO principals reiterated their deep interest in moving forward to raise the profile of the critical role of shipping and seafarers through a future joint initiative. Both principals agreed that the meeting served to strengthen the working relationships of the IMO and ILO Secretariats and consequently benefit seafarers all over the world.

UN Committees and the EA-SA-IO region

The Global South port security project

A major project to support the safety and security of port facilities on vital trade routes in the in Eastern and Southern Africa and the Indian Ocean region is set to continue its work. Future plans include national workshops in each beneficiary country to assess law enforcement capacity in each of the three domains covered by the project. This was reported by the IMO media service on 1 June.

Members of the Steering Committee and Technical Committee of the Port Security and Safety of Navigation in Eastern and Southern Africa and the Indian Ocean project were updated on progress to date and the project's next steps at separate meetings held from 23 to 25 May in Cape Town.

The Port Security Project aims to ensure the safety and security of port facilities on vital trade routes in the EA-SA-IO region critical to the economic development and prosperity of the Global South.

Agencies' involvement

Alongside IMO, the project, which was initiated in 2020, is jointly implemented by the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL) and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) under the strategic direction of the Indian Ocean Commission (IOC).

The Port Security Project provides technical expertise to increase safety and efficiency in the maritime sector. Its work is split between the three implementing partners, with IMO focused on the port security and safety aspects of navigation, whilst INTERPOL and UNODC work on its law enforcement aspects.

Indian Ocean Commission coordination

In addition to the implementing partners, those at the Cape Town meetings included National Focal Points from the respective project countries: Angola,

Comoros, Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles and the United Republic of Tanzania. The meetings were coordinated by the Indian Ocean Commission.

SAMSA hosting

Port Security Project's nine beneficiary countries and three partner countries took part in the Cape Town meetings, along with regional partners. The event was hosted by the South Africa Maritime Safety Authority, which holds observer status on the project. The European Union, which sponsors the project, was also represented.

Bonn climate conference

IMO shipping decarbonisation latest

According to news from IMO received on 6 June the organization has updated the UN Bonn Climate Change Conference held from 5 to 15 June on the Organization's work towards adopting a revised Strategy on reduction of GHG emissions from shipping.

IMO MEPC

The upgraded strategy is set to be adopted at the IMO Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC 80), which meets from 3 to 7 July following a meeting of the Intersessional GHG Working Group to be convened from 26 to June.

In a statement to the UN Framework for Climate Change (UNFCCC) Subsidiary Body and for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA), IMO's Camille Bourgeon highlighted the mandatory energy efficiency regulations already adopted by IMO and continuing work to ensure that international shipping bears its fair share of responsibility in addressing climate change.

SIDS and LDCs

As it continues to look at how to incentivise the availability and scalability of sustainable low-and zero-carbon marine fuels and technologies in the near future, IMO will continue to support developing countries. In particular these will be Small Island Developing States and Least Developed Countries and IMO has the view to ensuring a just and equitable transition to low-carbon shipping and to seize development opportunities arising from the decarbonisation of the maritime sector.

Safe handling of future marine fuels

IMO is also accelerating its efforts in developing the necessary safety regulatory framework allowing the safe handling of future marine fuels on board ships.

For further information

To download the full IMO Submission to SBSTA 58 readers are invited to see here:
https://tinyurl.com/yjc9c8dn

To learn more about IMO's GHG work see here:
https://tinyurl.com/mr2ne2bm

And to read more on IMO and the UNFCC click here:
https://tinyurl.com/2c4zcywn

Training Indonesian port security officials

Officials in maritime security roles in Indonesia have been taught the skills and knowledge required to conduct port facility security audits. Participants from the Designated Authority (DA) recently learned about effective preparation of reporting and follow-up actions that stem from the audit process. Port and ship security are essential for maritime trade.

About the DA

A Designated Authority is a specified organization responsible for maritime security that is nominated by a national Government. It sets the appropriate security level, verifies compliance of port facilities and approves port facility security assessments and plans.

National training is designed to assist participants in ensuring the full implementation of maritime security measures in Indonesian ports, as required by the

International Ship and Port Facility Code (ISPS Code)* and in line with established IMO Maritime Security measures, including the relevant provisions of SOLAS Chapter XI-2.

IMO reported that the five-day Port Facility Security Training Course held from 5 to 9 June took place in Makassar, Indonesia and involved 26 officials from several organizations. The course includes a field trip for the participants to Port Makassar.

Mr Rivo Lindo, Director of Sea and Coast Guard of Indonesia, Mr Alex Stephens the Consul General of Australia in Makassar and Ms Gillian Van Duren (First Secretary Transport Department. Home Affairs) spoke during the workshop's opening session. It is understood that the event was funded jointly by the Government of Australia and IMO.

Readers are invited to learn more about IMO's work on maritime security here:
https://tinyurl.com/bdd4ymc6

* https://tinyurl.com/266u8c9x

IMO Maritime Safety Committee (MSC 107)

31 May to 9 June 2023

The 107th meeting of the IMO Maritime Safety Committee (MSC 107) was held at IMO HQ in London from 31 May to 9 June.

Below we provide a summary of points of relevance to members of IFSMA.

1. Adoption of amendments

Safety measures for non-SOLAS ships operating in polar waters - Polar Code and SOLAS

MSC adopted a first set of amendments to the Polar Code, together with associated amendments to the SOLAS Convention, to incorporate new requirements concerning safety of navigation and voyage planning, applicable to fishing vessels of 24 m in length overall and above, pleasure yachts of 300 GT and above not engaged in trade and cargo ships of 300 GT and above but below 500 GT, operating in polar waters.

The amendments are expected to enter into force on 1 January 2026.

STCW Convention amendments related to electronic certificates

MSC adopted amendments to the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (STCW), 1978, regulation I/2 (Certificates and endorsements), and the corresponding section of the Seafarers' Training Certification and Watchkeeping (STCW) Code, related to electronic certificates. The amendments are expected to enter into force on 1 January 2025.

MSC also approved an associated circular on Guidelines on the use of electronic certificates of seafarers.

International Life-Saving Appliance (LSA) Code

MSC adopted amendments to the LSA Code related to ventilation requirements for totally enclosed lifeboats. The provisions should be applied to such lifeboats installed on or after 1 January 2029.

In this connection, MSC adopted associated amendments to the Revised recommendation on testing of life-saving appliances (resolution MSC.81(70)) and approved circulars on: Revised standardized life-saving appliance evaluation and test report forms (survival craft); and Revised standardized life-saving appliance evaluation and test report forms (personal life-saving appliances).

International Maritime Solid Bulk Cargoes (IMSBC) Code amendments

MSC adopted the latest set of amendments to the International Maritime Solid Bulk Cargoes (IMSBC) Code, following finalization by the Editorial & Technical Group. As usual, these amendments were adopted in the form of a consolidated version of the whole IMSBC Code and will enter into force on 1 January 2025, with voluntary application from 1 January 2024.

The MSC also approved related circulars on: Guidelines for the submission of information and completion of the format for the properties of cargoes not listed in the International Maritime Solid Bulk Cargoes (IMSBC) Code and their conditions of carriage; Guidelines for developing and approving procedures for sampling, testing and controlling the moisture content for solid bulk cargoes which may liquefy or undergo dynamic separation; and Lists of solid bulk cargoes for which a fixed gas fire-extinguishing system may be exempted or for which a fixed gas fire-extinguishing system is ineffective.

2. Maritime autonomous surface ships (MASS)

MSC made further progress on the development of a goal-based instrument regulating the operation of

maritime autonomous surface ships (MASS), expected to be adopted by 2025. This follows the completion of a related regulatory scoping exercise.

A MASS Working Group was established to further the work and developed common positions on various matters, to be shared with the Joint MSC/LEG/FAL Working Group on MASS, which was established as a cross-cutting mechanism to address common issues identified by the regulatory scoping exercises for the use of MASS conducted by the Maritime Safety, Legal and Facilitation Committees.

The MSC noted, in particular, the common position of the Group on training, certification and competency requirements, namely that: 1. When there are seafarers on a MASS, STCW applies to them. 2. However, when remote operators and masters at ROC are not on board a ship, STCW does not apply to those persons, and the MASS Code will be required to address all training, certification and competency requirements with the STCW requirements should be considered as a basis. 3. There are certain principles (e.g. regarding watchkeeping) in STCW, when considering autonomy and remote operation, that should be addressed in the MASS Code, irrespective of the application of STCW.

The MSC noted the progress made in developing the draft goal-based non-mandatory MASS Code and approved the updated road map for the further work.

The Correspondence Group was re-established to, inter alia: continue the development of the non-mandatory goal-based MASS Code; consider the common potential gaps and/or themes identified during the Regulatory Scoping Exercise (RSE) (MSC.1/Circ.1638, section 5), focusing on the high priority items; if required, develop positions on any common issues for submission to the Joint MSC/LEG/FAL Working Group in the future; limit the development of the non-mandatory MASS Code to cargo ships with a view to consider the feasibility for application to passenger ships at a future stage.

The Intersessional MASS Working Group, to meet in October 2023, was instructed to continue the development of the MASS Code, taking into account the latest draft prepared by the Correspondence Group; further consider the common potential gaps and/or themes identified during the RSE; if necessary, develop positions on any common issues for submission to the Joint MSC/LEG/FAL Working Group in the future; limit the development of the non-mandatory MASS Code to cargo ships with a view to consider the feasibility for application to passenger ships at a future stage.

The Working Group on Goal-based New Ship Construction Standards (GBS) considered examples of functional requirements (FRs) for the MASS Code and provided some observations and recommendations for the MASS Working Group, in particular, that an appropriate hazard identification (HAZID) study should be conducted to provide the necessary tool for developing relevant hazards, mitigating functions, and expected performances (EPs) and associated FRs.

The Joint MASS Working Group has developed a table – intended as a living document – to identify preferred options for addressing common issues, such as the role, responsibilities competencies required of the MASS master and crew; and identification and meaning of term "remote operator" and their responsibilities. The JWG is expected to have its next meeting in April 2024.

Symposium on MASS

A Symposium on "Making headway on the IMO MASS Code", co-sponsored by IMO and the Republic of Korea, was held on 30 May 2023, i.e., the day before MSC 107 commenced.

To read more readers are invited to see here: https://tinyurl.com/937ctzky

3. Guidelines for safety of ships using LPG

MSC approved Interim Guidelines for the safety of ships using liquefied petroleum gas (LPG).

The basic philosophy of these Interim Guidelines is to provide provisions for the arrangement, installation, control and monitoring of machinery, equipment and systems using LPG as fuel to minimize the risk to the ship, its crew and the environment, having regard to the nature of the fuels involved.

The guidelines were developed by the CCC Sub-Committee, as part of the important work being carried out by the Sub-Committee in the context of shipping's need for new fuels and propulsion systems to meet decarbonization ambitions set out in the Initial IMO GHG Strategy.

Matters related to innovative types of fuel are considered under the CCC agenda item on the International Code of Safety for Ships using Gases or other Low-flashpoint Fuels (IGF Code) and development of guidelines for alternative fuels and related technologies. The IGF Code, which entered into force in 2017, aims to minimize the risk to ships, their crews and the environment, given the nature of the fuels involved. The Code initially focused on liquefied natural gas (LNG), but work is now underway to also consider alternative fuel types.

Interim guidelines for the safety of ships using methyl/ethyl alcohol as fuel have already been developed by the Sub-Committee and were approved by MSC in 2020 (MSC.1/Circ.1621). Interim guidelines for ships using fuel cells were approved by MSC 105 in April 2022 (MSC.1/Circ.1647).

New output on safety regulatory framework to support the reduction of GHG emissions from ships using new technologies and alternative fuels

The MSC considered proposals for a new output to deliver a framework for the safe operation of new technologies and alternative fuels aimed at reducing GHG emissions from ships, to support the safe delivery of IMO's GHG Strategy.

Having noted the overwhelming support for the proposal, the MSC agreed to new output on "Development of a safety regulatory framework to support the reduction of GHG emissions from ships using new technologies and alternative fuels", to be added to the MSC agenda, starting with MSC 108.

A correspondence group was established to: identify and update a list of fuels and technologies which will assist international shipping to support the reduction of GHG emissions from ships using new technologies and alternative fuels; conduct an assessment for each identified fuels and new technologies (e.g. the state of knowledge of risks and the technical considerations of solutions, Hazards and Risks, Risk Control Measures) in relation to persons, ships (new built and converted) and applicable operations for the same, from e.g. projects applying alternative design and approval process where permitted; based on the outcomes, develop a record for safety obstacles and gaps in the current IMO instruments that may impede the use of the alternative fuel or new technology; and submit a written report to MSC 108.

4. Resolution on "Strengthening measures for ensuring the safety of international shipping"

Following a proposal by several Member States, MSC adopted a resolution on "Strengthening measures for ensuring the safety of international shipping".

The resolution notes that the IMO Council, at its128th session, strongly condemned the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK)´s recent missile launches without proper prior notification, aside from the incompatibility of ballistic missile launches with the relevant UN Security Council resolutions, which seriously threatened the safety of international shipping.

The resolution:

1. Urgently calls upon the DPRK to comply strictly with SOLAS regulation V/4, the recommendations contained in resolution A.706(17), as amended, on World-wide Navigational Warning Service (in particular, paragraph 4.2.1.3.13 of annex 1 thereto) and relevant circulars, that Member States should provide prior notification via transmission as NAVAREA warning;

2. Urgently calls upon the DPRK to cease unlawful and unannounced ballistic missile launches across international shipping lanes;

3. Requests the Secretary-General to take appropriate and practicable actions to establish close and cooperative relationships with relevant other international organizations including the International Civil Aviation Organization, which face the common serious challenges posed by the afore-said DPRK missile launches endangering the safety of international transport, and to report an update to Member States and relevant maritime stakeholders.

5. Maritime security, piracy and armed robbery against ships

Piracy and armed robbery against ships

MSC noted the latest update on global trends relating to piracy and armed robbery against ships. Figures based on reports submitted to the IMO show that the global number of incidents has generally continued to fall, with 131 incidents reported in 2022 compared to 172 incidents in 2021. This is attributed to the regional and international efforts to implement the Djibouti and Yaoundé Codes of Conduct and other important regional initiatives.

8. STCW training provisions on bullying and harassment in the maritime sector, including sexual assault and sexual harassment (SASH) approved

MSC approved, for subsequent adoption at MSC 108, draft amendments to the Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (STCW) Code, to prevent and respond to bullying and harassment in the maritime sector, including sexual assault and sexual harassment (SASH).

These draft amendments will also be considered at the next meeting of the joint ILO/IMO Tripartite Working Group to Identify and Address Seafarers' Issues and the Human Element (JTWG), before their adoption.

The new provisions will apply to all seafarers by means of amendments to the STCW Code, table A-VI/1-4 (Specification of minimum standard of competence in personal safety and social responsibilities).

United Republic of Tanzania

Draft maritime security legislation

IMO support

Providing support to the United Republic of Tanzania in drafting national legislation to incorporate international IMO legal instruments on maritime security was the aim of a workshop which took place in Dar es Salaam in week commencing 11 June.

During the five-day workshop, staff from the Ministry of Works and Transport were trained, particularly, in how to reflect SOLAS Chapter XI-2 and the ISPS Code* in the United Republic of Tanzania's domestic legislation, including control and compliance measures.

The ISPS Code forms the basis for a standardized mandatory security regime for international shipping. It also provides a framework for the exchange and evaluation of information between Contracting Governments, companies, port facilities, and ships.

The workshop has brought together thirty participants from several United Republic of Tanzania agencies including: the Drug Control Enforcement Authority (DCEA); the Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP) and the National Prosecution Services (NPS); the Office of the Attorney General (OAG); Immigration; Police Marine; the Tanzania Ports Authority (TPA); the Tanzania Revenue Authority (TRA); and the Tanzania Shipping Agencies Corporation (TASAC).

The event was opened by Dr Ally Possi, Deputy Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Works and Transport, Tanzania. Participants were expected to visit the Port of Dar es Salaam to see the security measures applied in situ.

Funding for the workshop was provided by the European Union.

* https://tinyurl.com/266u8c9x

IMO welcomes adoption of new oceans treaty

The new legally binding international instrument on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction – known as BBNJ – was adopted on 19 June, at the UN HQ in New York. It was adopted at the resumed fifth session of the Intergovernmental Conference, and will open for signature on 20 September. The treaty will enter into force after ratification by 60 States.

IMO Secretary-General Kitack Lim said: '*I congratulate all parties on the successful adoption of the new legally binding instrument on marine biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction. This landmark achievement will no doubt reinforce efforts to protect biodiversity in line with the aims of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Kunming-Montreal Global Framework for Biodiversity.*

'*IMO has participated throughout the negotiations, given the organization's mandate and expertise, and will continue to participate, in the implementation of the new instrument. IMO looks forward to further strengthening our cooperation with Member States, the UN family and all other stakeholders*.'

Items addressed

The BBNJ treaty addresses, among other things:

- The conservation and sustainable use of marine BBNJ.
- Marine genetic resources, including questions on benefit-sharing (MGR).
- Area Based Management Tools (ABMT), including marine protected areas.
- Environmental impact assessments (EIA); and
- Capacity-building and the transfer of marine technology (CB&TMT).

IMO presence

IMO has been present throughout the negotiations and has actively cooperated with the UN, in particular with Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea (DOALOS) of the Office of Legal Affairs of the UN; the International Seabed Authority (ISA) and with other specialized agencies such as the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO (IOC) and the International Labour Organization (ILO).

IMO officials have outlined IMO's experience in developing universally accepted regulations for international shipping to ensure shipping's sustainable use of the oceans, through more than fufty globally-binding treaties.

Ships plying their trade across the world's oceans are subject to stringent environmental, safety and security rules, which apply throughout their voyage.

Enforcement of regulations

IMO regulations are enforced through a well-established system of flag, coastal and port State control. Many IMO measures actively contribute to the conservation of marine biological diversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction, including the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution by ships (MARPOL) and the International Ballast Water Management Convention – which aims to prevent the transfer of potentially invasive aquatic species – as well as the London Convention and Protocol regulating the dumping of wastes at sea.

Adoption of protective measures

IMO has adopted numerous protective measures, which all ships must adhere to, both in and outside designated sensitive sea areas (PSSAs) and in special areas and emission control areas. These include strict rules on operational discharges as well as areas to be avoided and other ship routing systems, including those aimed at keeping shipping away from whales' breeding grounds. IMO's Polar Code is mandatory for ships operating in the Arctic and Antarctic. IMO has also issued guidance on protecting marine life from underwater ship noise.

After more than a decade of preparatory works, the UN General Assembly decided, in 2015, to develop an international legally binding instrument under UNCLOS on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction (UNGA resolution 69/292).

The series of conferences to develop the new BBNJ legally-binding instrument under the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) began in 2018, and successfully concluded with the adoption of a new treaty on 19 June.

Training auditors in the Asian Sub-region

IMO is continuing its work to help assess how Member States administer key IMO treaties to ensure its regulatory framework is universally adopted and implemented.

We learnt that a five-day training course was held to equip qualified officials from IMO Member States from the Asian Sub-region with the auditing knowledge and skills to assist in ensuring the effective implementation of the applicable IMO instruments, and to assist Member States to improve their capabilities.

The event held from 19 to 23 June in Port Klang, Malaysia, was jointly organized by IMO and Malaysia as part of a series of training activities to support the IMO Member State Audit Scheme (IMSAS).

Mandatory audit requirement

Under the Framework and Procedures for IMSAS, all IMO Member States are required to undergo a mandatory audit within the seven-year audit cycle. Up to 25 Member State audits are conducted each year under the Scheme. To date, 108 mandatory audits have been conducted under IMSAS since the start of the mandatory phase of the Scheme in January 2016.

The audit scheme, using the IMO Instruments Implementation Code (III Code) as the audit standard, aims to provide an audited Member State with a comprehensive and objective assessment of how effectively it administers and implements those mandatory IMO instruments which are covered by the Scheme.

Blended learning

The course uses revised material and blended learning: classroom sessions combined with individual work using a new e-learning tool which contains e-lessons, e-exercises and e-quizzes accessed through the online IMO Learning Management System (LMS).

Course participants include senior officials from maritime administrations who are, or will be, involved in preparing their respective countries to be audited by carrying out internal audits, and who may be nominated as auditors under the Scheme.

Twenty-five participants from seven IMO Member States and one Associated Member took part in the training: Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Fiji, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Hong Kong, China.

25 June: Day of the Seafarer

Seafarers' work to protect the marine environment around them was highlighted on Day of the Seafarer 2023

The urgent need to protect the world's oceans and the habitats within them is, nowadays, well understood. So, too, is the need for a sustainable shipping industry to ensure the essential transportation of goods and commodities across the globe, and of passengers.

Hundreds of thousands of seafarers bear witness every day to changes in the marine environment due to human activity – including from shipping. Those same seafarers are a key part of the solution through their implementation of vital IMO rules and regulations developed and adopted to care for the oceans and the planet, whilst ensuring the safety of shipping.

Seafarers' contribution in safeguarding the marine environment were highlighted on the annual Day of the Seafarer. The Day is marked each year on 25 June to recognize the unique part played in international trade, the world economy and civil society by this seaborne workforce.

MARPOL: Protecting the world's oceans

This year marks the 50th anniversary of the adoption of the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL), the main global treaty for the prevention of pollution of the marine environment by ships from operational or accidental causes.

This year's Day of the Seafarer reflected the 2023 World Maritime theme: ***MARPOL at 50 – Our commitment goes on***.

This theme emphasizes IMO's long history of protecting the environment from the impact of shipping – and its ongoing commitment to the important work done through this crucial treaty.

In his message for Day of the Seafarer 2023, IMO Secretary-General, Kitack Lim, underlined the part seafarers have in conserving the state of the oceans, as the maritime sector works towards making shipping more environmentally sound and sustainable.

Mr Lim commented: '*Seafarers have always played acritical role in helping to protect the health of our ocean and planet, and that role is increasingly important. Every day at sea, they help to enforce IMO's environment related treaties by implementing rules on garbage, and sewage, and air pollution prevention.*

DAY OF THE SEAFARER
—25 JUNE—

'*This year, as we celebrate the 50-year anniversary of our main environmental instrument – the MARPOL Convention - renewing our firm commitment towards the protection of our environment, this remains even more relevant.*

'*As the shipping industry accelerates its support of the global efforts to combat climate change by moving towards decarbonisation, seafarers' voices and actions are key to ensuring a just transition to a zero-carbon future*.'

Celebrating seafarers on social media

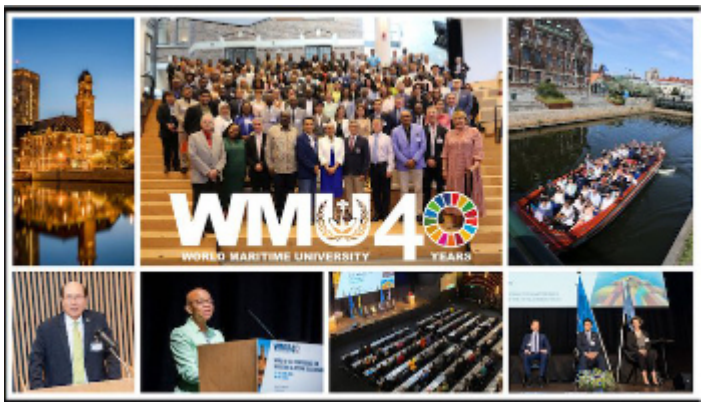
To highlight that the marine environment is worth protecting, IMO invited seafarers to mark Day of the Seafarer 2023 by sharing on social media photographs of themselves wherever they were at sea. The idea is that the world sees through their eyes how the vital work they undertake protects the oceans every day.

Others within the maritime industry and the wider public are also encouraged to take part in the social media campaign to show their appreciation for seafarers.

World Maritime University celebrates 40th anniversary

IMO-founded postgraduate World Maritime University has marked four decades at a Conference on Maritime and Ocean Sustainability. This was reported by the IMO media service on 23 June.

Over four decades, the World Maritime University (WMU) in Malmö, Sweden, has developed into a world centre of excellence in postgraduate maritime and ocean education, research, and professional training.



The University, established by the IMO, counts more than 5,800 alumni from 170 countries and territories. Many hold senior positions in maritime administrations around the world, testament to the University's mission to build an extensive network of well-qualified, highly educated maritime experts, particularly in developing nations.

To mark the 40th anniversary, a morning of celebrations commenced an international Conference on Maritime and Ocean Sustainability running from 20 to 22 June in Malmö.

IMO S-G's tribute

IMO's Secretary-General, Kitack Lim, himself a graduate of WMU, highlighted the University's achievements and reflected on his own experiences at WMU.

He commented: '*I am sure I can speak for all of us WMU alumni when I say that time spent studying at WMU has a profound impact on our lives – not just in terms of the studies completed but also the connections made. Our life experiences in the city of Malmö and WMU are ingrained in our hearts and minds – something we take with us wherever we go in the world and in our careers*.

'*The mighty international network of WMU graduates is a great force for good in the world. Those who continue to work as experts for the benefit of the international maritime community will help ensure that our beautiful ocean is passed on to future generations*.'

Thanking the many generous supporters of WMU over the past 40 years, Mr. Lim added: '*The success of the World Maritime University would not be possible without the support of the host City of Malmö and the Government of Sweden – IMO and the wider maritime community thank you with deepest gratitude. And I wish to express my appreciation to all the citizens of Malmö who have been generous and polite, always showing their kindness and support to WMU and its students*.

'*My sincerest thanks also go to the all the generous donors, private and public. Their financial, fellowships and in-kind support ensure that the University continues to be one of the cornerstones of IMO's capacity-building mission*.'

Reflection from WMU President

Dr Cleopatra Doumbia-Henry, WMUs outgoing President, reflected: '*The picture today, as we mark our Ruby Anniversary, is very different – in addition to the Malmö-based MSc, we have outreach MSc teaching in China; five distance-learning programmes; and a thriving PhD programme. The United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) since the year 2009, continues to recognize the importance of the World Maritime University of the International Maritime Organization, as a centre of excellence for maritime education, research and capacity building*.'

Professor Max Mejia, who begins his tenure as WMU President at the end of June, said: '*WMU must continue to be effective in serving its function of building capacity — of training future leaders and decision-makers — and its function of creating new knowledge that will contribute to IMO and global efforts to solve conundrums and challenges in the maritime and oceans areas*.'

Tributes

Alongside music provided by the WMU choir and the Malmö fire brigade, other speakers celebrating WMU's 40 years included: Rear Admiral Peter Brady (Ret'd), Vice Chair of WMU's Board of Governors and Director General of The Maritime Authority of Jamaica; Mr Johan Davidson, State Secretary to the Minister for Infrastructure and Housing, Ministry of Rural Affairs and Infrastructure, Government of Sweden; Mr Mitsuyuki Unno, Executive Director of The Nippon Foundation; Ms Sofia Heden, Deputy Mayor of Malmö; and Mr Leo Donghyeog Seo, President of WMU's Student Council.

Many WMU alumni attended the celebrations and Conference.

Valuable sponsorship

The three-day WMU at 40: Conference on Maritime and Ocean Sustainability was sponsored by IMO, the ITF Seafarers' Trust, and Ghana Ports and Harbours Authority.

Broad topics discussed

Sessions covered: Maritime & Ocean Sustainability; Transitioning to Zero Emission Shipping; Focusing on People to Ensure Healthy, Safe & Secure Working Conditions; Promoting Closer Collaboration Among Stakeholder Communities; Rewarding Sustainable Performance and Fostering Innovation; Creating A Level Playing Field Through Transparency & Accountability; and Protecting the Oceans Beyond National Jurisdiction.

A forum for regional and national alumni associations from around the world to showcase their work and build bridges with others was held on 22 June.

Remembering Dr Srivastava

In the early 1980s – under the leadership of the then Secretary-General, the late Dr C.P. Srivastava – IMO identified a shortage of well-qualified, highly educated maritime experts, particularly in developing nations. Dr Srivastava was a driving force behind the idea of establishing an international training institute to support Member States with high-level education and training experts to implement international Conventions, in particular the IMO instruments.

Swedish hosts

Sweden offered to host the new university – and with the financial support of the Swedish Government, the City of Malmö, and private donations, the World Maritime University was inaugurated on 4 July 1983.

WMU was founded with a mission to be the world centre of excellence in postgraduate maritime and ocean education, research, and professional training. The institution builds global capacity and effective implementation of the IMO Conventions and regulations whilst promoting maritime sustainable development. It also promotes the roles of women in the maritime and ocean sectors.

The academic offerings of the University have expanded beyond the original Master of Science degree in Maritime Affairs.

Broad curriculum

WMU today offers seven maritime-related specializations available within the Malmö MSc programme, a PhD programme, and an MPhil in cooperation with the International Maritime Law Institute (IMLI).

In addition WMU offers two MSc in Maritime Affairs specializations in Shanghai and Dalian, China. A Distance Learning programme has been added to the academic portfolio, including an LLM in International Maritime Law as well as Postgraduate Diploma programmes in Maritime Energy, Marine Insurance Law & Practice, Executive Maritime Management, and International Maritime Law.

WMU utilizes its extensive network of international maritime experts to complement its academic programme and professional development courses, as well as to support WMU's international conferences on key topics of importance to the maritime and ocean community.

WMU has benefitted from new infrastructure, including state-of-the-art facilities on the waterfront, centred on the refurbished historic Malmö Harbour Master's Building, inaugurated in 2015 – and the Øresund bridge between Malmö and Copenhagen.

Delivering UN SDGs

WMU works to deliver the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs) on education, gender equality, affordable and clean energy, decent work and economic growth, sustainable industrialization and innovation, climate action, the oceans, peace and justice, and working in partnership.

Hong Kong ship recycling Convention

Bangladesh accedes

Bangladesh has become a party to the Hong Kong International Convention for the Safe and Environmentally Sound Recycling of Ships, otherwise known as the Hong Kong Convention. This was reported by IMO on 26 June.

Bangladesh is one of the world's largest ship recycling[1] countries by capacity.

HE Ms Saida Muna Tasneem, High Commissioner, Permanent Representative of Bangladesh to the IMO, deposited the instrument of accession with IMO Secretary-General Kitack Lim on 26 June at IMO HQ in London.

Her Excellency commented: '*The Government of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has once again*

demonstrated Bangladesh's global leadership and commitment as a major ship recycling country to environmentally safe and sustainable ship recycling by acceding to the Hong Kong Convention. Bangladesh thanks IMO Secretary General Kitack Lim and his team, the Government of Norway and other international organizations for their continued support to our ship recycling industry.'.

Criteria to be met

The Hong Kong Convention will enter into force 24 months after the following required criteria have been met:

- Not less than 15 States;
- Not less than 40% of the world's merchant shipping by gross tonnage; and
- Ship recycling capacity of not less than 3% of the gross tonnage of the combined merchant shipping of those States mentioned above.

Bangladesh and SENSREC

Bangladesh's accession comes after a High-Level Roundtable meeting held on 23 May at IMO HQ to launch Phase III of the IMO-implemented project on Safe and Environmentally Sound Ship Recycling in Bangladesh (SENSREC).

This meeting discussed ratification of the Hong Kong Convention and took stock of the achievements of the project and key stakeholders' contributions.

Participants confirmed the significant role that the project and its legacy has played in prompting the Government of Bangladesh to accede to the Convention.

Safe and environmentally sound operations

IMO's SENSREC Project has been enhancing safe and environmentally sound ship recycling in Bangladesh with specific legal-policy support. Its targeted capacity building and involvement of key stakeholders has been instrumental in catalysing the accession process by Bangladesh.

Norwegian funding

It is understood that the Project has been funded by Norway in three phases, to the tune of approximately US$4 million since 2015.

Key partners

The SENSREC project has worked with key implementing partners, the Ministry of Industries, and the Bangladesh Ship Breakers' and Recyclers' Association (BSBRA), to cultivate a strong sense of ownership in greening ship recycling in Bangladesh. Through close collaboration on project activities, the project has also engaged on the ground in Bangladesh with workers, yard owners, and stakeholders, to develop a comprehensive understanding of the challenges and opportunities within the industry.

Training

During phase II of SENSREC, an institutional and legal roadmap towards ratification was established, and 900 shipyard workers, skilled professionals and other key stakeholders were trained. The remaining activities under Phase II focus on gender awareness in the ship recycling industry, including the holding of a workshop in June 2023 in Chittagong to discuss recommended actions on the economic participation of women in the ship recycling industry.

SENSREC Phase III is planned to provide further support to Bangladesh for compliance with the Convention, by focusing on technical assistance towards the establishment of Treatment, Storage, and Disposal Facilities, as well as analysis of further investment needs required for the yards.

[1]For more on the topic of ship recycling readers are invited to see here: https://tinyurl.com/mr4c24bf

Black Sea SAR coordination

The duties and responsibilities of a search and rescue mission coordinator (SMC) in the event of a search and rescue incident were the focus of a ten-day regional training course held in Constanta, Romania from 26 June to 7 July.

Providing technical advice

The main objective of the course was to help improve the SMC function within national search and rescue (SAR) services by providing technical advice on resolving problems associated with SAR Mission Coordination.

The IMO SAR Convention

In a document issued by the IMO media service towards the end of June we learnt that the training had been designed to enhance regional cooperation in line with the International Convention on Maritime Search and Rescue (SAR Convention)*.

An SMC is the official temporarily assigned to coordinate the response to an actual or apparent distress situation from a maritime rescue coordination

centre (MRCC) or a joint rescue coordination centre (JRCC).

Train-the-trainer format

It is understood that the course delivered in the train-the-trainer format, following IMO model course 3.14 for SAR mission coordinators, was targeted at those who may be required to train national SAR service personnel in the future.

The event was organized following a request from several Black Sea littoral States and as a follow-up to a similar activity delivered in 2012.

Romanian Naval Authority host

The training course was hosted in the Constanta Headquarters of the Romanian Naval Authority. The event was opened by Mr Cosmin-Laurentiu Dumitrache, General Director of the Authority.

*For an introduction to the IMO SAR Convention readers are invited to see here: https://tinyurl.com/mr29b8ca

Tackling invasive aquatic species

Galapagos-based video

IMO launch

The spread of invasive aquatic species (IAS) – marine organisms that have spread or been introduced beyond their native range – is recognized as one of the greatest threats to the ecological and economic well-being of the planet because of the serious harm they can do to a new environment.

Invasive aquatic species can be dispersed by way of biofouling on ships' hulls or other underwater surfaces. They can destroy entire native ecosystems, potentially costing millions of dollars to economies that rely on the coastal and marine environment through tourism, aquaculture and fisheries, and because of expensive damage to infrastructure. IAS are one of the primary causes of biodiversity loss globally.

IMO's Glofouling Partnerships project addresses this issue

The project recently travelled to the Galapagos Islands, a beautiful island archipelago 1000km off the coast of Ecuador, and home to some of the world's most unique endemic wildlife species. The purpose was to bring together marine biology scientists and related experts from around world for an international workshop on biofouling management to prevent the spread of invasive aquatic species in Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) and Particularly sensitive Sea Areas (PSSAs).

From 6 to 9 June an event took place at the Charles Darwin Foundation, an international non-profit organization dedicated to the environmental conservation of the Galapagos.

Participants from twenty countries discussed the best solutions for preventing the introduction of invasive species via ships' biofouling and saw demonstrations of different methods of in-water inspections of vessels.

Demonstrations and sampling

Practical demonstrations ranged from divers with hand-held cameras, inspections using small drones, and remotely operated vehicles or robots. Samples of biofouling collected during the demonstrations were then analysed in an on-site laboratory.

Broad attendance

Lilia Khodjet El Khil, Technical Manager for the GloFlouling project described the breadth of expertise of those who attended: '*The participants are a mixture of ports, biosafety agencies, government representatives, industry stakeholders, solution providers, and experts from all over the world who came together to discuss ways and means to minimise the introduction of invasive aquatic species from ships via biofouling in vulnerable marine ecosystems*.'

Inti Keith of the Charles Darwin Foundation explained the link between biofouling management and sustainability: '*Biofouling management is very important, not only because it stops the introduction of species from one region to another, but in these days where climate change is such a problem, fuel management has to be considered. So, having a clean hull and managing biofouling is really important for the conservation and sustainability of marine ecosystems worldwide*.'

It is understood that a report based on the workshop's outcomes will be published later this year which will include recommendations on areas where additional guidance, research or development is needed.

IMO video launch

On 29 June, the UN's International Day of the Tropics[1], IMO launched a video about the work of the GloFouling Partnerships project. Filmed amongst the stunning wildlife of the Galapagos, it illustrates the urgent need to tackle the threat of biofouling to

vulnerable marine ecosystems and shows the work that IMO and its partners are doing to protect the precious biodiversity of the world's oceans.

The video at 3:14 is available here: https://tinyurl.com/yc7tryx2

[1] https://tinyurl.com/3runy2xm

Climate change

By Michael Grey, Honorary IFSMA Member

Summers seem to be arriving so much earlier these days, at least on the news desks of newspapers. Traditionally, high summer was the period when all the ace correspondents departed to their gites in the Dordogne and house parties in Tuscany, leaving the second team, and wretched freelancers, who never got any holidays at all, to fill the pages. There were certain conventions which had to be observed, largely requiring the placing of standard stories which could be "refreshed" during this silly season, being retrieved from some stock kept against a need on a rainy day. We called it the "idiot file".

When holiday time came, it was vital to have a story about the Bermuda Triangle and some new revelation about this allegedly deadly shape (some said it was actually a rhombus) in the western Atlantic. You could count on a scare story from the west country, with a reliable sighting of a Great White Shark off the Cornish beaches, which in recent times has led, inevitably, to lengthy discussions of climate change. Shoals of Portuguese Men of War sometimes provide a pleasing variety.

But most reliable of all as a page-filler was the seasonal tale of that blasted wreck mouldering away on the ocean floor – the Titanic, which seems to retain its grisly grasp on folk memory long after it ought to have been decently forgotten. And here we were in the middle of May, with huge computerised illustrations purporting to have been retrieved from the dark depths by the latest in submersible technology. There was even some chap on the radio telling us that it could reveal new and important revelations of why the blooming ship sank, as if we didn't know that it was caused by its dangerous proximity to an iceberg.

It is Harland & Wolff that I feel sorry for, being cursed forever with its association with the name of that wretched ship. Just the other day it was the "Titanic's shipyard" that was going to build the new dry store ships for the Navy, while it was being bandied about once again, with the delivery from the yard of a whole fleet of barges for Cory in the Thames. And yet that famous shipyard built hundreds of successful ships, yet nobody uses their references to explain the yard's historic pedigree.

But let us move back to our seasonal tales and the confirmation that climate changes are taking place with lurid stories appearing of killer whales organising themselves like U-boat packs to chew off the rudders of expensive yachts. The senior pod members, no less, are teaching the young orcas to adopt this malevolent behaviour. What worries me is what the news editors, having used up their quota of such stories so early in the year, will find to fill the pages, come the summer months.

But perhaps rather than being anything to do with the seasons, there is a pattern of quite improbable things going on these febrile times. I read, for instance, that space on car carriers has become so expensive that it has become cheaper to ship your top of the range motor in a container. One hopes that they watch the weights, as the most fashionable electric automobiles are so heavy that civil engineers are worried about them bringing down bridges – on B-roads, not aboard the ship, although you might think that fire safety would also be something of a worry.

But perhaps the improbable tale that keeps on giving most, during this early summer, is that surrounding the emergence of the sanction-busting "dark fleet" of tankers, said to number more than 1000 ships and shipping Russian, Iranian and Venezuelan oil. Maybe we had just become complacent, assuming that the regulatory, insurance and supervisory regimes constructed in recent decades would have in some way prevented unscrupulous operators being able to run rings around all the processes put in place to keep ships and the marine environment safe.

It seems hard to believe that there are big, elderly tankers, laden to the gunwales with sanction-busting oil, whose ownership is virtually untraceable, behind what we used to call "brass-plate" (more likely plastic) single-ship companies, which change their identities with the regularity most people change their underwear.

We find that there are sub-Saharan dictatorships which most would have thought might just about been able to cope with the registration of a 40-year old paragraph coaster, with its ensign now proudly flown by several million tonnes of VLCC in doubtful states of repair. And perhaps worse still, the insurance carried by many of these ships and their alleged classification will have been obtained (if their owners have even bothered) from the sort of people you are warned about in consumer magazines to, very carefully, check the small print.

It is certainly a strange old world. Never mind, there are still some constants, and I am greatly reassured by the liner sector, which is bringing into service more and more super-sized, mega, containerships, assuring us of a huge slump in rates for the foreseeable future. Situation normal, at last. And it is only springtime.

Michael Grey is former editor of Lloyd's List

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Shipping can be greener, safer and more efficient if technological change is worker-led

In a statement of 31 May from ITF in London it was learnt that seafarers see the prospect of autonomous ships as an opportunity to solve a number of problems in commercial shipping but warn that crew expertise is central to decision-making in a time of technological change, and to make change effective companies and governments need to ensure the technology is transparent and reliable. Governments and companies need to be more transparent to ensure that crews' expertise is central to decision-making in a time of huge technological change.

Research into MASS

These are the conclusions of research collating seafarer perspectives and expectations on Maritime Autonomous Surface Ships (MASS) published jointly by the Korean Maritime Institute (KMI), the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) and the Korea Institute of Maritime and Fisheries Technology (KIMFT). Researchers interviewed seventeen seafarers and seafarers' representatives, giving voice to their hopes and fears about increasing levels of automation in the merchant fleet.

David Heindel, Chair of the ITF's Seafarers' Section, commented: '*Developments in artificial intelligence are making the possibility of fully autonomous ships more real,*

'*These ships are already being tested, though most seafarers don't envisage them becoming a practical reality for many years. What we are likely to see is a gradual process where levels of automation steadily increase. Far from considering this a threat to jobs, unions believe it is an opportunity to make shipping safer, with more skilled, better-quality work, putting the industry in a better place to tackle big issues like climate change*.'

Demand for seafarers' skills

In fact, the research indicates that demand for seafarers' skills and competences will keep rising until at least 2040, as the shipping industry continues to boom, although it recognises that the rate of employment growth may ease slightly because of automation.

Heindel continued: '*The global reality is that we need cleaner, greener ships to curb the industry's emissions, and if new technology can help with this challenge, we welcome that. But the industry must also deal with the urgent safety and health issues that seafarers face on a day-to-day basis, from basic access to clean drinking water through to having the right skills to be able to work with new and old tech. All of these challenges require workers' input to resolve them*.'

Making the change to new technologies fair

Heindel pointed out that we are on the brink of a huge technological change in the way shipping operates – both due to technological advances and the urgent need to shift to sustainable energy sources in response to the climate crisis. He said that we need to take account of seafarers' perspectives, ensuring a worker-led just transition, and making the most of their practical day-to-day expertise and experience to ensure technology protects decent working conditions at sea.

He concluded by saying: '*That's why this report is so important. As all parties come to grips with the changes required in regulations and ship operation, and the skills that will be needed, it is crucial that we include the voices of those who will be expected to make the new technology work*.'

Training is critical

The industry will require a different set of skills and competences so training will become a critical issue. Seafarers interviewed in the research were very positive about learning new skills and the impact these will have on the quality of their work. But they felt the industry is not doing enough to fund training, preparing seafarers for the changes that are coming.

To IMO MSC

On 31 May the report was presented to the 107th session of the IMO's Maritime Safety Committee (MSC), which has been scoping the impact of MASS and the regulatory and other changes that may be needed. The research will provide a sound basis for discussions over the next few days about the competencies required for seafarers navigating ships from remote locations, among other things.

Photo credit: Kristoffer C Molina

Dr Jong-Deog Kim, President of the Korea Maritime Institute, reflected: '*We sincerely expect that this report will contribute comprehensively to the development of the human-centred approach in shipping.*

'*This report will support the maritime mobility industry in the era of artificial intelligence (AI) with the necessary regulatory development for seafarers who will be affected greatly by the introduction and implementation of maritime autonomous surface ships (MASS).*'

Min-Jong Kim, President of the Korea Institute of Maritime Fisheries and Technology added: *This report, which highlights the expectations, insights, and challenges of adopting maritime autonomous surface*

ships through the voices of seafarers who are on the front lines of maritime transportation, is invaluable at a time when legal regulations for MASS operations are being developed, and I hope that, it will contribute to securing the safe operation of MASS by enhancing the human element encompassing the seafarers.'

UKHO marks successful participation at IHO Assembly 3

At the beginning of May, several representatives from the Hydrographic Office (UKHO) attended the 3rd Session of the International Hydrographic Organization's Assembly in Monaco. This Assembly is formed by the representatives of the IHO's 98 Member States and meets every three years to provide strategic guidance on the functioning and work of the organisation. This was reported by the UK Hydrographic Office on 5 June.

The IHO Assembly is an important venue for international hydrographic collaboration, and the week provided UKHO with the opportunity to engage and collaborate with peers and colleagues from around the world.

A royal welcome

The focal point of UKHO's week at the IHO Assembly was its stand in the exhibition hall. Here were several experts available from partnering and engagement teams, as well as technical experts and members of UKHO's leadership team. UKHO representatives were on hand to discuss the sharing and management of hydrographic data, including involvement in the development and implementation of S-100 standards.

Director General of IHM, Commander Salvador Espinosa Gonzalez-Llanos, and Rear Admiral Rhett Hatcher sign the POD Arrangement.

The stand also featured an interactive demonstration of the digital twin, providing a virtual model of Southampton and Portsmouth waters with dynamic data feeds such as AIS data, tidal heights, weather data and more. These data feeds allow the model to accurately replicate conditions in real time and simulate a range of scenarios. It is understood that these digital twins will support innovation across the maritime industry and help pave the way for emerging autonomous technologies.

The technology on display was popular with visitors including Prince Albert of Monaco who called in to inspect.

Highly engaging lunchtime seminars

During IHO Assembly 3 the UKHO held two lunchtime seminars. The first, *Countdown to S-100: Data standards in action*, was hosted in collaboration with Teledyne CARIS. The session shared the UKHO collective experience of the practicalities of S-100, the roadmap for its implementation, and provided a demonstration of S-101 and S-102 in action.

UKHO reported that it had also explored some of the drivers and challenges associated with S-100, including how autonomous data collection and improved sensors will increase the amount of data at users' fingertips, but also require them to process and verify that information in near or real time.

Meanwhile, UKHO's second seminar – titled *Navigating the maritime future* – saw the team explore digitalisation and new technology development, including a particular focus on how we can build cybersecurity into S-100 products from day one, to ensure that new technology development does not expose our industry to disproportionate risks.

Both seminars were well attended and saw much engagement with many productive conversations arising during and after the seminars.

Focus on partnering and engagements

Because the IHO Assembly draws in participants from around the world, each meeting provided UKHO with a brilliant opportunity for its partnership and engagement teams to sit down with international hydrographic counterparts.

The session was perfectly timed for the newly appointed HoPE (Head of Partnerships and Engagement) for Europe and the Mediterranean (EM) at UKHO, Nick Rodwell, to meet the majority of the EM representatives. It was reported that he had supported the facilitation of Poland signing a new bilateral agreement with the UK, one of the many successful additional activities completed during the margins of the event.

The strong attendance of the UKHO's counterpart national hydrographic office partners at the IHO Assembly also provided an ideal opportunity to sign a Print On Demand (POD) Arrangement with the Spanish Hydrographic Office (Instituto Hidrográfico de la Marina) (IHM).

The signing took place at the Monaco Yacht Club between Rear Admiral Rhett Hatcher and the Director General of IHM, Commander Salvador Espinosa Gonzalez-Llanos. The signing of the POD Arrangement will assist IHM with the provision of paper charts to the Spanish Navy. Admiral Hatcher is the UK National Hydrographer and the UK Government's representative at IHO.

The UK constructively engaged and provided input on the topics and significant issues discussed during the plenary meetings at Assembly.

IHO resolutions

Key decisions agreed included amendments to IHO resolutions on the use of gender inclusive language, recognition of the Southern Ocean, and establishment of new project teams to look at alternative funding for capacity building and consider the establishment of an S-100 infrastructure centre.

Progress on Electronic Chart System (ECS) activity

As mariners transition to digital navigational products, hydrographic offices have an obligation to ensure their official digital charting is available to all vessel types navigating in their waters. However, the current IMO regulations focus on ECDIS-capable vessels and, it wasc reported, do nothing to address the large market of vessels that are less than 10,000 GT in tonnage and that were constructed before 1 July 2013.

Unregulated Electronic Charts

Currently, non-ECDIS vessels are, in most cases, using unregulated Electronic Chart Systems in combination with unofficial electronic data products, and carry paper charts to meet carriage requirements.

In its announcement of 5 June the UKHO stated that to maximise the safety of navigation in national and international waters, hydrographic data should be used as widely as possible on all digital navigational displays. However, the regulations, standards and infrastructure required to use hydrographic office data in systems below the ECDIS mandate are currently not in place.

UK National Hydrographer signing bilateral agreement with Poland.

This year the IHO Assembly provided a critical venue to discuss this important issue, with the UKHO seeking for the creation of a working group to recommend how this gap can be filled, allowing for regulated and approved use of hydrographic office data on non-ECDIS vessel equipment.

The ultimate objective is a solution for all non-ECDIS vessels that can negate the need for any users to have to carry paper products in the future and allow them to fully embrace the advantages of digital navigation.

The proposal for a project team to be formed to investigate requirements for ECS was due to be discussed at an IHO Hydrographic Services and Standards Committee meeting in mid-June but is as yet unreported.

Evening reception conversations

Finally, the UKHO also hosted an evening reception during the Assembly week, with its CEO Peter Sparkes delivering a speech on perspectives on the future of hydrography.

That speech touched on several key elements – most chiefly among them S-100 – and the impact that the new data standards will have on the hydrographic community.

Exploring a range of factors such as HD Electronic Navigational Charts through to what can be achieved via digital twinning, Peter Sparkes shared his belief that the future of hydrography has never been more exciting.

Peter reiterated the UKHO's commitment, as the UK government's hydrographic and marine geospatial experts, to focusing on shaping the future of navigation. He shared thoughts on how the whole hydrographic sector, and indeed how hydrographers gather, deploy and present data, must evolve if the profession is to support the advancing needs of its users, and particularly mariners, across the globe.

In summary this year's IHO Assembly was both productive and engaging, and provided the perfect opportunity to discuss the exciting future for the global hydrographic community.

UKHO has indicated that it is looking forward to more opportunities for collaboration, particularly on developing issues such as sub-ECDIS, in the future.

UK waters Emergency Towing Vessel

Contract awarded to Marnavi Spa

The UK Government's Maritime & Coastguard Agency (MCA) has awarded a five-year contract for its Emergency Towing Vessel (ETV) to Marnavi Spa, with the ship now operating under the UK flag. This was reported by the UK Maritime & Coastguard Agency (MCA) on 2 June.

Ievoli Black is a 70-metre loa towing vessel of some 2283 gt with a bollard pull of around 140 tonnes.

It currently operates as the MCA's ETV, and following an open and fair competition which was highly contested, a new contract was awarded to run until 2028.

Under the new contract, there is a requirement for the vessel to be flagged to the UK and for the first time it will be operated by an all-UK crew, it is understood.

Following its flag move, the vessel will also be repainted to match the red and white livery of HM Coastguard Search and Rescue helicopters and aircraft fleet. It will also be used to support training of HM Coastguard officers.

Fully funded by the UK Government the renewed provision of service will provide support in maritime safety and protect areas of significant environmental interest it is understood.

North and west of Scotland

The current ETV operates to the north and west of Scotland, in and around the Minches, Pentland Firth and Fair Isle Channel where there is a critical lack of commercial towage solutions available to intervene in the event of a maritime emergency.

The service, which has been in place for more than twenty years, provides HM Coastguard with a single large ocean-going towing vessel which can respond when there is a maritime emergency, towing ships in distress out of danger.

By doing so, the ETV reduces the possibility of a ship casualty becoming a hazard to safe navigation or running aground and causing subsequent cargo or oil pollution and reducing the risk of loss of life.

Other duties

It will also be able to support other duties including basic salvage support, firefighting, search and rescue incident support, and counter pollution response support.

During the open procurement, bids were evaluated based on vessel type and dimensions, age, bollard pull, speed, crew complement and experience, emissions, training and exercises, efficiency and the chargeable day rate.

Paper to ECDIS charting

Reflecting advances in maritime technology, the vessel will be upgraded from using paper charts to the Electronic Chart Display and Information System (ECDIS), and will be fitted with a Fast Rescue Craft and a new dedicated workboat.

Ministerial comment

Maritime Minister Baroness Charlotte Vere Of Norbiton commented: '*The safety of seafarers and our waters remains our upmost priority. That is why government support for towing vessels like the Ievoli Black is so important to Scotland's coastal communities, ready to step up, in the case of an emergency.*

'*The UK Flag is one of the most prestigious in the world, known for upholding the highest standards of seafarers' safety - it will be great to see the Ievoli Black in white and red*.'

UK Government Minister for Scotland John Lamont added: '*This emergency towing vessel provided by the UK Government will cover some of the most remote parts of Scotland, ensuring maritime safety and helping to minimise risks of environmental pollution.*

'*This vital service - in place for more than 20 years - gets ships out of danger and out of the path of other vessels to minimise disruption and protect lives at sea*.'

About the UK MCA

The Maritime & Coastguard Agency is part of the UK Department for Transport. It promotes clean and safe seas by working with the shipping industry to promote environmentally sustainable shipping. It works with industry to reduce pollution and oversees the response to pollution incidents on the 11,072 miles of UK coastline.

The UK Government does not have a statutory obligation to provide towing and salvage services when ships get into difficulty. It is for ship owners and operators to manage their own risks and arrange towing and salvage using commercial providers.

However, it is recognised that it is important to ensure shipping activities off the coast of Scotland remain safe and that sufficient safeguards (such as search and rescue and commercial towage vessels) are in place, in case of a maritime incident.

In July 2016 the UK Government announced that it would fund the emergency towing vessel for a further five years.

The Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) is a frontline emergency response agency of the Department for Transport. As well as delivering maritime search and rescue through HM Coastguard (one of the four UK emergency services), the MCA is responsible for maritime regulation, safety and counter-pollution.

Red Sea

UN operation to prevent catastrophic oil spill

On 30 May the UN news service reported that a salvage vessel had arrived at the site of the decaying *FSO Safer* off Yemen's Ras Issa peninsula to prepare for removal of more than one million barrels of oil that threatens a humanitarian and environmental disaster. It was understood at the time that funding was still urgently required to complete the operation.

In a critical step forward in the operation the salvage support vessel *Ndeavor*, operated by lead marine salvage company SMIT, a subsidiary of Boskalis, was contracted by the UN Development Programme (UNDP) to undertake the transfer of the oil to a secure vessel and arrived onsite on 30 May.

Ndeavor's crew of experts commenced by inspecting the *Safer* and preparing to undertake all necessary work to make it secure for the transfer of oil to the replacement tanker *Nautica*, standing by in Djibouti to steam to the site in June and receive the oil.

Fundraising

The start of the operation on the water comes after almost two years of political groundwork, fundraising and project development, led by UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator for Yemen, David Gressly, who was aboard the *Ndeavor* on 30 May.

In December 2021, UN senior management endorsed the plan to prevent a spill by transferring the oil to a safe vessel and install long-term replacement capacity for *Safer*, and asked UNDP to implement it, contingent on funding. Drawing on expertise from the UN System as well as external contractors, partners and experts, the UN has worked round the clock to prepare for this unprecedented effort.

In the words of UN Development Programme Administrator Achim Steiner on 30 May: '*Today marks a critical step in the operation to remove the threat posed by the FSO Safer. With the marine salvage support vessel Ndeavor onsite, the project can now begin in earnest. This marks the culmination of tremendous amounts of work and coordination among UN agencies, maritime lawyers, oil spill experts and many more.*

'*This is a proud moment for the United Nations and for the UN Development Programme as the implementing partner for the emergency phase of the project to remove the oil. It is also a clear sign of what multilateral cooperation can achieve, and a prime example of the importance of prevention. Aside from a possible humanitarian and environmental catastrophe, funds spent now will prevent a disaster that could cost billions in the future.*

'*With this in mind, we call again upon the international community and private sector to step up and support us to close the funding gap on the project so that we can finish what we have started*.'

Significant environmental threat

Even after the oil transfer averts the worst-case scenario of a spill of one million barrels, the decaying *Safer* will still hold a considerable amount of residual oil and pose a significant environmental threat to the Red Sea.

However, we t that the project remains underfunded, with $29 million still needed (as at 30 May), including to safely moor the replacement vessel to a catenary anchor leg mooring buoy and towing *Safer* to a green recycling yard.

Film
An important introductory You Tube film of 14:21 provided by the German broadcaster Deutsche Welle (DW) is available with this link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sp14VLlgPKw

The UN's David Gressly added: '*Member states, private companies and the general public have contributed $114 million to stop the Red Sea Spill, and so many other partners that have contributed expertise and advocated for this critical operation.*

'*I thank them all and want to recognize SMIT Salvage and the Fahem Group for presenting an initiative in 2021 that became the basis of the project being implemented today.*

'*This is a great milestone, but we will not rest easy until the operation is completed. To do that we are counting on generous donors to close the remaining $29 million budget gap*.'

Thanks

As this news was received the UN thanked donors for the generous support. Furthermore, the UN through its Yemen office, extended thanks to the HSA Group, the International Association of Oil & Gas Producers, Trafigura Foundation, and Octavia Energy/Calvalley Petroleum and generous individuals that have contributed to the UN crowdfunding campaign for the plan.

Background

FSO Safer has been moored about nine kilometres off Yemen's Ras Isa peninsula since 1988 and could explode or break up at any time. Due to the conflict in Yemen, *FSO Safer* has decayed to the point where

there is an imminent risk it could explode or break apart, which would have disastrous effects on the region and beyond.

A major spill would devastate fishing communities on Yemen's Red Sea coast, likely wiping out 200,000 livelihoods instantly. Whole communities would be exposed to life-threatening toxins.

Potential port closures

Highly polluted air would affect millions. It could close of the ports of Hodeidah and Saleef – which are essential to bring food, fuel and life-saving supplies into Yemen, where 17 million people need food assistance.

Closure of desalination plants would cut off a water source for millions of people. Oil from *Safer* could reach the African coast and affect any country on the Red Sea. The environmental impact on coral reefs life-supporting mangroves and other marine life would be severe. Fish stocks would take 25 years to recover.

Potential $20 billion cost

The cost of cleanup alone is estimated at $20 billion. Disruptions to shipping through the Bab al-Mandab strait to the Suez Canal could cost billions more in global trade losses every day, as happened after *Ever Given* grounded in the Canal in 2021.

The UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator for Yemen, David Gressly, has led UN system-wide efforts since September 2021. UNDP is implementing this complex and high-risk project.

New tonnage

Maersk's landmark green methanol powered vessel

European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen to name

Early in June AP Moller-Maersk (Maersk) announced that Ursula von der Leyen, the president of the European Commission, had kindly accepted an invitation to be godmother of Maersk's new feeder vessel, the world's first container vessel sailing on green methanol.

It is understood that the Commission President will formally name the vessel at a ceremony in Copenhagen on 14 September, where it arrives on its maiden voyage, before heading to its regular operational route in the Baltic Sea. The Danish flagged 172 metre loa vessel is a key milestone for Maersk's plans to achieve net zero greenhouse gas emissions in 2040 across the entire business, it has been reported.

In the words of Vincent Clerc, CEO of Maersk: '*Just a few years ago, this iconic ship was merely a vision. Now, it is a reality, and we are honoured that Ursula von der Leyen has agreed to be its godmother.*

'*The European Commission, and especially its President, have been instrumental in steering the European continent towards an ambitious, green future. Our new vessel serves as a concrete example of the transformations that EU policies are supporting. This truly is the embodiment of the green deal in action.*'

The 2,100 TEU container vessel will stay in the Toldboden area of the Copenhagen harbour for about a week and be the focal point of several events and activities related to the shipping industry's effort to decarbonise.

It is understood that the vessel will provide real operational experience for Maersk seafarers handling the new engines and using green methanol as fuel, as the company prepares to receive a fleet of new, large ocean-going methanol engine powered ships from 2024.

To meet the ambitious 2040 target of net zero greenhouse gas emissions in time, Maersk aims to transport a minimum of 25% of ocean cargo using green fuels by 2030, compared to a 2020 baseline. The landmark feeder vessel is a major step toward the long-term objective of gradually renewing the entire fleet to operate solely on green fuels.

Footnote: Green fuels, an introduction

On 13 June Maersk announced that it had successfully secured green methanol for the maiden voyage of the new vessel.

It was reported that achieving this green fuel milestone is a significant step for the company and the industry's efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Maersk has signed a deal with Dutch producer OCI Global on the delivery of green* bio-methanol for the maiden voyage. The 21,500 km trip from Ulsan, Republic of Korea to Copenhagen, will provide real operational experience for Maersk seafarers handling the new engines and using methanol as fuel, as the company prepares to receive a fleet of new, large ocean-going methanol-enabled ships from 2024.

Morten Bo Christiansen, Head of Energy Transition, Maersk, commented: '*The green methanol market is still in its infancy and frankly we had not expected to be able to secure a maiden voyage on green methanol for this vessel. So, we are very proud to have achieved this significant milestone. We expect a diverse green fuel mix for the future, with green bio-methanol from biomass waste being available now.*'

OCI Global produces its green methanol at a US-based facility by using captured biogas from decomposing organic waste in landfills. The biogas is upgraded to biomethane and injected into the gas grid and the methanol is produced from the biomethane in the grid on a mass-balance basis. This way, green methanol can be produced in existing facilities using existing infrastructure and plants enabling a quick production. The method can contribute to a greener gas grid while capturing harmful methane emissions

that would arise from the waste feedstock if left untouched.

Green methanol by OCI Global is understood to be certified by International Sustainability & Carbon Certification (ISCC) in accordance with the EU Renewable Energy Directive.

To meet the ambitious 2040 target of net zero greenhouse gas emissions in time, Maersk aims to transport a minimum of 25% of ocean cargo using green fuels by 2030, compared to a 2020 baseline. The 2,100 TEU landmark methanol-enabled feeder vessel is an important step toward the long-term objective of gradually renewing the entire fleet to operate solely on green fuels.

*On green fuels Maersk states: '*We define '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' we refer to fuels with 65-80% life cycle GHG reductions compared to fossil fuels. 'Very low' refers to fuels with 80-95% life cycle GHG reductions compared to fossil fuels*.'

USCGC Sycamore

Exercise Argus 2023

Nuuk, Greenland

The ship's company of USCGC *Sycamore* arrived in Nuuk, Greenland, on 10 June, in support of Exercise Argus 2023.

During the port visit, US Coast Guard Commander Chad Conrad, *Sycamore*'s CO and Lieutenant Anthony Figueroa, *Sycamore*'s Executive Officer, met with organizers of the joint, large-scale exercise to discuss plans for Exercise Argus in Southern Greenland.

Sycamore departed Nuuk on 13 June for the start of the exercise, which included navigation, damage control, and search and rescue training events.

International partners

Exercise Argus is an annual training event designed to enhance capabilities of international partners for responding to search and rescue and marine environmental events in the Arctic region. The exercise took place from 12 to 16 June and afforded participating nations opportunities to advance effective partnerships, collaboration and interoperability for a variety of issues affecting the high North region.

The exercise included maritime and air assets from Greenland, Denmark, France and the United States. Participation in Exercise Argus highlighted the participants' collective commitment to safety, environmental protection and international partnerships in the region.

Nuuk was the second port call for *Sycamore*'s crew after leaving St. John's in Newfoundland.

Illustration per: https://www.web.dma.mil/ USCG ©.

Sycamore is a 225-foot buoy tender home-ported out of Newport, Rhode Island, with a crew of 48. *Sycamore*'s primary missions include maintaining aids to navigation, promoting economic security through navigation safety of the Marine Transportation System, supporting search and rescue, domestic icebreaking, living marine resources, maritime law enforcement, environmental protection, national defence and homeland security missions.

Let sleeping tigers lie

By Michael Grey, IFSMA Honorary Member

If you make your living as a regulator in the maritime world, there are two sets of regulations, which, if you value your career prospects and sanity, you will leave well alone. The first is the 1969 Tonnage Measurement Convention, which despite its faults, will bring down the wrath of all the world's ship owners, the management of all ports and canals, along with the purveyors of port services, lighthouses, ship builders and a lot more besides, on your hapless head. It will also cause ill-health and precipitate retirements of senior IMO officials. So, you should just get real and learn to live with it.

The second, which will have nervous breakdowns and exhibition of uncontrolled rage among a million or so mariners, should it be threatened with unwanted interference, is the 1972 International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea – the COLREGS.

This particular sleeping tiger stirs from time to time, with various bright ideas emerging, which clever proponents suggest will improve the rules which competent deck officers are expected to know intimately. I can recall, during the early part of this century, attending a debate in London about suggested changes that would allegedly remove any doubt about the status of "stand-on" and "give way" ships in a crossing situation. It was packed to the doors with professionals, standing room only, but there was no doubt that in the vote that followed, the "remainers" beat the "reformers" hands-down. It was a fairly heated discussion. The most convincing arguments came from the late Dr. John Kemp, who

was possibly the world's leading expert in the regulations and their applications (and who about 40 years before had taught me navigation).

The suggestion was that both ships should alter course to starboard in such a situation, a change which superficially seemed to attract approval by, but was destroyed by the opposition. Dr.Kemp pointed out that there was absolutely nothing wrong with the regulations as they were, they had stood the test of time and required only proper knowledge and full compliance.

I expect the spirit of John Kemp was stirring uneasily during the recent Maritime Safety Committee meeting at IMO, when the distinguished delegates considered a proposal from China which would subject the COLREGS to a "comprehensive revision." This was in the light of all the amazing technical advances which had benefited (or afflicted) the maritime world since the rules were put to bed, probably with some relief, in 1972.

You can have a certain amount of sympathy with the doubtful current relevance of many of the requirements, even though the "modernisation" of the 1970s acknowledged the fact that we did not meet close-hauled square riggers very often, when on passage. The Chinese paper very reasonably points out the futility of rigorous attention to sound signals, when the OOW is enclosed in an air-conditioned wheelhouse (probably listening to their favourites through state of the art earbuds. Similarly, with the explosion of ship sizes and the strange configurations that have emerged from naval architects with imagination, lights and shapes perched improbably on top of these strange structures seem somewhat unnecessary. And when you see big fast ships blinding up the Channel in nil-visibility, are the rules as prescribed just failing to cope with reality? You might think of desperate chats on the VHF as ships close and the way that AIS has become something of a crutch to the uncertain mariner.

It is also a fact that much of this enthusiasm for change comes from the lobbyists for the dreaded Maritime Autonomous Surface Ships brigade, which in the opinion of some, have been ridiculously over-indulged with time and effort at IMO. We have to get with MASS, they tell us, we must embrace AI and help to construct collision avoidance algorithms, so sings the chorus from this techno-infested minority. It reminds me of the tail wagging the dog in the endless debate about gender, with tiny minorities calling the shots.

As it is usually eventually acknowledged, after a lot of pointless argument any changes to rules that are supposed to be followed by every ship on the waters of the earth is a huge matter. I can remember somebody saying that it was like Sweden, changing from driving on the left, to the right, at a moment in time. Only globally. Like changing depths from fathoms to metres, and causing a lot of premature ageing among shipmasters.

It was probably inevitable that the proposition of a comprehensive review was opposed by some substantial delegations and NGOs, including Japan, the UK, NZ, France, Turkey, Greece, the ICS, IFSMA (they ought to know best) and BIMCO. The arguments about the rules standing the test of time and the solution lying in better knowledge and compliance are not exactly new thinking, but none the worse for that. So all those thousands of navigators will not be worried sick, as long as they know what the COLREGS is telling them. This tiger can slumber on.

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

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About Maritime Advocate Online

Maritime Advocate Online is a fortnightly digest of news and views on the maritime industries, with particular reference to legal issues and dispute resolution. It is published to over 20,000 individual subscribers each week and republished within firms and organisations all over the maritime world. It is the largest publication of its kind. It is estimated it be seen by around 60,000 readers in over 120 countries.

See also here: https://themaritimeadvocate.com/

The 20th IALA Conference

Rio de Janeiro

27 May to 3 June

Conclusions

At the close of a very intense week which saw 120 presentations delivered in technical sessions the following conclusions were arrived at:

- Sustainability and its link to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is of increasing importance and IALA is duty bound to raise the profile of this area in the committees. Members should continue to innovate sustainable approaches by recognizing, developing and reviewing the whole lifecycle of aids to navigation services.
- In addition to GNSS, various space and terrestrial technologies are able to provide PNT and integrity information to the maritime user. IALA should continue to facilitate collaboration and standardisation taking a holistic approach to achieve resilient PNT.
- To achieve digital transformation in the S-100 domain, the importance of collaboration and continued dialogue between IHO, IALA and other domain controllers is necessary. IALA should stand ready to assist coastal authorities with their transition to S-100 related products.
- Autonomy is a driver to leverage the development of digital products. Aids to navigation have a role in support of autonomous vessels and technology needs to be standardized to meet the future requirements of all vessels.
- The IALA Risk Toolbox has proven benefits for

members but should be enhanced to cover all ships on all voyages. The IALA Toolbox forms an essential part of assessment of risk and their mitigation requirements. Simulation techniques provide for a comprehensive assessment of mitigation measures.

- IALA should encourage members to collaborate and have proper structures and procedures in place in order to prevent, identify, deal with and recover effectively from cyber security events. IALA has a role in supporting dissemination of lessons learnt in order to increase resilience against these threats.
- VTS technology needs to take into account human factors with increased digitalization, including Artificial Intelligence in VTS.
- IALA acknowledges that virtual tools and the use of e-learning contribute to flexible, efficient and sustainable training. In addition, IALA recognizes its role in promoting the use of language-testing tools to improve the communication capabilities of VTS operators.
- Physical aids to navigation remain important to the mariner. IALA members should continue to pursue emerging technologies and approaches such as big data analytics, Internet of Things (IoT), machine vision technology and drones to make their services more effective and meet the future needs of the mariner.

Video highlights

A video of 4:34 duration with some highlights of the Conference is available here:
https://tinyurl.com/2p8y8pmn

The event was hosted by the Brazilian Navy (Marinha do Brasil) and Brazil now provides the Presidency of IALA to 2027. The Vice Presidency is held by India.

IALA Secretary-General Francis Zachariae delivering the IALA Conference Conclusions, Rio de Janeiro, 3 June 2023.

Photo: IALA ©.

Next conference

The 21st IALA Conference will take place from 29 May to 4 June 2027 in Mumbai.

U S Coast Guard and safe navigation

Voluntary fairways US West Coast

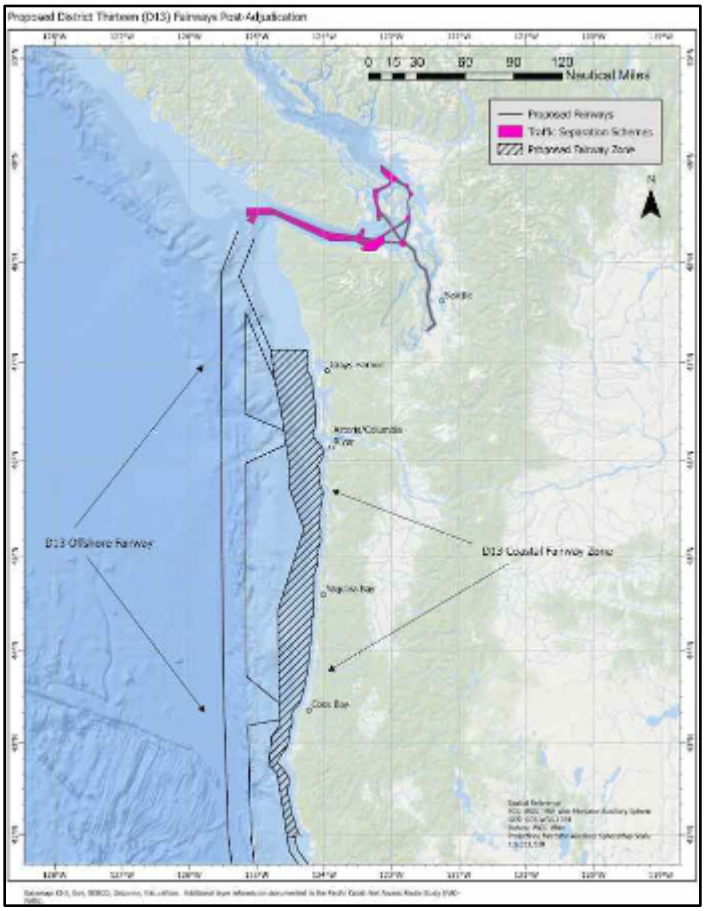
In early June from San Francisco the US Coast Guard published the Final Report of the Pacific Coast Port Access Route Study (PAC-PARS) in the Federal Register.

This is the first comprehensive evaluation of vessel traffic patterns that use Pacific coastal waters off California, Oregon, and Washington.

Evaluation of usage

The main goal of the PAC-PARS was to evaluate historic and future waterway usage to determine navigational risk and provide recommendations to uphold safety of navigation. To do this, the study examined vessel tracking data from the past ten years and considered environmental data, existing and planned offshore development infrastructure, and historical marine incident data among other datasets.

22,000 stakeholder comments



Coast Guard chart 3 regarding the final report of the Pacific Coast Port Access Route Study (PAC-PARS) in the Federal Register. The main goal of the PAC-PARS was to evaluate historic and future waterway usage to determine navigational risk and provide recommendations to uphold safety of navigation.

Photo by Petty Officer 2nd Class Matthew West, US Coast Guard District 11.

The Coast Guard also considered concerns and recommendations from maritime stakeholders, tribes,

and members of the public. The Coast Guard received and considered more than 22,000 comments during three public comment periods.

The PAC-PARS recommends establishing new voluntary fairways for coastwise and nearshore vessel traffic with connections to existing Traffic Separation Schemes and ports. These fairways facilitate safe and predictable traffic patterns as the demand for and use of Pacific coastal waters increases.

Dramatic increase in traffic

In the words of Coast Guard Pacific Area port and waterways specialist, Lieutenant Liesl Olson: '*The variety and number of waterway users along the Pacific Coast has dramatically increased over the past decade; in the interest of maintaining navigational safety for all members of the maritime community, the Coast Guard conducted this study. Its fairway recommendations promote safe vessel transits along the coast and connect to major port approaches*.'

Documentation available

A Notice of Availability for the final study results, as well as the associated appendices and enclosures, were published on the Federal Register under docket USCG-2021-0345, and can be found by searching the docket above at www.regulations.gov

Additionally, the study will be available at the USCG Navigation Center's website:
https://tinyurl.com/546kp7ze

Picture credit

Coast Guard chart 3 regarding the final report of the Pacific Coast Port Access Route Study (PAC-PARS) in the Federal Register. The main goal of the PAC-PARS was to evaluate historic and future waterway usage to determine navigational risk and provide recommendations to uphold safety of navigation.

US Coast Guard medevacs cruise ship passenger

230 miles off New Orleans

On 27 June from New Orleans the Coast Guard reported that it had medevaced a 53-year-old man from a cruise ship two days before in a position approximately 230 miles south of New Orleans, Louisiana.

Coast Guard District Eight watchstanders received a call at approximately 1530 local time on 25 June. from the crew of the cruise ship *Voyager of the Seas* requesting a medevac for a passenger aboard experiencing severe loss of blood.

Watchstanders diverted a Coast Guard Air Station New Orleans MH-60 Jayhawk helicopter aircrew and an Aviation Training Center Mobile (fixed wing) HC-144 Casa aircrew to assist.

The helicopter aircrew arrived on scene, hoisted the passenger and cruise ship nurse, and transferred them to University Medical Center New Orleans. The passenger was last reported to be in fair condition.

Video of the medevac is available here:
https://tinyurl.com/4pv5wwxu

About the USCG 8th District

The US Coast Guard's 8th District Headquarters in New Orleans is responsible for Coast Guard activities in 26 states.

Illustration per USCG 8th District Public Affairs. USCG ©.

A majority of activity is from coastline states including Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama and the panhandle of Florida.

The 8th District is home to two of the nation's busiest ports, New Orleans and Houston. More than two million barrels of oil and one million tons of cargo are imported daily. Ten of the top fifteen busiest ports by tonnage are located in the 8th District. Additionally, more than 65% of the nation's liquefied natural gas activity and 11% of crude oil refining capacity are located in the Port Arthur/Lake Charles region alone.

For more information

For more information about the USCG 8th District readers are invited to visit the District's homepage here: www.uscg.mil/d8

Australian waters

Receiving Maritime Safety Information (MSI)

Advice from AMSA

All ships transiting METAREA X and NAVAREA X, or navigating the Australian coast, should ensure they can receive all maritime safety information (MSI) necessary for the intended voyage. This was the message in a Marine Notice issued by the Australian Maritime Safety Administration (AMSA) at the end of June.

Masters should ensure receivers capable1 of receiving MSI are configured appropriately for their intended voyage, including whilst in port. This may be confirmed by an AMSA Port State Control Officer during a Port State Inspection.

Background

Maritime safety information (MSI), as defined in regulation IV/2 of the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea, 1974, as amended, means navigational and meteorological warnings, meteorological forecasts and other urgent safety-related messages broadcast to ships.

Every ship, while at sea, shall be capable of receiving MSI (regulation IV/4) and search and rescue related information through the entire voyage in which the ship is engaged (regulation IV/7)2

Receiving MSI

AMSA as Joint Rescue Coordination Centre (JRCC) Australia and the Australian Bureau of Meteorology (BoM) broadcast MSI through the International Enhanced Group Call service, using the International SafetyNET service (Inmarsat) and the International SafetyCast service (Iridium).

These services are supplemented by HF radiotelephone broadcasts (callsign: VIC).

Navigational warnings are made to NAVAREA X and coastal warning areas A to H.

Meteorological warning and forecasts are made to METAREA X, the high seas (North Eastern, South Eastern, Western, Northern and Southern) and coastal waters (Bass Strait, Torres Strait, Northern Territory, Western Australia and Northern Australia).

Further detail, the limits of these areas and broadcast times, are provided on the AMSA and BoM websites respectively here: https://tinyurl.com/4jupnntr

https://tinyurl.com/2a2t89t4

Readers are reminded that Australia does not provide a NAVTEX service.

International SafetyNET service

MSI broadcast for NAVAREA X and METAREA X, the high seas and coastal waters are available through the Pacific Ocean Region (POR) and Indian Ocean Region (IOR) satellites. MSI broadcast for coastal warning areas is only available through the POR satellite.

International SafetyCast service

MSI broadcast for NAVAREA X, METAREA X, the high seas and coastal warning areas is available via the Iridium SafetyCast service.

The Marine Notice 05/2023 is available here: https://tinyurl.com/2kc7k5bx

The Marine Notice supercedes No 13/2016.

[1] Information on configuring MSI receivers for the International SafetyNET service and International SafetyCast service are available in manufacturers' equipment manuals.

[2] Refer to Guidance for the reception of maritime safety information and search and rescue related information as required in the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS) (MSC.1/Circ.1645).

Shell and Orca AI

Innovation in navigation

The partners kicked off with a pilot project trialling Tel Aviv-based start-up Orca AI's maritime navigation platform on a Shell-managed gas tanker. It has now morphed into a long-term development collaboration resulting in new features that can significantly enhance safety at sea.

Below Saurabh Kumar, Project Engineer at Shell Shipping & Maritime, and Dor Raviv, CTO at Orca AI, reflect on outcomes and benefits of the partnership so far. This was reported on 26 June.

Navigational error resulting in collision or grounding is one of the highest safety risks associated with maritime transport. Safe navigation relies strongly on Officers of the Watch (OOWs) maintaining lookout awareness and making good navigational decisions. The introduction of tools such as AIS, ARPA, VTS and ECDIS has provided more input data, but correct information processing and action response continue to rely on human factors.

As a leading charterer and ship manager, Shell has long recognized the need for new navigational tools to better support the OOW.

Saurabh explained: '*There has been a hiatus in novel navigational technologies since ECDIS, and serious navigation incidents are still happening. Among our many R&D initiatives we wanted to explore ways to improve situational awareness and to enhance the safety of navigation. Our aim has been to come to a deep understanding of how AI technologies can support better decision-making alongside existing systems*.'

Positive attraction

In 2019, Shell Shipping and Maritime R&D department started scanning for potential partners with technology that could be installed on oceangoing vessels.

Saurabh added: '*Most autonomous ship projects focused on smaller vessels and short voyages, but we wanted something that could be scaled for larger tonnage*.'

Orca AI's automated watchkeeper met Shell's technological requirements: The solution uses a combination of thermal cameras, low-light cameras, and data from onboard sensors to create an accurate image of the waters surrounding a ship in real-time. Advanced computer vision allows the system to identify objects and classify them. The AI algorithm continuously learns the environment in order to understand hazardous situations and alert the OOW based on pre-defined thresholds.

Another deciding factor for Shell was that Orca AI's navigation and collision avoidance system was already mature. As a 'plug and play' system, there is no requirement for complex retrofits.

Green light for a pilot project

Shell invited Orca AI to work on a six-month pilot that kicked off in November 2020, with the system installed on a large LNG carrier.

Saurabh continued: '*When we embarked on the partnership with Orca AI, we were not like one more customer paying a license fee. It is much more productive to work alongside vendors to see how we can develop the product. Our ships are like living labs in this respect. We're using every new version on the second LNG carrier with good feedback*.'

Already, in the first few months, the insights generated by the Orca AI system were significant.

To conclude Saurabh reflected: '*The crew were expecting enhanced radar capabilities, but they soon saw that Orca AI stands on its own merits. It is especially useful in high-traffic conditions closer to shore*.'

Orca AI's Chief Technology Officer and Co-founder, Dor Raviv, says the pilot project has been key to proving the credibility and reliability of the platform.

He commented: '*The Shell R&D team prepared internal analysis of navigational performance using data generated by the Orca AI system, including close quarters events, from the vessel. The analysis clearly demonstrated the capabilities of our platform to improve safety and they are championing its value internally*.'

Shaping product direction

One of the things that makes this partnership so unique, is Shell acting as a catalyst for designing new features of the Orca AI platform, such as the platform's dashboard and monthly reports. The partnership has also matured into a testbed for the application of AI and machine learning and today Shell is supporting Orca AI in creating a more relevant product suited to any cargo segment, with a focus on actionable insights, learning and awareness

Dor explained: '*We are now looking at security monitoring, detecting fugitive emissions and we will shortly release a brand-new Voyage Comparison module.*

'*The module is ground-breaking in that it enables users to see exactly where events occurred on a map display, including route deviations due to bad weather, alongside accompanying images and video. Secondly, users can compare different sections of a route to benchmark different KPIs across their fleet*.'

The partners are also focusing on operational optimisation. Dor points out that whereas today, crews have little incentive to choose an optimised route, this will not be the case with a semi-autonomous ship.

He added: '*There are many suppliers of strategic route planning systems, which are of course helpful, but no one else has a solution for tactical navigation based on high-resolution data. Today, the Captain decides the best collision avoidance manoeuvre. However, our system can recommend a manoeuvre and optimal timing*.'

Eventually the system will be integrated with the propulsion system, taking control of the helm under human supervision. This will facilitate time and distance savings that will stack up not only for individual ships but across fleets.

'*That could mean really large numbers*, Dor concluded. '*The intention now is to develop a full-scale autonomous navigation platform that can provide real-time recommendations for collision avoidance and shore-based monitoring and take shipping operations efficiency to a whole new level*.'

About Orca AI

Founded in 2018, Orca AI is the creator of the world's first-of-its-kind automated situational awareness platform to maximise voyage safety and operational efficiency for ships and fleets.

Powered by maritime purpose-built AI and computer vision technologies, the Orca AI platform empowers crew to make data-driven decisions in congested waters and in low visibility conditions. Additionally, it allows fleet managers and operators to have a better understanding of their fleets' performance and identify unsafe or risky and inefficient behaviours easily.

In 2022, Orca AI empowered the world's first commercial autonomous voyage in partnership with Designing the Future of Full Autonomous Ships (DFFAS) and the Nippon Foundation.

Orca AI's solution is already utilized by leading shipping companies worldwide, including SeaSpan, NYK, and MSC.

For more information readers are invited to see here: www.orca-ai.io

USCG servicing Pacific buoyage

Towards the end of June from Honolulu the US Coast Guard Cutter *Juniper* visited Kaneohe Bay on the east side of the Hawaiian island of Oahu, as part of an operation to service and maintain aids to navigation.

USCGC *Juniper*'s passage to Kaneohe Bay focused on repairing day boards, aids to navigation that mark channels and safe water, utilizing the cutter's two small boats to service seven fixed aids to navigation in two days.

Juniper also serviced two floating aids to navigation inside Kaneohe Bay and joined forces with the Regional Dive Locker Pacific to service three floating aids at the entrance to the bay. The dive locker operated off the cutter's small boat to inspect and replace parts of the buoys.

Lieutenant Commander Timothy Bonner, *Juniper*'s CO commented: '*The crew works hard to maintain the constellation of aids to navigation within the main Hawaiian Islands and in the greater Pacific region. These operations are critical to ensuring the integrity of commercial supply chains, recreational boater safety, and the safe passage of government and military vessels*.'

Juniper is a 225-foot loa seagoing buoy tender home-ported in Honolulu and is responsible for maintaining aids to navigation, performing maritime law enforcement, port and coast security, search and rescue and environmental protection.

44-day mission

Earlier in the year *Juniper* returned to homeport Honolulu after a mission in the Pacific to deter illegal fishing and support partner nation's sovereignty as part of Operation Blue Pacific.

On that mission *Juniper* steamed approximately 8,200 nautical miles in the effort to assist Pacific Island partners in protecting maritime governance and a rules-based international order to ensure a free and open Indo-Pacific.

Bonner added: '*Combining efforts to deter illegal, unregulated, and unreported fishing throughout Oceania is more important than ever. It was an honour for the Juniper crew to have the opportunity to work with our Fijian partners in assisting them in patrolling their exclusive economic zone*.'

After departing Fiji, *Juniper* steamed to American Samoa where her crew serviced several aids to navigation in Pago Pago Harbor and on Ta'u Island.

To quote Lieutenant (JG) Pryor Miller, *Juniper*'s operations officer: '*It is our pleasure to support American Samoa's maritime transportation system by utilizing our crew's multi-mission capabilities. Servicing aids to navigation in the Pacific is essential to providing the needed infrastructure to maintain a maritime transportation system that promotes economic prosperity and an uninterrupted flow of maritime commerce*.'

Operation Blue Pacific is an overarching multi-mission Coast Guard endeavour, promoting security, safety, sovereignty, and economic prosperity in Oceania while strengthening relationships between partner nations in the Pacific.

US Coast Guard's 14th District

Today, more than 1,150 active duty, 150 reserve, 80 civilian, and 400 Auxiliary men and women make up the Fourteenth District, which boasts the Coast Guard's largest area of responsibility. The district covers more than 14 million square miles of land and sea, with units on Oahu, Maui, Kauai, the Big Island, and in American Samoa, Saipan, Guam, Singapore and Japan.

Boundaries of the District's responsibilities extend from the Hawaiian Islands and across most of the Central and Western Pacific.

Pilot transfer arrangements

AMSA Marine Notice 04/2023

Towards the end of June we learnt that the Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) has published this Marine Notice to remind shipowners, operators, masters, crews, recognised organisations, marine pilots and pilotage providers about their obligation to provide and ensure continued safe pilot transfer arrangements on ships.

Background

Since November 2017 several pilots' lives were placed at risk, in multiple separate incidents where a man rope parted, or its securing point failed. Additionally, AMSA received several incident reports on safety issues related to pilot transfer arrangements.

The full Notice No 04/2023 with illustrations is available here: https://tinyurl.com/4dy632xu