



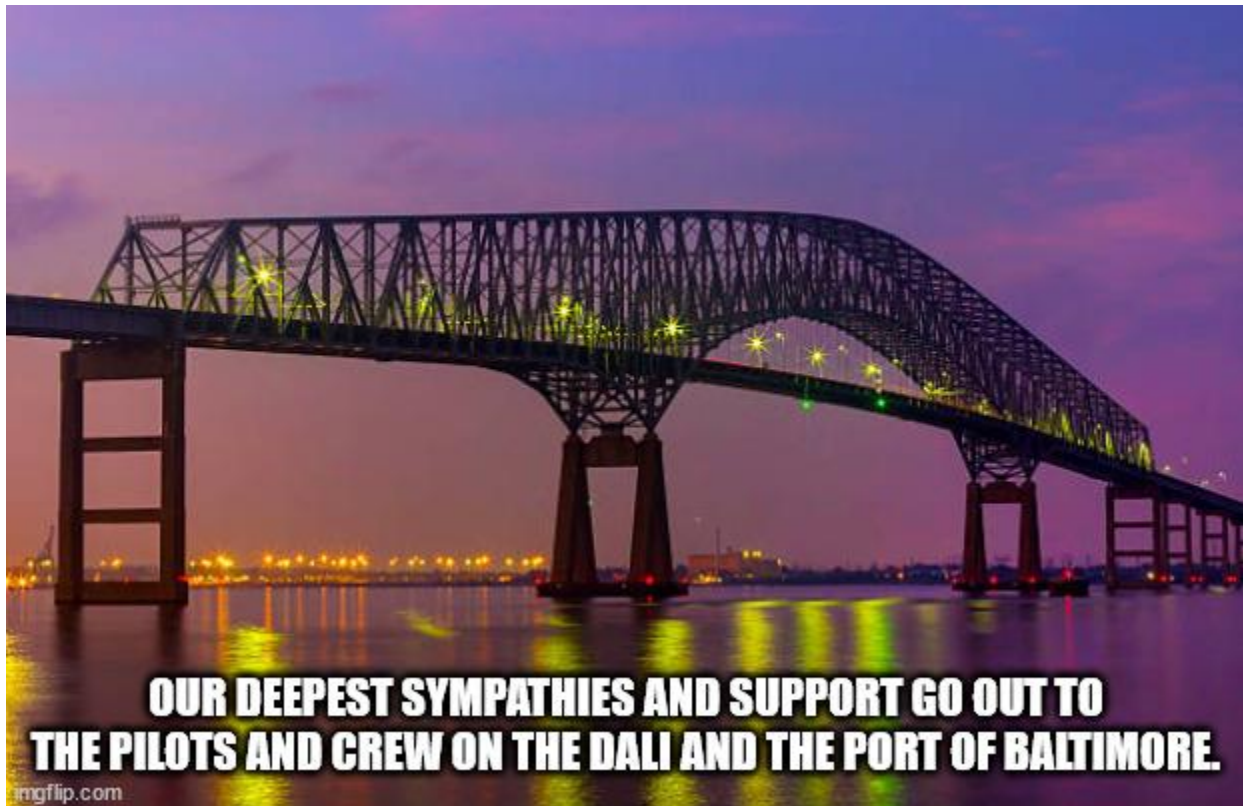
# MM&P Notice to Members

Email: [mmpinfo@bridgedeck.org](mailto:mmpinfo@bridgedeck.org)

410-582-7046

## OSG FLEET & ATC FLEET NEWSLETTER 48TH EDITION

MARCH 29, 2024



### TRAGEDY

TRAGEDY STRUCK EARLIER THIS WEEK IN THE PORT OF BALTIMORE. I AM SURE WE ARE ALL GETTING ASKED THE SAME QUESTIONS FROM FAMILY, FRIENDS, AND MAYBE EVEN NEWS OUTLETS. FEW CAN TRULY UNDERSTAND THE SHEER TERROR FOLLOWED BY A SENSE OF DEVASTATION THAT THE BRIDGE TEAM MUST HAVE EXPERIENCED THAT EVENING. WE MAY SPECULATE ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED BY ANALYZING THE VARIOUS CLIPS OF VIDEO AND REPORTING. TIME WILL TELL AND NO ONE CAN DOUBT THAT THE FINGER WILL GET POINTED. WE ALL KNOW THE MASTER HAS THE ULTIMATE CONTROL AND AUTHORITY OVER THE VESSEL. HOWEVER, HOW MUCH CONTROL DOES HE OR SHE REALLY HAVE WHEN IT COMES TO COMPLEX ELECTRONIC AND ENGINEERING SYSTEMS, ADEQUATE CREWING LEVELS,



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MAINTENANCE & REPAIR BUDGETS, FUEL QUALITY, AND TECHNICAL SUPPORT, TO MENTION JUST A FEW VARIABLES THAT COULD LEAD TO DISASTER?

THE MASTER OF A VESSEL IN THE MODERN MERCHANT MARINE IS GOVERNED AND HELD TO THE STANDARDS OF ANCIENT ADMIRALTY LAW. IN BYGONE ERAS, ONCE YOU SIGNED ON BOARD, THE MASTER WAS THE ULTIMATE AUTHORITY AND MADE DECISIONS INDEPENDENTLY OF THE COMPANY. THE REALITY IS THE SHIPS ARE LARGER, CREWS ARE SMALLER, AND ALL SHIPPING COMPANIES NOW INSTRUCT THE MASTER ON HOW HE OR SHE WILL MANAGE THEIR SHIP WHETHER IT BE BUDGETS, MANNING, FUEL, OR MAINTENANCE. THIS IS DONE WITH INSTANTANEOUS COMMUNICATION VIA EMAIL OR SOMETIMES A TEXT OR, OF COURSE, A PHONE CALL WHEN A COMPANY DOESN'T WANT IT IN WRITING. THIS MAY ALSO BE DONE THROUGH THE SAFETY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (SMS) IN THE EVENT A PAPER TRAIL LEADING DIRECTLY TO YOUR LIVELIHOOD IS DESIRED. AS WE KNOW, WHEN THINGS GO WRONG, THE LICENSED DECK OFFICERS ON BOARD ARE LEFT HOLDING THE LIABILITY BAG AND -- ABSENT UNION CONTRACTUAL AND LEGAL SUPPORT -- HOLDING IT VERY MUCH ALONE.

OUR UNION WAS FOUNDED IN REACTION TO THE OUTRAGEOUS CRIMINAL PROSECUTION OF A STEAMBOAT CAPTAIN. FOR OVER 137 YEARS WE HAVE BEEN UPHOLDING THE PRINCIPLE THAT MARINERS SHOULD NOT BE CRIMINALLY PROSECUTED FOR INDUSTRIAL ACCIDENTS ABOARD SHIP. WE HAVE ALL LEARNED ABOUT THE ERROR CHAIN AND HOW WHEN ONLY ONE OF THOSE LINKS IS BROKEN THEN THE ERROR OR ACCIDENT DOES NOT HAPPEN. AN OFTEN-OVERLOOKED LINK TO THAT CHAIN IS COMPANY CULTURE. IN MANY CASES **THE ERROR CHAIN BEGINS ASHORE, WHERE FINANCIAL DECISIONS AND OPERATIONAL DIRECTIVES ORIGINATE.**



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## IN THE NEWS

### AUSTRALIA BANS DERELICT LIBERIA-FLAG SHIP

MARITIME AUTHORITIES IN AUSTRALIA HAVE FINALLY LOST PATIENCE WITH A FLAG-OF-CONVENIENCE VESSEL, THE KMAX LEADER, WHICH SPENT FOUR MONTHS BROKEN DOWN IN GLADSTONE HARBOR IN QUEENSLAND.

THE AUSTRALIAN MARITIME SAFETY AGENCY CHARGED THE OWNER AND OPERATOR OF THE FLAG-OF-CONVENIENCE VESSEL WITH BREAKING SAFETY LAWS, THEN BANNED IT FROM AUSTRALIA'S PORTS FOR A YEAR AND HAD IT TOWED TO THE PHILIPPINES.

THE RUSTED BULKER FIRST CAME UNDER AMSA'S SCRUTINY IN OCTOBER 2023, WHEN IT REPORTED "ENGINE ROOM VIBRATIONS" AFTER ARRIVING IN THE PORT OF GLADSTONE TO PICK UP A SHIPMENT OF COAL.

THE SHIP'S AGENT PLEDGED TO RESOLVE THE ISSUE IN 8 TO 10 DAYS, BUT FOUR MONTHS LATER, THE VESSEL AND ITS CREW WERE STILL LANGUISHING IN PORT.

AMSA ASKED THE SHIP'S CLASSIFICATION SOCIETY FOR A DAMAGE SURVEY. IT ALSO ASKED THE GREEK OWNERS TO PROVIDE AN UPDATED REPAIR PLAN AND INFORMATION ABOUT TOWAGE ARRANGEMENTS.



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BUT THE OWNERS NEVER RESPONDED, AND THE AGENCY SAID THE SHIP REMAINED "NONCOMPLIANT."

"AMSA EXPECTS ALL SHIP OPERATORS AND MASTERS TO ENGAGE PROMPTLY, TRANSPARENTLY AND MEANINGFULLY," SAID AMSA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS MICHAEL DRAKE.

"INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS EXIST TO PROTECT THE LIVES OF SEAFARERS, AND OUR PRECIOUS MARINE AND COASTAL ENVIRONMENTS. THEY ARE NOT OPTIONAL."

ESPECIALLY IN A PORT LIKE GLADSTONE, WHICH IS CLOSE TO THE GREAT BARRIER REEF, HE SAID THAT A STRANDED SHIP POSES BIG SAFETY RISKS.

IT COULD BREAK ITS MOORING LINES, DRAG ANCHOR, AND CAUSE CATASTROPHIC DAMAGE TO THE MARINE ENVIRONMENT.

TWO CYCLONES SWEEPED THE COAST OF QUEENSLAND IN THE MONTHS THAT THE KMAX LEADER LANGUISHED IN GLADSTONE HARBOR.

THE LIBERIA-FLAGGED SHIP IS THE 10TH VESSEL TO BE BANNED FROM AUSTRALIAN PORTS IN THE PAST YEAR.



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*MM&P President Don Marcus (center) visits Captain Dan Ziemer and Captain Tom Bagan to celebrate the maiden voyage of the MV GREEN OCEAN.*



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***THE LICENSED DECK OFFICERS' UNION***

**MM&P IS HERE TO LISTEN**

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS, YOU CAN REACH CAPTAIN SHAWN TUCY OR CAPTAIN TOM LARKIN AT [MMPINFO@BRIDGEDECK.ORG](mailto:mmpinfo@bridgedeck.org) OR CALL 410-582-7046

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