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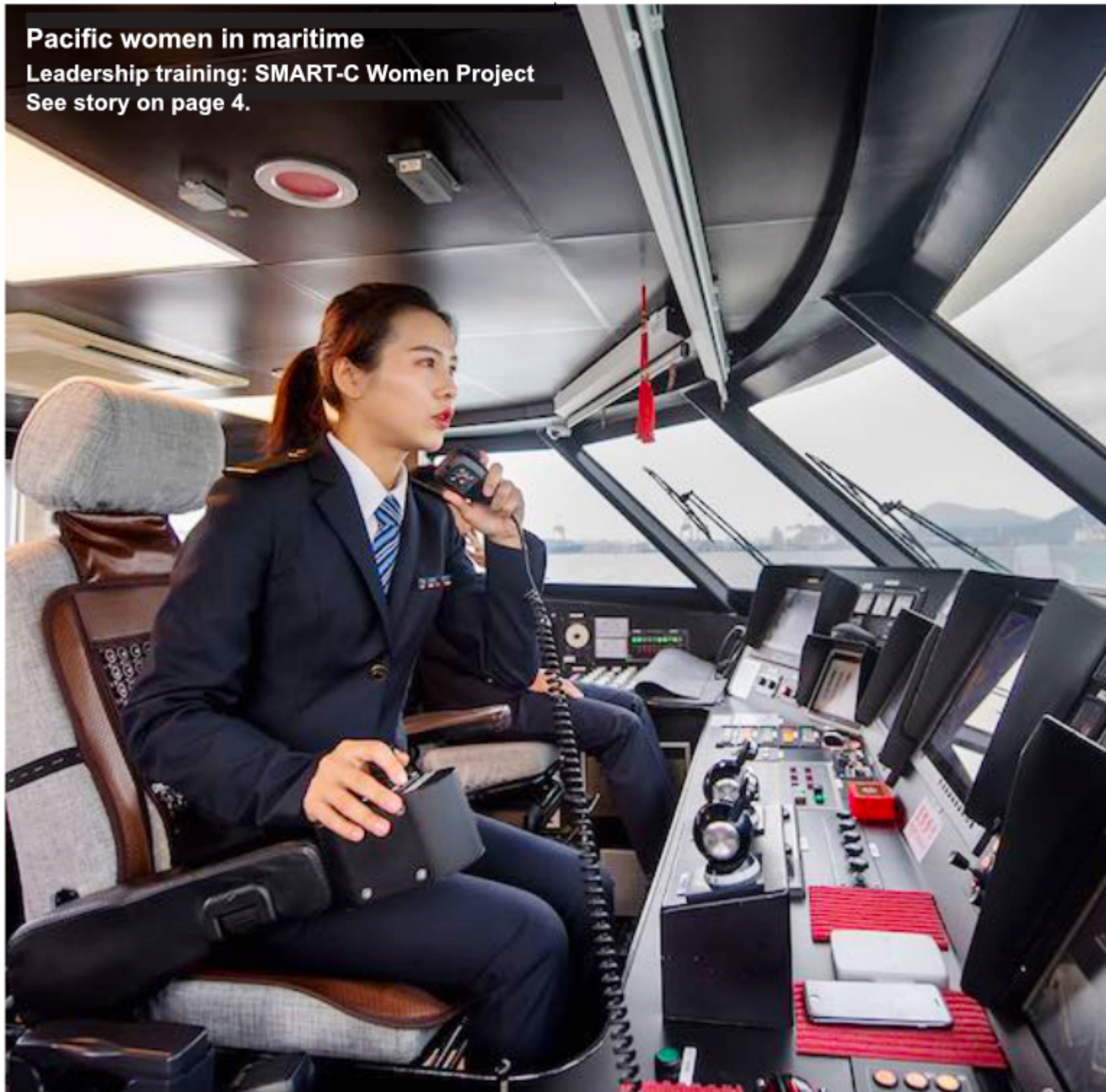
IFSM

NEWSLETTER

The Shipmasters' International Voice

Pacific women in maritime

Leadership training: SMART-C Women Project
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Readers are reminded that the opinions expressed in the IFSMA Newsletter are those of the various authors and providers of news and are not necessarily in accord with IFSMA policy.

Secretary General's Message

After a quiet month in the Middle East the main development is the recent US air strikes against the Houthis. This hasn't resulted in retaliation against merchant ships, though some analysts have said it increases risk for ships associated with Operation Poseidon Archer. As it is, ships haven't returned to the Red Sea in any great numbers, so an elevated threat might not translate into elevated risk if the ships that would be targeted are still diverting.

The peace deal between Ukraine and Russia in the Black Sea should theoretically lower the risk to seafarers, but only if strikes against port infrastructure cease, since this was the predominant cause of casualties. In terms of maritime traffic, it's unlikely to have much impact, given Ukraine's Black Sea campaign forcing the Russian Black Sea Fleet into port, and opened up Ukraine's ports to trade. Similarly, ships were not being directly targeted by either side.



For the first time for many months, there was an attack against a Panamanian bitumen carrier off the coast of Equatorial Guinea. This occurred in the last week of March. Ten seafarers were kidnapped, and at present (in the first week of April) we are not sure of their whereabouts, though it's assumed that they have been taken to the Delta as the pirates' craft was sailing northbound after the incident. This is very concerning for obvious reasons and will be watched closely by security experts, but at present it is not considered to be indicative of a trend.

I am delighted to tell you that the industry, of which IFSMA is part, has just published Best Management Practice Maritime Security (BMP MS) and consolidates the previously published BMP documents into a single, volume. You will find a report in this Newsletter with a link to this freely available publication. It is an excellent piece of work and my thanks go to Captain Russell Pegg of OCIMF for the considerable effort he has put into this task.

Keep safe

Jim Scorer
Secretary General

Hazardous cargo San Juan, Puerto Rico

USCG inspects

On 26 March a US Coast Guard Sector San Juan inspections team discovered an Anhydrous Ammonia hazardous cargo shipment threatening the safety and security of the Puerto Nuevo Terminals (PNT) port facility.

A team of three Coast Guard Marine Science Technicians conducting a routine examination at the facility identified three tank-containers, one of which was deemed to be unlawful, with more than 5,000 gallons of Anhydrous Ammonia, a hazardous, highly toxic and corrosive gas or colourless liquid which is flammable in high concentrations. The product is used for various industrial applications including in detergents, pesticides and fertilizers.

After the finding, an interagency team including personnel from the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (ATF), Coast Guard Investigative Services (CGIS), Customs and Border Protection (CBP), Immigrations and Customs Enforcement-Homeland Security Investigations (ICE-HSI), US Army National Guard, and the US Marshals Service conducted a sweep of Puerto Nuevo Terminals, inspecting other containers.

The port facility's inability to meet safety compliance measures regarding their firefighting capability continues to be a concern for the Coast Guard. A Coast Guard Captain of the Port Order was issued to Puerto Nuevo Terminals on 27 February explicitly prohibiting the facility from storing and handing certain hazardous materials due to the facility's lack of adequate firefighting capability.

Anhydrous Ammonia was included among the prohibited hazardous cargoes.

Captain Robert E Stiles, acting Coast Guard Sector San Juan commander and acting Captain of the Port commented: 'We appreciate the diligence of our Coast Guard inspection team and interagency partners in our shared commitment to port safety and security, as our investigation into this matter continues.

'We will continue to devote all the necessary resources to ensure that HAZMAT is handled in compliance with federal laws and regulations to safeguard the local population and to prevent a catastrophic incident from impacting maritime industry operations, which are so vital to the economy of Puerto Rico.'

Waterfront facilities designated to handle, store, load, discharge or transport dangerous cargo are required to provide adequate quantities and locations of fire extinguishing equipment to meet National Fire Protection Association regulations.

Best Management Practices (BMP) Maritime Security

A new publication

An interactive guidance publication to help all vessels plan voyages and to detect, avoid, deter, delay and report attacks and incidents wherever they occur

News was received at the end of March that industry associations BIMCO, ICS, IMCA, INTERCARGO, INTERTANKO and OCIMF supported by over forty maritime stakeholders, have released a consolidated and enhanced publication with the title: BMP Maritime Security.



As an interactive online publication, BMP Maritime Security (known as BMP MS) consolidates previously published regional publications into a single, comprehensive publication with actionable insights and advice. It focuses on providing a threat and risk management process and, recognising the dynamic nature of regional security situations, provides signposts to direct users to the most up-to-date security intelligence and risk assessment information.

BMP MS is now available to view on the industry website here: <https://tinyurl.com/yn65attu>

Seafarers operating ships around the world encounter a range of maritime security threats, which often involve aggressive state and non-state actors. Although these threats vary across regions and in their severity, they can have a traumatic effect on seafarers who face unwarranted physical and mental harm. In some cases, being held as hostages and subjected to violence and ill-treatment for extended periods.

To counter the threat, existing BMP guidance has greatly improved the industry's ability to understand, detect, and deter maritime security threats in recent years, but the advice needs to keep pace with the rapidly evolving threat environment.

In BMP Maritime Security, users can navigate easily to different sections and link directly to external sources. Additionally, the publication includes various diagrams that provide valuable learning opportunities. The

publication includes a significant section detailing global authorities and, importantly, appropriate contacts and tools for seafarer welfare support.

Comment

BIMCO – David Loosley, BIMCO Secretary General & CEO, commented: ‘2024 saw an unprecedented spike in attacks against merchant ships. Ships were attacked with weapons of war in the Black Sea and in the Southern Red Sea more than one hundred times, and four innocent seafarers lost their lives. Globally, 126 seafarers were held hostage during pirate attacks and armed robberies, and 12 seafarers were kidnapped. BMP MS will reduce risks and save lives. While we cannot control how the threats will develop in 2025 and beyond, we can make sure that we have the best tools available to help protect our seafarers and world trade.’

ICS – Guy Platten, Secretary General, reflected: ‘Recent years have shown the stark security threats that seafarers and the industry can face in the service of world trade. From the conflict in Ukraine to the Red Sea Crisis, the dangers faced by shipping have increased to a severity not seen in two generations. This new global BMP continues the shipping industry’s unswerving commitment to protecting seafarers and mitigating threats to the trade on which we all depend.’

IMCA – Iain Grainger, Chief Executive, said: ‘The maritime industry faces an ever-evolving landscape of security threats, making it essential for seafarers to have access to the most up-to-date and practical guidance. BMP Maritime Security provides a consolidated resource that helps vessels proactively manage risk, safeguard the welfare of crews, and enhance maritime security resilience worldwide. People are our key asset, so IMCA is proud to support this initiative, ensuring that best practices continue to evolve alongside the challenges our industry faces.’

INTERCARGO – Kostas G. Gkonis, PhD, Director / Secretary General, indicated: ‘The new consolidated BMP guidance, developed by the maritime industry in coordination with naval forces, addresses escalating global threats to the safety and well-being of seafarers. INTERCARGO proudly supports this vital collaboration which cuts across traditional sector boundaries to deliver clear, actionable security protocols to protect those working at sea. Through our joint work, we should collectively ensure that these practices reach and empower every vessel, requiring sustained cooperation between frontline crews, whose dedication keeps global trade moving, and security resources and expertise.’

INTERTANKO – Tim Wilkins, Managing Director, added: ‘As seafarers navigate conflict and armed threats, it is our duty as shipowner representatives to provide them with the most up-to-date information and guidance to ensure their safety. The revised BMP and related threat overviews reflect the collaborative efforts of many of our members, drawing on the hard-earned experience of the maritime industry. INTERTANKO considers BMP as being a vital reference for every vessel.’

OCIMF – Karen Davis, Managing Director, concluded by saying: ‘In the current heightened threat environment, where seafarers face unprecedented security challenges, the maritime community needs clear advice on how to manage threats, the risks, and the best mitigations to implement. This publication builds on a successful series of BMPs consolidating the best information available in one publication, BMP Maritime Security.’

BMP Maritime Security publication replaces previously published issues or supported guidance.

The publication is available for download here: <https://tinyurl.com/yn65attu> and also linked from the IFSMA welcome webpage.

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 ©

Pacific women in maritime

Leadership training: SMART-C Women Project

Women maritime professionals from the Pacific region have completed their first training session under the IMO-Republic of Korea SMART-C Women Project¹.

This project aims to advance gender diversity in the Asia-Pacific maritime sector by providing specialised training for selected women, targeting ASEAN countries² and Pacific small island developing states (SIDS)³.

The first session for this year’s programme held from 3-7 March took place online, boosting the technical and leadership skills of nineteen maritime professionals from Fiji, the Marshall Islands, Papua New Guinea, Tonga and Vanuatu, in the areas of decarbonisation, digitalization and gender.



This led into the following training session of 17 - 21 March, aimed at deepening participants’ knowledge and competencies, while building strong regional networks.

Selected trainees from the online programme had the opportunity to attend an on-site training session in the Republic of Korea, where they gained hands-on experience and further develop practical skills that can be applied in their home countries.

About the SMART-C Women Project

The IMO-Republic of Korea SMART-C Women Project offers tailored training programmes for women from developing countries in Asia and the Pacific, enabling them to expand their career and leadership opportunities.



SMART-C Women  INTERNATIONAL MARITIME ORGANIZATION

The training focuses on three areas: Decarbonisation, Digitalisation and Gender, exploring topics such as alternative energy solutions for shipping, IMO's Strategy on Reduction of GHG Emissions from Ships, maritime digitalisation (including the Maritime Single Window, cybersecurity)^{4,5} and digital transformation in Pacific SIDS.

Furthermore, it covers cultural awareness around gender, unconscious bias and advancing women's leadership within the sector.

The Project has been structured around four key pillars:

- Online and on-site training to develop professional competencies.
- Fully funded fellowships for selected participants to study at WMU⁶ or the International Maritime Law Institute (IMLI)⁷.
- Global networking initiatives to facilitate international collaboration and knowledge-sharing.
- Pilot consultancy projects supporting the development of national master plans for women's empowerment in the maritime sector.

¹ <https://tinyurl.com/mrx2w8vk>

² <https://asean.org/member-states/>

³ <https://sdgs.un.org/>

⁴ <https://tinyurl.com/yznckvja>

⁵ <https://tinyurl.com/5achy8db>

⁶ <https://www.wmu.se/>

⁷ <https://imli.org/>

IMO to develop global strategy for maritime digitalization

It was reported on 18 March that the IMO is taking action to create a comprehensive strategy that harnesses emerging technologies to turbo-charge efficiency, safety and sustainability in the shipping industry.

A roadmap for digital transformation

During its 49th session in London from 10 to 14 March, IMO's Facilitation Committee (FAL) outlined a work plan for developing the IMO Strategy on Maritime Digitalization, which is set to be adopted by the Organization's highest governing body – the IMO Assembly – by the end of 2027.

The cross-cutting strategy will span different areas of IMO's work, fostering a fully interconnected, harmonized and automated global maritime sector.



To guide this process, the Facilitation Committee established a Correspondence Group to define the strategy's scope, key objectives and implementation framework. The Group will work over the coming year to identify existing and emerging technologies, standards and methodologies that can support maritime digitalization, while ensuring alignment across IMO's various committees.

The Facilitation Committee invited the Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC) and Maritime Safety Committee (MSC) to encourage Member States and international organizations to join the Correspondence Group, to ensure the early involvement of all stakeholders in shaping the IMO digitalization strategy.

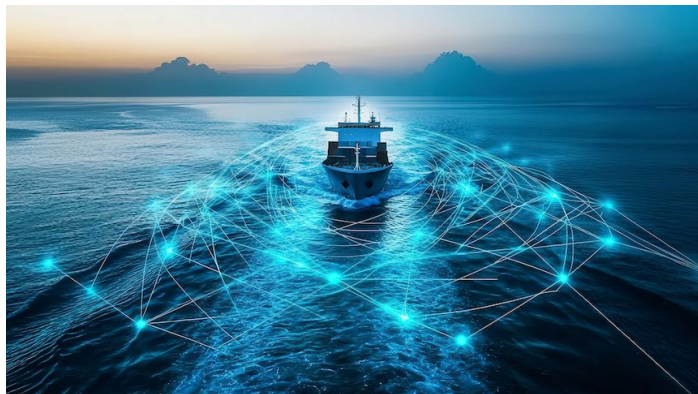
The Correspondence Group will table a report to the next session of the Facilitation Committee (FAL 50) in 2026, before a final submission is made to the Assembly session scheduled for the end of 2027.

IMO Secretary-General Arsenio Dominguez emphasized the transformative potential of cutting-edge technologies such as AI and autonomous navigation, while recognizing related challenges, including cybersecurity risks and the global digital divide.

He stated: *'The IMO Maritime Digitalization Strategy is a game-changing effort to make smooth, seamless, smart shipping a reality. It will help integrate vessels and ports, improve logistics and optimize routes, while reducing greenhouse gas emissions. We must work together to ensure the strategy serves all.'*

Advancing digitalization initiatives

The strategy builds on previous milestones, including the introduction of mandatory Maritime Single Window (MSW) regulations last year, which require ships and ports to use a single digital platform to exchange information and streamline port call procedures.



The 49th session of the Facilitation Committee advanced other key digital initiatives, including:

Updated IMO Compendium on Facilitation and Electronic Business:

A new version was approved, featuring additional data sets to improve standardization and interoperability across maritime IT systems.

Enhanced Maritime Single Window (MSW) Guidelines:

Amendments to the Guidelines for setting up a maritime single window were approved to introduce verification functions, reducing manual administrative burdens and eliminating redundant checks by different authorities.

Cybersecurity for Maritime Single Window:

A new output was introduced to develop cybersecurity measures to safeguard MSWs and protect digital maritime operations from attacks.

Electronic certificates Guidelines:

Joint FAL-LEG-MEPC-MSC Guidelines on electronic certificates were approved and forwarded for concurrent approval by IMO's Marine Environment Protection (MEPC), Maritime Safety (MSC), and Legal Committees (LEG).

Input from Member States

The success of the IMO digitalization strategy will depend on input from Member States and international organizations, particularly concerning safety and environmental protection considerations. A detailed summary of the Facilitation Committee meeting will follow.

Facilitation Convention at 60

Industry leaders focus on future

Global shipping influencers have applauded the historic changes brought about by IMO's Facilitation Convention, which continues to shape the future of maritime transport six decades after it was adopted.

To mark 60 years of the Convention on the Facilitation of International Maritime Traffic (or FAL Convention)¹, international delegates gathered for a special panel event hosted by IMO on 10 March to explore the impact of the treaty and its relevance for the future.

Adopted in 1965

The convention was adopted in 1965 to help ease the flow of maritime traffic by standardizing the information ships must provide when entering ports.

Since 1 January 2024, amendments to the convention requires the use of maritime single windows² or centralized digital platforms for exchanging information between ships, ports and relevant authorities, further streamlining procedures for ships' arrival, stay and departure.

In the words of panellist Lars Kjaer, Senior Vice-President of the World Shipping Council: *'The Facilitation Convention is the best convention that most people have never heard about.'*

Actions to raise awareness

He said that despite driving a digital leap forward for the sector, many stakeholders were not aware of the convention, nor its role in facilitating maritime trade. He urged more actions to raise awareness about the FAL Convention, as well as engaging different regions about their concerns and challenges in implementation.



Patrick Verhoeven, Managing Director of the International Association of Ports and Harbours (IAPH) underlined the good progress achieved on standardization and digitalization – while highlighting

current challenges. That includes closing the digital gap between countries with advanced technologies and those without, as well as protecting against cyber security risks.

He commented: *'Of course, we want to promote digitalization, but the number one risk for the port industry is the cyber risk, because we provide a critical service with critical infrastructure. With the growing geopolitical instability, that risk only increases.'*

Ensure the safe and efficient exchange of data

Building trust between government and industry, including through public-private partnerships, was therefore crucial to ensure the safe and efficient to exchange of data and information.

A seafarer's view

Officer Scarlett Barnett-Smith, a young seafarer working for DFDS Seaways, focused on the impacts of the convention on the lives of seafarers. She reflected: *'I think it is very important that seafarers focus on our core duties, not sitting behind a computer processing loads of paperwork.'*

She also mentioned a potential *'of modernization'* among some of the workforce and called on ship and port managers to provide clear, accessible communication to ensure seafarers are not left behind in the digital transition. She stressed the importance of protecting seafarers' mental health and providing a supportive environment for females on board ships, who make up less than 2% of seafarers worldwide.

Wide-ranging discussions

Discussions between the panellists and the audience were dynamic and wide-ranging, demonstrating the broad interest in the FAL Convention and idea of having a shared responsibility. The event, held in the margins of the 49th session of the Facilitation Committee, was opened by IMO Secretary-General Arsenio Dominguez and moderated by Pressiana Naydenova from the Association of British Ports.

Two video presentations

An introduction to FAL is to be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/4y5fcdaw>

A video of the IMO FAL 60th anniversary event is available here: <https://tinyurl.com/mukyhamn>

¹ <https://tinyurl.com/yj38hjdj>

² <https://tinyurl.com/yznckvja>

UN agencies urge: Protect satellite navigation from interference,

Aviation, maritime and telecoms agencies raise alarm over increase in jamming and spoofing of satellite navigation systems.

Increasing incidents of interference with aviation, maritime and other satellite telecommunications services mean States need to urgently enhance their protection of a critical radio-frequency band, the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), and International Maritime Organization (IMO) said with *'grave concern'* in a joint statement issued on 18 March 2025.



These cases of harmful interference are in the form of jamming and spoofing that disrupt Global Navigation Satellite Systems (GNSS) operating in the frequency bands allocated to the Radio Navigation Satellite Service (RNSS).

The joint statement, signed by the Secretaries-General of the three UN specialized agencies, identifies five key actions required from Member States:

- Protection of RNSS from harmful interference affecting civilian and humanitarian operations.
- Strengthening resilience of RNSS-dependent navigation, positioning, and timing systems.
- Maintaining conventional navigation infrastructure for contingency support.
- Enhancing collaboration between regulatory, aviation, maritime, defense, and enforcement authorities.
- Implementing comprehensive interference reporting mechanisms.

IMO S-G's comment

IMO Secretary-General Arsenio Dominguez said: *'The safety of seafarers and shipping relies on the resilience of systems to support safe navigation and communication. Interference with Global Navigation Satellite Systems poses a serious risk to shipping activities, which could cause collisions and grounding. I urge all Member States to act to protect these critical systems.'*

The joint statement

Readers are invited to download the joint statement with the link here: <https://tinyurl.com/y5txjdf4>

Ships and ports rely on GNSS for a wide array of applications relating to position, velocity and precise universal and local time which are used mainly for navigation purposes and, most importantly, on

systems that are part of the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS).

SOLAS

Regulation V/19.2.1.6 of the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS), 1974, requires that *'all ships, irrespective of size, shall have a receiver for a global navigation satellite system or a terrestrial radio navigation system, or other means, suitable for use at all times throughout the intended voyage to establish and update the ship's position by automatic means.'*

Per IMO MSC

IMO's Maritime Safety Committee, through MSC.1/Circ.1644, has *'urged Member States to take actions necessary to minimize interference coming from their territory, as required under the ITU Radio Regulations; consider issuing warning notices or advisories to mariners specifying the time periods and areas impacted by any known interferences to minimize negative effects upon maritime operations; and consider enacting measures that prevent unauthorized transmissions on recognized satellite navigation system frequencies.'*

ITU radio regulations

Article 4.10 of the ITU Radio Regulations states: *'Member States recognize that the safety aspects of radionavigation and other safety services require special measures to ensure their freedom from harmful interference; it is necessary therefore to take this factor into account in the assignment and use of frequencies.'*

ICAO S-G's comment

ICAO Secretary-General Juan Carlos Salazar said: *'Radio Navigation Satellite Service interference can impact aircraft operations far beyond the immediate affected area, creating potential safety risks across multiple flight regions. ICAO is fully committed to working closely with Member States to implement these protective measures through existing aviation safety frameworks and standards.'*

'Global Navigation Satellite Systems are critical to our safety on land, at sea and in the air,' said ITU Secretary-General Doreen Bogdan-Martin. She added: *'Member States should ensure the uninterrupted operation of these systems for everyone's safety and the resilience of essential services that our lives depend on.'*

Getting on board the green shipping revolution

An IMO video

A new video from the IMO delves into the innovative technologies and transformative approaches shaping the future of sustainable shipping, driven by the ambitious 2023 IMO GHG Strategy.

Bold actions required

In the words of IMO Secretary-General Arsenio Dominguez: *'Bold actions are required to reduce GHG emissions and combat climate change. We know that shipping can definitely drive a green and digital transformation.'*

IMO Member States have committed in the 2023 IMO GHG Strategy to reach net-zero emissions from international shipping by or around 2050.

Operational and technical improvements are already boosting energy efficiency, along with the use of alternative marine fuels. Ship operators are investing in premium hull coatings and integrating wind propulsion to reduce fuel consumption.

IMO is working to overcome the challenges to make the ambitions in the GHG Strategy a reality.

Comment

HE Ximena Fuentes, Ambassador of Chile to the United Kingdom added: *'No single country can implement this strategy alone. All interests must be taken into account, in particular the interests of developing countries – building their capacities to be able to adapt safely to new fuels.'*



Harry Conway, Chair of the IMO Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC) reflected: *'We all have different interests. We should build consensus around a particular objective or goal.'*

The GHG Strategy will leave no one behind in the transition. Mustapha Sellam, Director, Noor Ouarzazate Solar complex in Morocco concluded by saying: *'The opportunities and potential of developing countries depend on their natural resource assets. So they have a huge potential for energy production.'*

As IMO Secretary-General Dominguez encouraged: *'Be part of the solution. Everyone has a role to play in the green shipping revolution.'*

To watch the IMO video readers are invited to use the link here: <https://tinyurl.com/zrxjy9xa>

To explore the latest information on alternative marine fuel and technologies see the link here: <https://futurefuels.imo.org/>

Largest NATO exercise of 2025

First large-scale deployment of Allied Response Force

It was reported from NATO MARCOM Public Affairs on 3 March that two of NATO's naval task groups have taken part in NATO's largest exercise of 2025, Exercise Steadfast Dart, in the Aegean Sea. The exercise took place from 10 - 17 February.

The ships of both Standing NATO Maritime Group 2 (SNMG2) and Standing NATO Mine Countermeasures Group 2 (SNMCMG2) played a significant role in this large-scale multinational exercise, designed to boost working relationships between NATO Allies and Partners.

This was also the first time NATO's Allied Response Force Doctrine was used in an exercise scenario.

Testing and training deployment

Steadfast Dart 2025 was designed to test and train the operational deployment of the Allied Reaction Force (ARF) to NATO Vigilance Area South-East. The doctrine encompasses maritime, air and land activity, aiming to strengthen the Alliance's collective defence capabilities while demonstrating unity and resolve.



Ships assigned to Standing NATO Maritime Group 2 operating in the Aegean Sea during their participation in Exercise Steadfast Dart with NATO's Allied Reaction Force (ARF).

SNMG2 naval units from France, Greece, Italy, Spain and Türkiye, along with staff from Bulgaria and the United Kingdom, demonstrated their professionalism and expertise throughout the exercise. The ships taking part were flagship TCG *Kemalreis* (Türkiye), FS *Commandant Birot* (France), HS *Kountouriotis* (Greece), ITS *Thaon di Revel* (Italy), two warships from Spain: ESPS *Álvaro de Bazán* and ESPS *Patino*, reinforced by the Greek Navy's HS *Limnos* and other ARF Units.

More than 1,000 crew members from across NATO nations were on board, working tirelessly to ensure that the exercise aims and objectives were met.

A broad range of scenarios practised

The task group practised a wide range of activities, including escort operations for deployed units such as

Aircraft Carriers and Amphibious Ships, anti-submarine warfare, Naval Gunfire Support (NGS), air defence, anti-surface firings and operations and Maritime Interdiction Operations. Additionally, SNMG2 units carried out many replenishments-at-sea, where they tested both ship-handling skills and the logistical capabilities of NATO's maritime forces under challenging conditions.

The crews' dedication was particularly evident as they endured harsh weather and rough seas, making the execution of these complex operations even more challenging.

Comment

To quote Commander of SNMG2, Turkish Navy Rear Admiral H. Ilker Avci: *'SNMG2 accomplished its mission in the first ever ARF exercise and enhanced vigilance activity through Exercise Steadfast Dart 25, demonstrating once again the leverage of having a standing naval force at sea at all times.'*

'The exercise has also been very beneficial for enhancing interoperability and testing the newly formed command and control structures of the Alliance.'

The SNMCMG2 ships taking part were TCG *Yüzbaşı Güngör Durmuş* (flagship, Türkiye), Turkish minehunter TCG *Ayvalık* and French minehunter FS *Capricorne*. Together, they successfully conducted mine countermeasures training as part of the exercise scenario, demonstrating their ability to secure vital sea lines of communication (SLOC). The exercise highlighted SNMCMG2's operational readiness, as well as the effectiveness of NATO's combined maritime capabilities in ensuring safe passage for Allied naval forces.

Said the Commander of SNMCMG2 Turkish Navy Captain Kürsat Kurnaz: *'Exercise Steadfast Dart 25 provided a dynamic and challenging environment where NATO forces refined their coordination and tactical proficiency.'*

'The operation highlighted the adaptability of multinational teams, reinforcing strong partnerships and ensuring seamless cooperation across different domains. The dedication and professionalism of all participants played a crucial role in executing complex scenarios successfully, demonstrating NATO's commitment to maritime security and collective defence.'

The SNMCMG2 crew carried out mine countermeasure (MCM) operations to practice dive-accident response, ensuring the MCM vessels are prepared for real-world challenges. This intensive training and cooperation underscores the multinational teamwork required to maintain freedom of navigation in the waters.

Captain Kurnaz added: *'Working side by side, our multinational team located and neutralised mines, showcasing how teamwork and interoperability keep the Alliance's waters and critical underwater infrastructures safe.'*

'By training together, we enhance our readiness to maintain maritime security and send a clear message of strategic deterrence to any potential threat. We are always ready to keep the routes clear.'

Enhanced operational readiness

With enhanced operational readiness, improved interoperability, and refined deployment capabilities, NATO's maritime capabilities were tested, validated, and strengthened during Steadfast Dart 25.



Standing NATO Mine Countermeasures Group 2 flagship TCG Yzb. Gungör Durmuş accompanied by TCG Ayvalık and FS Capricorne demonstrated skill and coordination while executing Asymmetrical Threat Training during NATO's exercise Steadfast Dart 25.

SNMG2 and SNMCMG2 are two of NATO's four standing maritime task groups. These task groups form the core maritime capability of NATO's Allied Reaction Force (ARF) and provide a continuous maritime capability to execute NATO missions across the spectrum of operations, demonstrating solidarity and strengthening the bond and interoperability between Allied naval forces.

North Sea Port-Canada trade

It was reported in recent weeks that North Sea Port will cooperate intensively with the Canadian ports of Montréal, Québec, Saguenay, Sept-Îles en Trois-Rivières. This new cooperation focuses on strengthening trade between the Saguenay-Saint Laurent sea corridor and North Sea Port. Canada is reported to be North Sea Port's fourth trading partner.

North Sea Port and the five Canadian ports, located in the South West of the country, signed an agreement

to shape this cooperation. This builds on a previous cooperation agreement from 2018 between the Port of Quebec and North Sea Port. Here a new step adds the ports of Montréal, Saguenay, Sept-Îles et Trois-Rivières to the existing cooperation. The agreement provides a framework for concrete initiatives in trade, innovation and energy transition.

Trade and logistics

Focus is on further developing the bulk sector and optimizing logistics chains between the Saguenay-Saint Laurent's Canadian hinterland, the port area of North Sea Port and NW Europe. In addition, the ports share knowledge and insights to improve port planning and port operations.



In the words of Maarten den Dekker, Chief Sustainability and Digital Officer of North Sea Port, Innovation and technology: *'Canada is North Sea Port's fourth most important trading partner in terms of cargo throughput. Our location in Western Europe is of great strategic importance for cooperation with the ports of Montréal, Québec, Saguenay, Sept-Îles en Trois-Rivières. Cooperation with these five Canadian ports can only be beneficial.'*

There is also cooperation in the field of technology and circular economy. The ports will promote cooperation between customers, research institutes, universities and start-ups. Sharing knowledge and successes expands networks and promotes technological innovations such as artificial intelligence in port operations.

Energy transition and sustainability

These ports will also actively cooperate to reduce their carbon footprint. Spearheads include low-carbon energy production, greening of port areas, alternative fuels and energy efficiency initiatives.

Julie Gascon, Mario Girard, Carl Laberge, Pierre D Gagnon en Gaétan Boivin, respectively, the Director-General of the port companies of Montréal, Québec, Saguenay, Sept-Îles et Trois-Rivières jointly emphasise: *'We are proud to set up this cooperation framework with North Sea Port, connecting the Saguenay-Saint-Laurent corridor with a dynamic region such as the North Sea. The aim is to develop a strong collaboration and achieve results together,*

such as in the areas of decarbonization, knowledge and innovation.'

About North Sea Port

The cross-border port known as North Sea Port was founded on 1 January 2018 and is the result of a merger between the Dutch Zeeland Seaports (Vlissingen and Terneuzen) and the Flemish/Belgian port of Ghent.

Firefighting suit protection

EU mid-year deadline

Shipowners and operators of EU vessels must take steps to ensure that all new firefighting suits on board comply with changes to European regulations which enter into force from June 2025, according to urgent advice from life-saving equipment manufacturer VIKING reported in early February.

Viking is recommending fleet managers undertake a full risk assessment of their firefighting suits to verify compliance with requirements applying under MED regulations (EU) 2024/1975. These are in addition to provisions in effect since August 2024 – that all new firefighting suits must be tested to EN469:2020 standards.

It is understood that from June, all new firefighting suits bought for EU vessels must feature all three of the enhanced protection capabilities included in 'Level 2' classifications within MED regulations. While Level 1 fire suits in-service will remain compliant until they wear out, they must be replaced by Level 2 PPE once they are no longer fit for purpose or worn out.



Developed in response to high-risk firefighting, Level 2 notation covers radiant and convective heat resistance (X2), enhanced water penetration protection (Y2) and breathability (Z2). The inclusion of Y2 responds to growing risks of electrical fires on ships and greater seafarer exposure to close-quarters firefighting in enclosed spaces where water is used in high volumes. Y2 suits feature an extra moisture barrier to protect firefighters against steam burns and chemicals.

As explained by Charlotte Nielsen, Product Manager PPE, Viking Life-Saving Equipment: 'There has been widespread acknowledgement that seafarers need

more protection, including from electric vehicle and battery fires, and in enclosed spaces.

'Owners recognise these needs but the most extensive fire suit rule changes for two decades are entering into force with unusual speed, so they also want to fully understand what is being asked of them.'

To avoid potential challenges from Port State Control, owners should verify their firefighting gear compliance by date of purchase. Neilson continued: 'We recommend customers conduct risk assessments on the condition and certification of suits and update each vessel's Safety Management System (SMS).'

VIKING has sold Level 2 marine fire suits since 2016 – all meeting X2 and Z2 protection levels. As new MED regulations enter into force, the safety equipment provider expects a significant number of non-EU countries to follow. UK legislation has already been amended to reflect Y2 requirements it is understood.

Charlotte Nielsen reported strong uptake for the VIKING YouSafe™ Torch – VIKING's latest Level 2, EN469:2020 certified fire suit. Made for comfort, durability, and superior heat and water protection, the YouSafe™ Torch has already been used in fighting fires at sea.

The first fully electric offshore vessel

Early in February from Bergen Corvus Energy, a leading supplier of zero emission means for the offshore and marine industry announced that it will deliver a mega-size battery system for the first fully electric offshore vessel ever to be built.

This vessel is an electric Commissioning Service Operation Vessel (eCSOV) that will be constructed by Armon shipyard in Spain for UK-based shipowner Bibby Marine Ltd. (*see illustration*)

World's first of its kind

Corvus Energy will supply its Blue Whale Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) delivering close to 25MWh of power for the vessel. It will be the largest LFP (Lithium Iron Phosphate) battery system ever delivered to a maritime project.

In the words of Pål Ove Husoy, VP Sales at Corvus Energy: 'A fully electric offshore vessel is something the industry has been working towards for a long time and marks a major milestone in offshore vessel operations.'

'This eCSOV will be the first offshore vessel that can operate fully electric for a full day and will set a new standard for future offshore vessels.'

'The unique system design incorporating both battery power and dual-fuel methanol engines will significantly reduce carbon emissions and increase energy efficiency while providing the reliability and performance needed for demanding offshore wind and renewable operations.'

Unique optimized power distribution system

Corvus Energy has been cooperating closely with the shipowner, designer and integrator to create the system design.

Unlike conventional hybrid systems, the vessel will utilize its large battery pack as the primary power source, with engines running solely for charging at a constant, optimized load that maximizes efficiency, extends battery lifespan and significantly reduces emissions.



The eCSOV will have almost 25MW of Corvus battery installed and will be the world's first fully electric offshore vessel.

The innovative DC grid architecture further enhances overall system performance by minimizing energy losses and ensuring seamless power distribution. Additionally, offshore charging capabilities will enable simultaneous battery charging while maintaining DP for station-keeping, representing an industry first in the Service Operation Vessel (SOV) market.

Accelerating the path to net zero

Gavin Forward, New Build Director at Bibby Marine, commented: *'We are excited to collaborate with Corvus on this pioneering eCSOV project, setting a new benchmark for sustainable offshore operations and driving the future of zero-emission vessel technology.'*

Equipment from Corvus Energy will be delivered to the shipyard in 2026, and the vessel is scheduled for operation in 2027 supporting the commissioning and operation of windfarms.

Ro-Pax vessel Marco Polo

Grounding in Hanö bay

Swedish Accident Investigation Authority report

The Swedish Accident Investigation Authority has investigated a shipping accident that took place in the northern part of Hanö Bay, Blekinge County, on 22 October 2023.

Summary

On 22 October 2023 the ro-pax vessel *Marco Polo* (Cyprus-flag; 15,955gt; 150metres loa; Class RINA

and DNV) was en route from Trelleborg to Karlshamn. The planned route passed east of Hanö. During the voyage, the navigation equipment malfunctioned, and the vessel went off course. Rather than the planned route, the vessel entered shallow water between Hanö and the mainland. An initial grounding occurred at the shoal Laxören at 0513, but the trip continued and eleven minutes later, the vessel ran aground again and was hard aground.

The two groundings caused extensive damage to the hull of the vessel and a major spill of heavy fuel oil in the northern part of Hanö Bay.

The crew did not initially realise that the vessel had run aground. This delayed the raising of the alarm and the rescue response. Assessment of the extent of the spill was also complicated by darkness and poor visibility.

Focus of the rescue response was initially on evacuating passengers from the vessel. Later the operation switched to focussing on responding to the environmental emergency, with the goal being to stop the spread of the heavy fuel oil that was leaking from the vessel. This took place both on sea and ashore.

The environmental rescue response was protracted and complicated, and the large number of involved organisations placed significant demands on the cooperation between these organisations. Rescue response was also further complicated by difficult weather conditions and uncertainties regarding the vessel's salvage. A week after the grounding, the ship drifted off the shoal and subsequently ran aground a third time, which caused the release of more heavy fuel oil, from already damaged tanks.

On 2 November, eleven days after the first grounding, it finally became possible to tow the vessel into Stilleryd harbour in Karlshamn.

Individual rescue response measures were generally implemented effectively. However, the investigation shows that there were deficiencies, including in the communication between the organisations involved, the handling and sharing of information ahead of decision-making about rescue response measures, central government support and during supervision of the salvage by the authorities. The deficiencies delayed the rescue operations, and the consequences of the grounding likely worsened. The investigation has also identified several legal challenges, which highlight a need to review the societal ability to manage significant vessel incidents.

Causes of the accident

The accident was caused by the vessel's insufficient procedures for ensuring safe navigation after the loss of the GPS signal.

A contributing cause was that the bridge crew relied solely on one navigational method.

Underlying causes were deficiencies in the crew's training in both the navigational systems and the safety management system.

Safety recommendations

Affected stakeholders have taken several measures. In terms of deficiencies identified in the investigation which have already been addressed by such measures, SHK has not made any recommendations.

The Swedish Government is recommended to:

- Investigate how society's ability to deal with major shipping accidents can be enhanced. The investigation should, among other things, review the roles and responsibilities of the organisations concerned and the potential to share geographic information, as well as clarify responsibilities for the clean-up of oil following a shipping accident. An investigation of this nature should also include measures that can reduce the risk of shipping accidents due to disruptions or interruptions of GNSS.

The Swedish Transport Agency is recommended to:

- Produce methods that the agency can apply to ensure that measures in salvage plans are implemented, and compose procedures for rapidly making and executing decisions concerning mandatory measures.

The Swedish Maritime Administration is recommended to:

- Ensure that the Joint Rescue Coordination Centre (JRCC), at an early stage, contacts the emergency responders ashore who may need to assist in a maritime search and rescue. Where possible, this contact should be made in direct conjunction with a decision concerning a maritime search and rescue operation, in order to facilitate a dialogue about the need for measures at an early stage.
- Promote an update of the information in international sailing directions to ensure that it is clearly indicated that Hanö Sound is categorized as internal waters and is therefore subject to compulsory pilotage.

The vessel's manager TT-Line GmbH & Co. KG is recommended to:

Take action to ensure safe navigation and that emergency situations are managed in an adequate manner by:

- Improving procedures for watch handover on the bridge.
- Further developing the navigation procedures and ensure that they are complied with.
- Ensuring that the bridge officers have sufficient knowledge of the navigation systems.
- Improving the crew's knowledge of the safety management system.
- Ensuring that the crew receive sufficient training in emergency scenarios so that they are able to quickly identify and manage an emergency situation that arises.
- Revising its procedures to further improve support to the vessel in the event of various emergency scenarios.

The full report is available here:

<https://tinyurl.com/mry8u37x>

Swedish Accident Investigation Authority

SHK 2025:03e
Final report

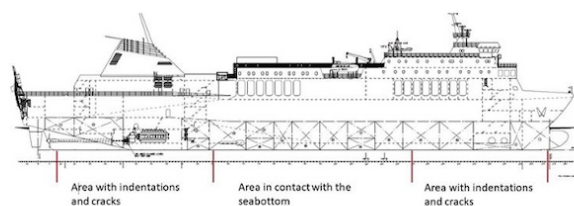


Figure 6. Side view of the vessel. The picture shows the damage to the vessel following the second grounding.

Editorial note:

The text and illustrations here are based on material kindly provided by the Swedish Accident Investigation Authority: <https://www.shk.se>

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G7 Foreign Ministers

Declaration on Maritime Security and Prosperity

In mid-March the Foreign Ministers of the G7 States *viz* Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America, and the High Representative of the European Union, reaffirmed the G7's steadfast commitment to contribute towards a free, open, and secure maritime domain based on the rule of law that strengthens international security, fosters economic prosperity, and ensures the sustainable use of marine resources.

Maritime security and prosperity are fundamental to global stability, economic resilience, and the well-being of all nations, and the conservation and sustainable use of ocean ecosystems is essential to all life on Earth. Over 80% of global trade is transported by sea, and 97% of global data flows through submarine cables. Disruptions to maritime routes pose a direct threat to international food security, critical minerals, energy security, global supply chains, and economic stability.

The Declaration

As a body the G7 Foreign Ministers issued this Declaration:

We express deep concern over the growing risks to maritime security, including strategic contestation, threats to freedom of navigation and overflight, and illicit shipping activities. State behaviour in these areas has increased the risk of conflict and environmental damage, and imperils all nations' prosperity and living standards, especially for the world's poorest.

We recognize the role of the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) as the legal framework for governing all activities in the oceans and the seas.

We recall the G7 Statements on Maritime Security adopted in Lübeck (2015) and Hiroshima (2016).

We welcome related work presently underway through other G7 ministerial tracks and working groups, on a range of issues including securing undersea cable networks and combating abandoned fishing gear.

We welcome, as well, G7 work relating to transnational organized crime and terrorism that touches on the maritime domain, including in relation to piracy and armed robbery at sea, trafficking in persons, and strengthening the maritime law enforcement capabilities of coastal states.

We acknowledge the importance of regional maritime security frameworks, to support coastal states to address collectively threats to their maritime security.

We welcome existing initiatives, such as the G7++ Friends of the Gulf of Guinea (G7++ FoGG, that Canada chairs this year), which has been the primary forum for dialogue among G7 members and partners on maritime security in the Gulf of Guinea.

Emerging Threat on Safe Seas and Freedom of Navigation and Overflight

Enhancing Stability:

We underscore the importance of freedom of navigation and overflight and other internationally lawful uses of the high seas and the exclusive economic zones as well as to the related rights and freedoms in other maritime zones, including the rights of innocent passage, transit passage and archipelagic sea lanes passage, as provided for under international law.

We share a growing concern at recent, unjustifiable efforts to restrict such freedom and to expand jurisdiction through use of force and other forms of coercion, including across the Taiwan Strait, and the South China Sea, the Red Sea, and the Black Sea.

We condemn China's illicit, provocative, coercive and dangerous actions that seek unilaterally to alter the status quo in such a way as to risk undermining the stability of regions, including through land reclamations, and building of outposts, as well as their use for military purpose. In areas pending final delimitation, we underline the importance of coastal states refraining from unilateral actions that cause permanent physical change to the marine environment insofar as such actions jeopardize or hamper the reaching of the final agreement, as well as the importance of making every effort to enter into provisional arrangements of a practical nature, in those areas.

We condemn, as well, dangerous vessel manoeuvres, the indiscriminate attacks against commercial vessels and other maritime actions that undermine maritime order based on the rule of law and international law.

We reiterate that the award rendered by the Arbitral Tribunal on 12 July 2016 is a significant milestone, which is legally binding upon the parties to those proceedings and a useful basis for peacefully resolving disputes between the parties.

We reaffirm that our basic policies on Taiwan remain unchanged and emphasize the importance of peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait as indispensable to international security and prosperity.

We welcome the resumption of exports from Ukraine's Black Sea ports. Freedom of navigation for commercial shipping in the Black Sea must be upheld.

Attempts to Change the Status Quo by Force: We oppose unilateral attempts to change the status quo, in particular by force or coercion including in the East and South China Seas.

We undertake to implement means through which to track systematically and report on attempts to change the status quo by force and by the establishment of new geographical facts, including through coercive and dangerous actions on the oceans and seas that might threaten regional and international peace and security.

Protecting Critical Maritime and Undersea Infrastructure:

We are seized of the fact that vital energy and telecommunications infrastructure under the oceans and seas connects our economies and is vital to our prosperity.

We recall the G7 Joint Statement on Cable Connectivity for Secure and Resilient Digital Communications Networks (2024) and the New York Joint Statement on the Security and Resilience of Undersea Cables in a Globally Digitalized World (2024).

We share a growing concern that undersea communications cables, subsea interconnectors and other critical undersea infrastructure have been subject to critical damage through sabotage, poor seamanship or irresponsible behaviour which have resulted in potential internet or energy disruption in affected regions, delays in global data transmission, or compromised sensitive communications.

We will enhance our cooperation with industry to mitigate risks, reduce bottlenecks to operational tasks while strengthening repair capacities in order to improve the overall resilience of critical undersea and maritime infrastructure. In this respect, we welcome the EU Action Plan on Cable Security adopted in February 2025 by the European Commission and the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy.

Maritime Crime:

Maritime crime, including piracy, armed robbery at sea, maritime arms trafficking and sanctions evasion, human trafficking, illegal drug trafficking and Illegal, Unreported, Unregulated (IUU) fishing, continues to impede maritime security, freedom of navigation, and our economy and prosperity.

We have been working together to tackle these maritime crimes, but maritime illegal activities have

extended into new areas, to become an urgent issue to be addressed.

We welcome the G7 Action Plan to combat migrant smuggling adopted under Italy's 2024 G7 Presidency.

Protecting Freedom of Trade:

In the past year, indiscriminate Houthi attacks in the Red Sea have endangered maritime security of vessels and their crews, disturbed international trade, and exposed neighbouring countries to environmental hazards. Enabled by Iran's military, financial, and intelligence support, these illegal attacks have also contributed to increased tension in the Middle East and Yemen, with severe repercussions on the intra-Yemeni peace process. The vessel "Galaxy Leader" seized by the Houthis must be released immediately.

We appreciate the efforts of all those countries that have engaged to ensure freedom of navigation in the Red Sea, protecting crucial shipping lanes and helping to restore regular flows of trade through the Suez Canal connecting the Mediterranean Sea to the Indian and Pacific Oceans. In this regard, we commend the efforts of EU's maritime Operation Aspides and U.S.-led Operation Prosperity Guardian.

Safe Shipping and Supply Chain Security

Curtailing Unsafe and Illicit Shipping Practices:

The rise of unsafe and illicit shipping practices, including fraudulent registration and registries, poses a significant threat to global trade and environmental sustainability.

We are concerned that unsafe and illicit shipping imposes heavy costs on industry, governments and citizens. Russia's ability to earn revenue has been sustained through its extensive effort to circumvent the G7+ oil price cap policy through its shadow fleet of often older, underinsured, and poorly maintained ships that routinely disable their automatic identification systems or engage in "spoofing" to avoid detection and circumvent international safety, environmental, and liability rules and standards. North Korea continues to pursue its nuclear and ballistic missile programmes and evade sanctions, particularly through its illicit maritime activities, including prohibited ship-to-ship transfers of petroleum and other UN-banned commodities. Through G7 coordination, we have exposed North Korea uses of "dark" vessels – those that engage in illicit activity – to circumvent United Nations Security Council mandated sanctions. Russia and North Korea are strengthening their economic relations including through maritime routes, such as the reported transfer of petroleum products from Russia to North Korea. Unregulated, "dark" vessels undertake IUU fishing, destroying marine habitats and depleting fish stocks, with negative impacts for biodiversity and food security. Unregulated, inadequately insured "dark" vessels also pose a high risk of maritime accidents, including in fragile ecosystems such as the Arctic and Antarctic.

We commit to strengthening our coordination, amongst the G7 and with other partners, to prevent the use of unregistered or fraudulently registered, uninsured and substandard vessels engaged in sanctions evasion, arms transfers, illegal fishing and illicit trade.

We encourage relevant International Organizations to improve maritime domain awareness by expanding satellite-based vessel tracking and establishing comprehensive data records of the movement of individual ships and of ship-to-ship transfers, as a means of identifying and tracking illicit maritime activities.

We are also committed to capacity building of the countries in the region in law enforcement and Maritime Domain Awareness.

Shadow Fleet Task Force:

We invite members of the Nordic-Baltic 8 (Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Sweden), and possibly others, to join participating G7 members in a Shadow Fleet Task Force to enhance monitoring and detection and to otherwise constrain the use of shadow fleets engaged in illegal, unsafe or environmentally perilous activities, building on the work of others active in this area. The Task Force will constitute a response by the participating States to the call by the International Maritime Organization in its Resolution A.1192(33) of 6 December 2023 for Member States and all relevant stakeholders to promote actions to prevent illegal operations in the maritime sector by shadow fleets and their flag states, including illegal operations for the purposes of circumventing sanctions, evading compliance with safety or environmental regulations, avoiding insurance costs, or engaging in other illegal activities.

Enhancing Maritime Supply Chain Resilience and Energy and Food Security: Maritime supply chains will continue to underpin the global economy, but these face a variety of threats, both present and future, stemming from both geopolitical tensions and environmental factors. Maritime disruptions raise consumer costs, increase transit times, and can reduce demand in importing countries, which in turn means lower revenues and diminished competitiveness for producers in exporting countries. Such vulnerabilities in maritime transport can undermine energy and food security, particularly for developing nations reliant on stable shipping routes, including Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and Least Developed Countries (LDCs).

We welcome maritime initiatives involving and supported by G7 partners intended to promote energy and food security, such as the Grain from Ukraine scheme, and the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific.

We invite cooperation with the African Union (pursuant to Africa's Integrated Maritime Strategy 2050) and other relevant International Organizations to identify best practices for enhancing maritime supply chain resilience and for safeguarding energy and food security, including in times of geopolitical crisis.

Promoting Safe and Resilient Ports and Strategic Waterways:

Port ownership and operational control matter to national security, as foreign control or influence over critical port infrastructure can create vulnerabilities in trade, in defence and security, and in economic stability. Port resilience is also crucial to economic stability and global trade and yet ports face growing risks from environmental degradation, extreme weather events and geopolitical conflicts. Strengthening port security and modernizing infrastructure are essential to maintaining safe and efficient maritime trade. Ensuring that the ownership and management of strategic waterways and key maritime choke points are not vulnerable to undue influence by potential adversaries is also essential to national security.

We underscore the importance of scrutiny of ownership structures and port management and resilience within our own national jurisdictions, including with regard to Information and Communications Technology (ICT) systems, to ensure that adversaries do not gain leverage over supply chains, military operations, or the flow of strategic resources.

We will work with partners and with relevant International Organizations to encourage robust cybersecurity standards for port ICT infrastructure, to increase resilience against malicious cyber incidents on maritime logistical networks, to reduce monopolistic power over key supply chain nodes, to promote secure and transparent port ownership, to limit unsolicited or undue foreign influence over critical infrastructures and strategic waterways, and to otherwise encourage greater focus on such potential vulnerabilities.

Unexploded Ordnance (UXO) at sea poses a significant hazard to the marine environment, to the safety of fishermen and other users of the maritime space, and to various marine economic activities.

We commit to enhancing diplomatic efforts and to exchanging best practices among national authorities, relevant international and regional organizations, and relevant industry sectors to accelerate the clean-up of UXO from the seas and ocean.

Sustainable Stewardship of Maritime Resources

Strengthen Enforcement Against IUU Fishing:

IUU fishing is a major contributor to declining fish stocks and to marine habitat destruction. It may account for a third of all fishing activity worldwide, at a cost to the global economy of more than US\$23 billion per year and with negative consequences for fisheries as an enduring economic asset, including for developing countries.

We welcome the Canadian-led Dark Vessel Detection System in Ecuador, Peru, Costa Rica, the Philippines, and members of the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) and would see value in replicating the model to support

other partners whose fisheries are under threat from IUU fishing.

We recognize that data sharing and transparency play a key role in this fight by exposing bad actors and that technological advances can support a robust Monitoring, Control and Surveillance and enforcement landscape.

We encourage further progress in addressing IUU fishing, working with and through relevant International Organizations to establish and strengthen rules to sustainably manage fish stocks on the high seas and to improve the enforcement of these measures, including through the further development of detection technologies, aircraft patrols and high seas boarding and inspection of vessels, building upon the 2022 G7 Ocean Deal.

We welcome the Third UN Ocean Conference, in Nice, France, from 9 to 13 June 2025.

Partnerships

This G7 Maritime Security and Prosperity Declaration provides a framework for cooperation with non-G7 partners, including countries hosting major ports, large merchant fleets, or extensive flag registries as well as relevant regional and International Organizations, such as the International Maritime Organization and ASEAN.

We would welcome robust cooperation with partners to take forward the goals set out in this Declaration, consistent with the principles of sovereignty and territorial integrity, under the efforts of the G7 countries, including a free, open, prosperous and secure Indo-Pacific region, to build a free and open maritime order based on the rule of law, and of commitment to the sustainable development of the world's maritime spaces.

We welcome the cooperation on Coast Guard Functions, including the Global Coast Guard Forum hosted by Italy in 2025, as well as the Arctic Coast Guard Forum, which could also support the objectives of this Declaration.

New Food4Seafarers Project

To Improve Seafarers' Nutrition and Catering Standards

A new research initiative, Food4Seafarers, has been launched by the World Maritime University (WMU)* with generous sponsorship from the ITF Seafarers Trust. The goal of the project is to address the persistent issue of inadequate nutrition and catering for seafarers.

Significant challenges

Reports and studies of the maritime sector have repeatedly highlighted significant challenges for seafarers regarding restricted access to fresh and nutritious food, subpar provisions, and financial constraints affecting meal quality. These factors

adversely affect seafarer well-being, and require reform.

Led by WMU's ITF Seafarers Trust Associate Professor Khanssa Lagdami, the study will assess food provision on ships, identifying inefficiencies and gaps in current practices. The ultimate goal is to enhance the health and well-being of seafarers while promoting more sustainable catering solutions.



As a pilot study, Food4Seafarers will gather crucial data to support the development of practical recommendations aimed at improving food quality, nutrition, and accessibility for seafarers.

Objectives

Key Objectives of the Food4Seafarers Project are to:

- Assess the current state of onboard nutrition and catering including supply chain dynamics as well as the costs of food and drinking water.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of current practices to identify gaps and best practices in food provision and catering.
- Develop evidence-based policy recommendations to enhance the quality, nutritional value, and quantity of food provided to seafarers.

By addressing these critical issues, the project aims to drive positive change in the maritime industry, ensuring that those who keep global trade moving have access to healthy and sustainable food options at sea.

*<https://www.wmu.se/news/food4seafarers>

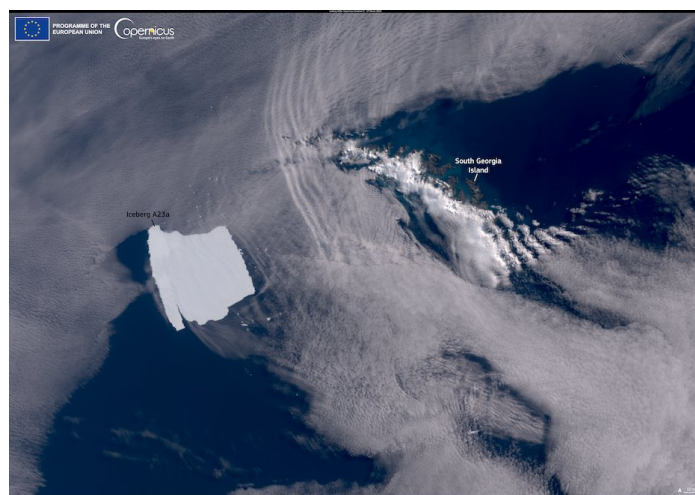
Iceberg A23a runs aground near South Georgia Island

This Copernicus Sentinel-3 image, acquired on 17 March 2025, shows the world's biggest iceberg, known as A23a.

Once measuring 3,900 km², the iceberg is now roughly 3,300 km², shrinking as it passes through the Antarctic Ocean.

The iceberg started moving again in 2024 after being stuck on the floor of the Weddell Sea for over thirty years. After travelling over 350 km since December 2024, A23a has now run aground nearly 70 km from South Georgia Island.

Researchers tracking the iceberg suggest that its presence or future movement could affect the wildlife of South Georgia, which serves as an important breeding ground for animals such as penguins and seals.



Credit: European Union, Copernicus Sentinel-3 imagery

EU Copernicus ©

Open data from the Copernicus Sentinel satellites delivers vital insights on remote areas around the world, including in the Antarctic. This information is key to better understanding changes in these complex environments and their impacts on affected ecosystems.

Learning differently about accidents

By Michael Grey, IFSMA Honorary Member

Maritime accidents have produced headlines of late, with all sorts of questions about how they happened careering around the airwaves. It is probably too early for this columnist to add to the virtual interrogation, except, perhaps to ask whether it is an appropriate action for a civilised country to be remanding a survivor of shipwreck in custody, hours after being landed? And even whether law enforcement officers should be barging into a marine casualty investigation ahead of the professionals? But let us no go further into such contentious matters.

Doubtless, in the fulness of time, with the publication of the report from the MAIB, there will be all sorts of useful conclusions reached. These will be hopefully pored over by seafaring professionals and those who operate ships, to learn the lessons and better manage risks. But in all such accidents, will there be lessons that remain unlearned? In a very thought provoking book, Dr. Nippin Anand, who holds a master mariner's certificate in addition to a PhD in social sciences and anthropology, along with a master's degree in economics and social psychology, suggests that there is a lot more to learn about risk and safety.

Nippin, who has a reputation as a compelling speaker at safety related conferences and as the author of articles in professional journals, was led into this book by the calamity of the Costa Concordia and the subsequent trial in Italy of her master Captain

Schettino, currently serving out his sentence. Nippin, who was certainly not alone in wondering whether the entire responsibility for the fatal accident could be placed on the shoulders of the ship's commander, decided to interview him, which at some length, he was able to do. And while this accident serves as a thread through this book, the author shows how his background, across so many different disciplines, has enabled him to search far beyond the usual "rituals" of an accident investigation and into its background, and the many factors which came together on that fatal night in January 2012.

The author, whose humanity becomes obvious as his thesis evolves and who confesses to his own "near miss" incident during his time at sea, is sympathetic to the master's plight, noting the way the mockery of the media, the dubious reporting and sensationalism, along with the demand by Italian officialdom to purge the national shame with a suitable scapegoat, overwhelmed rational thought. He guides the reader along a line markedly different from the traditional approach to an accident investigation, showing how real learning will come from a deeper understanding of why people do things, looking at relationships, the mind, the importance of doubt and the role of the emotions and feelings.

Learning, he suggests, is "surfacing the unconscious;" digging a bit deeper into the unseen drivers that contribute to a calamitous situation. There are those who will never be convinced that Schettino was not the author of his own misfortune, but Nippin Anand asks his readers to at least open their minds to fresh interpretations of the casualty. He points out that in the "sail-past" close to the island, it was a "normal" manoeuvre for cruise ships, which are expected to routinely sail far closer to the land than other ships. He attempts to analyse the thinking and conduct of the other members of the bridge, and offers suggestions as to why they never intervened in any way as the ship missed her turn.

He explores the myth of "no-blame culture", which goes against human nature in many respects, with its perennial search for a scapegoat. And he concludes with a practical method of learning from accidents using as an example an actual enclosed space tragedy, drawn from a report into a death aboard a coal carrier anchored off Indonesia in 2022. This he terms the "iCue" method, which seeks to establish the human decision-making of the participants in the accident, which was somewhat less complex than the cruise ship tragedy and perhaps easier to understand.

In this important book Nippin Anand concludes that learning means embracing the fallibility which makes us all human, and in doing so, better manage the risks which are part and parcel of everyday life. Are we learning from accidents? Quandary, a question and a way forward, by Dr Nippin Anand. Published by Novellus ISBN 978-1-7385603-0-1 nippin.anand@novellus.solutions

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

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FuelEU Maritime Regulation

As part of the European Commission's Fit for 55 legislative package, the FuelEU Maritime Regulation (Regulation (EU) 2023/1805) promotes the use of renewable, low-carbon fuels and clean energy technologies for ships, essential to support decarbonisation in the sector.

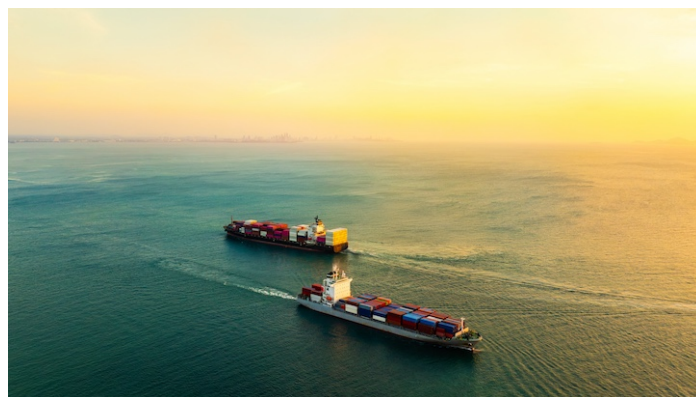
The Regulation was fully applied from 1 January 2025 (except for Articles 8 and 9) on monitoring plans that were applied from August 2024.

It is understood that application of FuelEU was delayed in Norway and Iceland due to delays in the process of incorporating the FuelEU Maritime Regulation into the European Economic Area (EEA) Agreement. This means that Norwegian and Icelandic ports have been regarded as third-country ports in a FuelEU context from 1 January 2025 until the incorporation of FuelEU in the EEA Agreement.

Key facts about the FuelEU Maritime Regulation

FuelEU Maritime sets maximum limits for the yearly average greenhouse gas (GHG) intensity of the energy used by ships above 5,000 gt calling at European ports, regardless of their flag.

Targets will ensure that the greenhouse gas intensity of fuels used in the sector will gradually decrease over time, starting with a 2% decrease by 2025 and reaching up to an 80% reduction by 2050.



The targets cover not only CO₂ but also methane and nitrous oxide emissions over the full lifecycle of the fuels used onboard, on a Well-to-Wake (WtW) basis.

To reduce air pollution in ports, passenger and container ships at berth or moored at the quayside must use on-shore power supply (OPS) or alternative zero-emission technologies from 1 January 2030 onwards in ports covered under Article 9 of the Alternative Fuels Infrastructure Regulation (AFIR), and from 1 January 2035 in all EU ports that develop OPS capacity. Member States may choose to apply the obligation to ports not covered by Article 9 of AFIR, from 1 January 2030.

By taking a goal-based and technology-neutral approach, FuelEU Maritime allows for innovation and the development of new sustainable fuels and energy conversion technologies, offering operators the

freedom to decide which fuels and technologies to use based on ship-specific or operation-specific profiles.

The Regulation also provides for different flexibility mechanisms, supporting existing fleets to find suitable compliance strategies and rewarding first-movers for early investment in energy transition.

Frequently Asked Questions

There are a number of questions that could be asked of the FuelEU Maritime proposals and a selection is set out on the website indicated below under the following heading: *Questions and Answers on Regulation (EU) 2023/1805 on the use of renewable and low-carbon fuels in maritime transport, and amending Directive 2009/16/EC*

Answers are intended to guide stakeholders in understanding the application of the FuelEU Regulation, see here: <https://tinyurl.com/ehzce3x2>

They were prepared by the services of the Directorate-General for Mobility and Transport of the European Commission and do not commit the European Commission as such.

Alfa Laval and ammonia fuel supply systems

Alfa Laval has signed its first contract for the ammonia fuel supply system, FCM Ammonia, illustrating the company's position in developing decarbonising of the maritime industry. The FCM Ammonia will be installed onboard seven LPG/ammonia carriers for Tianjin Southwest Maritime.

Ammonia-powered shipping becoming a reality

As a front-runner in enabling the use of ammonia, Alfa Laval has achieved a significant milestone by securing the contract for the ammonia fuel supply system, highlighting its technological readiness to handle ammonia as fuel.



Ammonia fuel supply system Alfa Laval FCM Ammonia.

The FCM Ammonia will be installed on a CSSC Huangpu Wenchong shipyard in China for shipowner Tianjin Southwest Maritime (TSM).

It is understood that the installation will commence with three 25,000 cubic metre vessels, followed by four 41,000 cubic metre vessels.

In the words of Peter Sahlen, Head of Marine Separation, Fuel Supply System & Heat Transfer, Alfa Laval: *'Through research, product development, and strategic partnerships, we are building the solutions needed for a safe and efficient transition to low-carbon alternative fuels.'*



CSSC Huangpu Wenchong Shipyard, China.

'Our deep experience with fuels like methanol and LPG has given us a head start with ammonia, and this first contract validates our commitment to driving decarbonization in shipping with reliable and innovative solutions.'

Collaborative development drives innovation

The FCM Ammonia contract follows extensive testing and development conducted in close collaboration with Swiss engine designer WinGD.

In December 2024, comprehensive testing of the full fuel supply system, fuel valve train, and vent treatment system commenced at WinGD's Engine & Research Innovation Center (ERIC) in Winterthur, Switzerland.

These tests, utilizing test benches delivered by Alfa Laval Monza, will first validate key components for the vent treatment system, also called the ammonia release mitigation system, and then secure control logic and performance at varying engine loads.

The research and development project with WinGD for testing FCM Ammonia has laid a strong foundation for its commercial adoption.

This is further evidenced by K Shipbuilding receiving Approval in Principle (AiP) from ABS in December 2024 for the design of an ammonia dual-fuel MR1 tanker. The project, a collaboration between South Korea's shipbuilder K Shipbuilding (KSB), Alfa Laval, WinGD, and the classification society American Bureau of Shipping (ABS), saw Alfa Laval contribute to the design of the entire fuel system. This included the ammonia fuel supply system, fuel valves train, and vent treatment system, with Alfa Laval also adding an Aalborg ammonia dual-fuel boiler system to the project scope. This achievement marks the first instance of a combined vent treatment system incorporating both a water absorber and burning.

The success of the rigorous testing project is generating trust across the industry, and the recognition from class societies further confirms that ammonia can be a safe and viable marine fuel when

backed by expert collaboration and robust system design.



K Shipbuilding receives AiP for the design of an ammonia DF MR 1 tanker.

The first FCM Ammonia unit for TSM is scheduled for delivery at the end of 2025. The contract with TSM, a current customer for FCM LPG, Alfa Laval fuel supply system for LPG, further underscores Alfa Laval's role in providing comprehensive fuel solutions to meet the evolving needs of the maritime industry.

Hold cleanliness

This article issued by the Shipowners' Club* on 18 March considers the legal obligations of owners regarding the cleanliness of their vessels' holds from the perspective of both time and voyage charters.

Hold cleaning remains a vital issue for the carriage of any bulk cargo. Failure to comply with the contractual obligations for cleanliness can often lead to disputes and lost time in addition to potential claims for cargo contamination.

The required level of hold cleanliness

Broadly, a charterparty or a fixture recap will usually specify the level of cleanliness required. For example, Clause 2(c) of the BIMCO NYPE 2015 form requires holds to be 'clean and in all respects ready to receive the intended cargo'. However, in cases where a standard form is used, it is a common trade practice for this to be amended with further requirements. Particularly because the requirements will vary depending on the exact nature of the cargo.

Common terms used in the market include:

Hospital clean – this is considered the most onerous type of clean. The wording stipulates all paint must be 100% intact and the holds must have been swept and washed completely clean.

Grain clean – this requires the holds to be free from insects, odour, residue of previous cargo, lashing material, loose rust scale and paint flakes. Prior to loading, the holds must be swept, washed down with fresh water, dried and well ventilated.

Normal clean – this involves the holds to be swept, washed and dried clean.

Shovel clean – this is considered the least onerous cleaning requirement and simply involves the removal of previous cargo residue only (it does not require washing).

When are the holds required to be clean?

The charterparty often determines when exactly the holds must be in the required cleanliness state, however there can sometimes be contradictions between the standard wording and the fixture recap or rider clauses. Standard wording may require the holds to be clean on delivery, while bespoke fixture recap or rider clauses could specify cleanliness upon arrival at the load port.

Disputes can arise when a vessel is clean upon arrival but a specified event (such as a subsequent change in cargo) then renders the vessel holds unclean, as occurred in the *Bunga Saga Lima*¹. In such cases, the vessel would have met the charterparty requirements, and any time lost cleaning would be for charterer's account.

Who determines cleanliness?

Many charterparties may stipulate that the condition of the holds is determined by an 'independent surveyor'. However, the definition of independent surveyor has been the source of dispute in the past. In the case of *Protank Orinoco*², the Commercial Court addressed this issue and decided that an independent expert is defined as one jointly appointed by both owners and charterers.

Intermediate hold cleanliness

Under a time charter, unless there is an additional express clause, it is generally accepted that the obligation of clean holds is provided only on delivery and does not extend to subsequent voyages under the same charter.

However, some charterparties (including the NYPE 2015) require the owners to render 'customary assistance' in hold cleaning throughout the charter. In the *Bela Krajina*³ case the court held that this obligation was limited to the level of cleaning the crew (who were not professional/specialist hold cleaners) could reasonably achieve. If further cleaning was required, for example when a charterer moved from a cement cargo to a grain cargo, this would not fall within 'customary assistance' and, unless expressly stated otherwise in the charterparty, would be at the charterer's expense.

Possible Claims

Holding cleaning can give rise to several different claims. If a charterer misses the laycan for a sub-charter due to cleaning delays, those costs may, prima facie, be claimable from the owner.

Furthermore, if cleaning takes longer than anticipated, the charterer may attempt to place a time-chartered vessel off-hire. Such a claim would only succeed if the delay was caused by an 'off-hire event' as defined in the relevant clause. In *Berge Sund*⁴, the court held

that the need for the additional cleaning during the charterparty term did not constitute an off-hire event.

Additionally, inadequate hold cleaning can lead to claims from cargo owners if contamination occurs after the cargo has been loaded.

Some practical considerations

When considering the level of hold cleanliness required, owners should bear in mind the following:

- a. The contractual provisions.
- b. The nature of the cargo.
- c. The previous cargoes carried.
- d. The load and discharge ports.

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See also <https://www.shipownersclub.com/>

- ¹ Bunga Saga Lima [2005] 2 Lloyd's Rep. 1
- ² Protank Shipping Inc. v. Total Transport Corporation [1997] 2 Lloyd's Rep
- ³ Bela Krajina [1975] 1 Lloyd's Rep 139
- ⁴ Berge Sund [1993] 2 LLR 453

2026 America's 250th anniversary celebration

Queen Mary 2 to join

On 25 March Cunard announced from Southampton an exciting partnership with Sail4th 250, the non-profit organisation overseeing celebrations in the Port of New York and New Jersey for America's 250th anniversary next year.

The collaboration will see the luxury cruise line's flagship *Queen Mary 2* – the world's only ocean liner – take pride of place at the heart of the landmark event, offering guests a once-in-a-lifetime vantage point in what promises to be an unforgettable moment in history.

Six-day event

The six-day centerpiece of America's milestone anniversary will feature the largest international flotilla of tall ships and naval vessels ever assembled.

Some seventeen nations have already committed their tall ships to participate, and the US Navy has invited scores of others. More than thirty tall ships are expected. The celebration will also include festivals, public access to the tall ships, a massive fireworks display, and an exhibition of 18th-century historic documents.

Tall ships parade

Planners expect eight to ten million spectators to line the fifteen-mile New York/New Jersey shoreline to

view the 4 July parade of tall ships and naval vessels, with events planned from 3-8 July, 2026.

Katie McAlister, President of Cunard, said: '*Cunard has a long and distinguished history with the United States as pioneers of Transatlantic travel, and we are proud to play a role in this momentous celebration.*

'As the world's only ocean liner, Queen Mary 2 will offer guests an experience like no other — immersing them in the excitement and grandeur of America's 250th Independence Day. This is a truly unique opportunity to witness history in spectacular fashion, and we couldn't be more thrilled to be part of it.'

This collaboration reflects Cunard's deep-rooted connection to the United States and its rich maritime history. For more than 185 years, Cunard ships have pioneered transatlantic travel, and in 2026, *Queen Mary 2*'s presence in New York Harbor will add to that history.

Largest gathering of tall ships

From her prime position in New York Harbor, guests on board will have unrivalled views of the largest gathering of tall ships and naval vessels ever seen in the city. The spectacle will continue with a dramatic military flyover, culminating in a breathtaking fireworks finale over the Manhattan skyline. Whether at anchor or positioned in the harbour, *Queen Mary 2* will serve as the ultimate setting for this landmark occasion.

Chris O'Brien, President of Sail4th 250, added: '*The participation of the majestic Queen Mary 2 helps ensure that seafaring travellers can have first-class seats to the most spectacular event in the history of New York Harbour. Given Cunard's storied history and indelible ties to the United States, we are pleased to have found the perfect seafaring partner for our nation's historic milestone.*



Queen Mary 2 will take centre stage in New York Harbor across 3-4 July 2026.

Ross D. Levi, Executive Director / VP, NYS Division of Tourism, Empire State Development, added: '*The addition of Queen Mary 2 to Sail4th will only enhance the celebrations surrounding America's 250th birthday.*

'I LOVE NY is proud to support Sail4th's efforts to create this once-in-a-lifetime event. We look forward

to promoting this largest-ever international flotilla as part of the state's unique America 250 activities so that visitors from around the globe can see for themselves how easy it is to love New York.'

Cunard's Independence Day Spectacular Voyage will take place from 3-10 July, 2026, offering guests the chance to be part of history. After an extraordinary stay in New York, *Queen Mary 2* will continue to Newport, Rhode Island, and Halifax, Nova Scotia, where guests can explore two of North America's most charming and historic ports.

Prices currently start from £1,999 per person based on two sharing a Britannia Balcony stateroom.

About Cunard

Cunard is a luxury British cruise line, renowned for creating unforgettable experiences around the world. Cunard has been a leading operator of passenger ships since 1840, and this year celebrates an incredible 185 years of operation. 2025 is a momentous year in Cunard's history, which will be marked with several iconic land-based events and special Event Voyages.

The Cunard experience is built on fine dining, hand-selected entertainment, and outstanding White Star service. From a partnership with a two-Michelin starred chef, to inspiring guest speakers, to world class theatre productions, every detail has been meticulously crafted to make the experience unforgettable. A pioneer in transatlantic journeys and round world voyages, destinations sailed to also include Europe, the Caribbean, Alaska, the Far East and Australia.

Four ships in simultaneous service

There are currently four Cunard ships, *Queen Mary 2*, *Queen Elizabeth*, *Queen Victoria* and new ship, *Queen Anne*, which entered service in May 2024. This investment is part of the company's ambitious plans for the future of Cunard globally, with the brand now boasting four ships in simultaneous service for the first time since 1999.

Cunard is based at Carnival House in Southampton and has been owned since 1998 by Carnival Corporation & plc.

About Sail4th 250

Sail4th 250 is a 501 (c)3 not-for-profit organization founded in 2020. It is the successor organization to Operation Sail, Inc., which organized the previous major tall ship events in the Port of New York and New Jersey in 1964, 1976, 1986, 1992, 2000, and 2012.

Sail4th 250 is part of the 2026 Sail250@America tour of the East Coast and Gulf port cities of New Orleans, Norfolk, Baltimore, and Boston. The programs Sail4th 250 is developing will provide economic development, cultural enrichment, and educational programming for citizens, businesses, and visitors throughout the region.

Reducing maritime emissions

Australia and Singapore support research

Australia and Singapore have selected eight projects for funding as part of a \$20 million initiative to help reduce emissions in the maritime sector.

The Australia-Singapore Initiative on Low Emissions Technologies (ASLET) supports the objectives of the Singapore and Australia Green and Digital Shipping Corridor (GDSC)¹, which will help accelerate decarbonisation and digitisation of shipping routes between Singapore and Australia.

It is jointly delivered by the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO), Australia's national science agency, and the Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore (MPA) on behalf of the governments of Australia and Singapore.

The ASLET grant opportunity was launched in July 2024 to support projects that will help accelerate the deployment and uptake of zero or near-zero greenhouse gas (GHG) emission technologies for maritime and port operations.

A total of thirty-two applications were received from universities, research institutes and industry based in Australia and Singapore.

Eight projects selected

The eight projects selected for funding cover a range of activities, including innovations in the supply, transport, storage, dispensing and maritime utilisation of hydrogen, ammonia and methanol, as well as safety and environmental monitoring, and electrification.

Links to CSIRO and MPA Singapore

For more detail on these projects, readers are invited to see the CSIRO² and MPA³ websites.

The selected projects have also attracted co-contributions and are expected to be completed within the next two years.

¹ <https://tinyurl.com/yck6x2xa>

² <https://tinyurl.com/bdht92m2>

³ <https://tinyurl.com/yu275bkw>

Pacific International Lines, Fleet renewal

PIL advances fleet renewal with the naming of its fourth 14,000 TEU

LNG dual-fuel container vessel

It is the first PIL vessel to feature an innovative bow windshield to improve aerodynamics and reduce fuel consumption and corresponding emissions.

From Singapore on 10 March Pacific International Lines (PIL) announced the naming of its fourth 14,000 TEU LNG dual-fuel container vessel.

The vessel was named *Kota Embun* by Mrs Evelyn Ng, wife of Mr Ng Kee Choe, Deputy Chairman of PIL, in a ceremony held in the Shanghai shipyard that day.

Embun translates as dew in Malay and symbolises renewal and harmony with nature, reflecting the vessel's role in promoting sustainable and environmentally-friendly shipping practices.

PIL's 'E' Class

This 14,000 TEU vessel is part of PIL's 'E' Class series, which are the largest in its fleet. They are also the first to run on LNG and were designed and constructed by Jiangnan Shipyard, a leading shipbuilder in China.



Kota Embun is the first PIL vessel to feature a bow windshield for improved aerodynamics, which is expected to reduce fuel consumption and corresponding emissions by 1% per annum on the Far East to US West Coast, Central and South America Service 2 route that the vessel will ply.

CEO's comment

Lars Kastrop, CEO of PIL, commented: *'The naming of Kota Embun, our fourth 'E' Class vessel is testament to the excellent progress we are making in our fleet renewal drive and journey towards greener shipping.'*



'We have another fourteen new vessels of various capacities, equipped with LNG dual-fuel technology and other advancements. Each new vessel brings us closer to our goal of operating a more modern and environmentally-friendly fleet. They enhance our ability to better meet global trade demands and

support our customers with wider and more efficient services.'

It is reported that PIL has ordered a total of eighteen newbuild vessels since 2022. In addition to the four 14,000 TEU vessels, PIL has another four 8,000 TEU, five 13,000 TEU, and five 9,000 TEU vessels on order.

ABS and PIL sign MOU

Advancing maritime operations and technologies

ABS and Pacific International Lines (PIL) announced on 25 March that they signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) at Singapore Maritime Week that establishes a framework to collaborate on projects related to maritime technology, sustainability and safety management systems.

Christopher J Wiernicki, ABS Chairman and CEO, reflected: *'To make meaningful progress in this era of rapid change, we need strategic industry collaborations like this one with PIL. We look forward to capitalizing on our unique strengths and capabilities in maritime compliance and cutting-edge technologies to advance safety, emissions reduction and operational efficiency.'*

As part of the overall strategic partnership, the MOU allows ABS and PIL to exchange technical knowledge and jointly explore innovative maritime technologies. The ABS Technology and Singapore Innovation Research Center will provide modelling and simulation to support PIL's new vessel constructions and existing vessel retrofits.

ABS Sustainability specialists will work with PIL to develop an energy-efficiency strategy including techno-economic studies, and the implementation of practical decarbonization measures that enhance environmental performance.

Safety is another key focus area of the agreement, with ABS providing guidance for Port State Control improvement and aligning safety standards with global best practices.

Lars Kastrop, CEO of PIL, added: *'This MOU reinforces our commitment and supports our plans to future-proof our fleet. Partnering with ABS allows us to leverage world-class expertise to drive innovation, advance decarbonisation, and enhance safety management. This long-term collaboration is a testament to our dedication to driving progress, ensuring that we stay ahead of regulatory changes while maintaining operational excellence and environmental responsibility.'*

The MOU will enable PIL to advance the resilience and competitiveness of its fleet by exploring innovative solutions, fostering technical knowledge exchange, and assessing emerging maritime and decarbonization technologies. PIL has recently taken delivery of four new state-of-the-art vessels and has another fourteen on order that can benefit from this partnership.

ABS is guiding the industry with leading research and insights to support technology advancement in the marine and offshore industries. Learn more here.

About Pacific International Lines

Established in Singapore in 1967, Pacific International Lines (PIL) is among the top twelve container shipping lines in the world, and the largest home grown carrier in Southeast Asia.



Operating a fleet of around 100 container vessels, the company provides shipping services and solutions to customers in more than 90 countries worldwide, with a focus on Asia, China, Africa, the Middle East, Latin America, Oceania and the Pacific Islands.

With a global network of owned agencies and intermodal corridors, PIL provides end-to-end transportation.

Shiphandling, The Beautiful Game: Volume One

by Captain Grant Livingstone SNAME FNI, and Captain George Livingstone FNI

Published by The Nautical Institute this book includes sections on

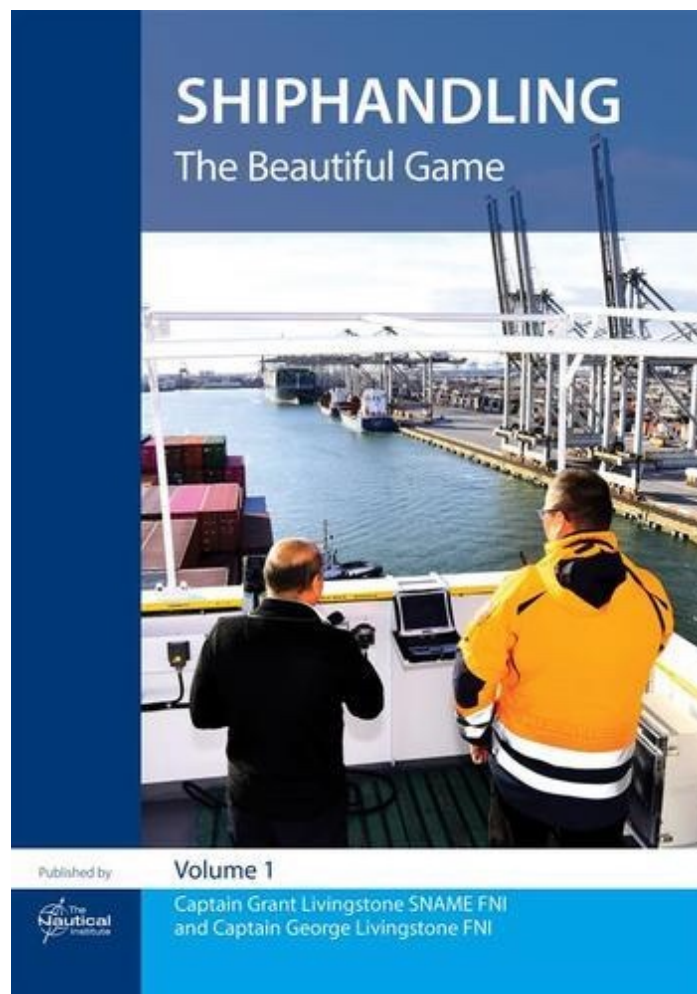
- (i) ensuring situational awareness;
- (ii) safer operations;
- (iii) stress management;
- (iv) bridge resource management and
- (v) communication.

Successful shiphandling involves more than technical skill. Understanding emotions and pressure is as foundational to shiphandling as understanding wind and current.

Alongside how to handle emotions such as fear, panic and anxiety in stressful situations, *Shiphandling, The Beautiful Game* provides a resource on managing the fundamentals, from momentum and inertia, turns and arranging assistance of tugs in anchoring and mooring.

The book covers common challenges, such as navigation in restricted visibility or in channels, turning in confined waters and ports, maintaining situational awareness and avoiding the distractions that have become more common with advances in technology.

The authors combine technical analysis with less formal anecdotes and recollections from their decades of experience at sea as pilots.



As the authors said:

'Understanding emotions and pressure is as foundational to shiphandling as understanding wind and current.'

Priced at £125.00 for non-Members of the Nautical Institute and £87.50 for Members readers requiring more information and wishing to order are invited to contact Publications at the NI by e-mail here: pubs.admin@nautinst.org

On 28 March the authors with a panel of serving master mariner experts and chaired by Captain John Lloyd, CEO of The Nautical Institute set out in a webinar to share hard truths, real insights and deliver a fresh way to think about the craft of shiphandling.

UK and carbon-free shipping by 2050

A course charted

Fuels of the future and shipping charge points in harbours are at the centre of a major new strategy to make Britain's shipping fleet net zero by 2050 and drive growth in coastal communities.

On 25 March the UK Maritime Minister Mike Kane revealed the government's new goals for all vessels that operate in UK waters and dock at UK ports to be

carbon free and help vessel owners, operators and scientists make emission-free voyages a reality.

A green energy superpower

Part of the UK government's Plan for Change to propel the UK towards becoming a green energy superpower and drive growth, the new Maritime decarbonisation strategy sets out goals to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 30% by 2030, 80% by 2040 and to zero by 2050. This will see the UK match the highest level of the ambitious goals agreed at the IMO in their 2023 strategy on reduction of greenhouse gas emission from ships.

Investment in green technologies and fuels will cement the UK as a clean energy superpower and encourage a green economic revival at the local level, helping to build high-skilled jobs in coastal communities and delivering a local boon to cities and towns.

The UK Emissions Trading Scheme (UK ETS)

Under the new strategy, the shipping sector will be brought under the UK Emissions Trading Scheme (UK ETS). This will see operators of larger vessels such as tankers and cruises – which cause the most pollution – pay more for their greenhouse gas emissions.

Furthermore, the strategy sets out plans to reduce emissions from shipping and increase the use of clean fuels and technologies, such as hydrogen, electric or ammonia vessels.

Charge port strategy

Later the same day (25 March) the minister launched the new strategy in Portsmouth with vessel charge port pioneer ABB to demonstrate how these new green shipping technologies will bring in private investment, create thousands more jobs and revitalise coastal communities.

Such investment has already seen growth in coastal regions, with the £206 million of UK SHORE funding having already supported over 300 organisations across every nation and region in the UK and secured over £100 million of private investment, helping to kickstart economic growth.

In addition, the government launched two calls for evidence to help inform the development of measures needed to reduce emissions at berth, understand the future energy demand at ports and decarbonise smaller vessels.

Comment

Maritime Minister, Mike Kane, said: *'Climate change is one of the greatest challenges we face today. Working together with industry and international partners, we are driving down emissions in every corner of the economy.'*

'As part of our Plan for Change, we're committed to making the UK a green energy superpower and our

maritime decarbonisation strategy will help us build a cleaner, more resilient maritime nation.'

Richard Ballantyne, Chief Executive of the British Ports Association, commented: *'We welcome today's announcement. UK ports are already demonstrating their commitment to net zero with ambitious targets and investment in new technologies and fuels. The UK SHORE programme shows what can be achieved when government and industry work together on shared goals.'*

'We will continue to work closely with the Department for Transport on lowering barriers to investment and decarbonisation for both ports and vessels and this strategy will help set a clear direction and expectations well into the future. We look forward to a continued close partnership built on common aims.'

Chris Shirling-Rooke, Chief Executive of Maritime UK, reflected: *'Decarbonisation is both an enormous challenge and opportunity for the maritime sector, with huge potential for growth, jobs and innovation in our coastal communities, and across the whole of the United Kingdom.'*

'It is vital that our country continues to drive change and chase growth by creating a cleaner and more sustainable future. We welcome the government's commitment today and look forward to continuing to work with them on the maritime decarbonisation strategy.'

Mike Sellers, Director of Portsmouth International Port, indicated: *'We welcome the announcement of the new maritime decarbonisation strategy, which the port's master plan very much aligns with.'*

'To help achieve this ambition, we're on track to become the UK's first multi-berth, multi-ship 'chargeport' by providing renewable plug-in energy when ships are alongside from spring 2025.'

'The seachange shore power project, demonstrates the success of both public and private investment, supported by the government's zero emissions vessels and infrastructure (ZEVI) fund, driving innovation towards net zero. We're pleased to show the minister what's happening in Portsmouth and how this could be a model for ports across the country.'

Rhett Hatcher, CEO of the UK Chamber of Shipping, added: *'The UK Chamber is proud to have led the way on decarbonisation, publicly calling for the global shipping industry to reach net zero emissions by 2050, prior to the UK government and IMO commitments. Across our sector, we have already invested in new technologies and pioneering innovations to meet our commitments and are leading the drive towards net zero. We, therefore, welcome the government's publication of the maritime decarbonisation strategy, as a much-needed successor to the 2019 clean maritime plan.'*

'The government's strategy must now be matched by delivering the regulatory framework, technology and infrastructure, including a shore power revolution, required to support the green transition for UK

maritime, bringing benefits to maritime communities and the UK economy. We look forward to working collaboratively alongside government to progress this important agenda and reach our shared goals of a cleaner, more resilient maritime sector in the UK.'

Anna Krajinska, UK Director at Transport & Environment (T&E), informed: 'T&E welcomes the government's commitment to reduce shipping emissions by 30% by 2030, 80% by 2040 and net zero by 2050. It is crucial that ambitious targets are coupled with robust policy measures to slash the UK's domestic and international shipping emissions without delay.'

Geraint Evans, Chief Executive of the UK Major Ports Group, advised: 'Major ports are at the heart of the UK's transition to net zero, acting as hubs of innovation and supporting the development of future fuels, clean maritime infrastructure, and greener supply chains. Today's strategy provides much-needed policy certainty for industry, unlocking investment in the technologies and infrastructure that will drive down emissions.'

'The successful delivery of the government's missions relies on strong public and private sector partnerships, and with the right long-term commitment and collaboration, we can accelerate the transition to lower-carbon shipping and ensure the UK remains a global leader in maritime sustainability.'

Mark Dickinson, General Secretary of Nautilus International (IFSMA Member organisation), concluded with: 'Nautilus International welcomes the government's ambitious maritime decarbonisation strategy as a crucial step toward building a sustainable future for UK shipping. The targets to achieve zero emissions by 2050, with significant milestones in 2030 and 2040, demonstrate the commitment needed to address the climate emergency that threatens our planet.'

'As we transition to new fuels, technologies and vessel designs, we must ensure this green revolution delivers for maritime professionals too. A just transition must be at the heart of these changes – guaranteeing quality jobs, comprehensive training and appropriate upskilling for seafarers who will be operating these new systems. We look forward to working closely with the UK government in achieving a just transition that supports continued economic and employment growth and prosperity for coastal communities as well as all maritime professionals.'

With global shipping accounting for 2% of all emissions, the UK will push for high ambitions at the UN's next meeting of the IMO in April, as it develops important measures to reduce emissions from global shipping.

ISWAN advocates for a seafarer-centred future

Listening more closely to seafarers is essential to a safe, sustainable maritime sector, says the International Seafarers' Welfare and Assistance Network (ISWAN).

Rapid adaptation

The maritime sector is having to adapt rapidly to respond to major challenges, including the urgent need to decarbonise and the targeting of shipping in geopolitical conflicts. These factors are having significant impacts on the daily realities that seafarers face during their life and work at sea. In the context of the maritime sector's growing recruitment and retention crisis, it is more important than ever before for the sector to take proactive steps to understand and address the challenges that seafarers and their families face.



In launching its new three-year strategic plan, ISWAN shares its vision for a safe, fair and inclusive maritime sector that provides fulfilling careers and sustainable livelihoods for all seafarers and their families. This includes giving seafarers and their families a meaningful role in decision-making, and taking a holistic approach to wellbeing and safety that considers their physical, mental, emotional and financial health.

Helplines

Through its helplines and case work, ISWAN frequently hears from seafarers who feel that the challenges they face in their life and work at sea are not acknowledged or taken into account. In response, ISWAN plans to influence change in the maritime sector by using its platform to amplify the voices of seafarers and their families, raise awareness of their concerns and advocate for evidence-based solutions.

Comment

Simon Grainge, Chief Executive of ISWAN, said: 'We are working to ensure all our projects, services and resources at ISWAN are informed by the needs of seafarers and their families as well as insights from our helplines. We will be strengthening our commitment over the next three years to working in partnership with active seafarers and families to develop solutions that take full account of the unique challenges of seafaring. However, ISWAN's new strategic plan does not just chart a course for us as an organisation; it also shares the seafarer-centred change we want to see in the maritime sector.'

Amb. Nancy Karigithu, ISWAN Sea Ambassador and Kenya's Special Envoy and Advisor on Maritime and Blue Economy at the Executive Office of the President, added: *'Faced with a looming recruitment and retention crisis fuelled by geopolitical conflicts and the transition to decarbonised shipping, the need to protect seafarers' safety, wellbeing and livelihoods cannot be understated.'*

'ISWAN's holistic approach to seafarers' wellbeing that encompasses physical, mental, emotional, and financial health will be a major catalyst for a more diverse, resilient, sustainable, and most importantly, humane maritime sector.'

As ISWAN publishes its 2025-28 strategic plan, it encourages the entire maritime sector – across the shipping, yachting and cruise industries – to create an environment in which all seafarers feel safe, valued and respected and have the support and resources they need to respond to the challenges of life at sea.

ISWAN shared its vision, mission and goals with a number of seafarers in its network ahead of the launch for their feedback.

Zaldrene John Gabales, an Able Seaman at Leonis Navigation Company Inc. and a maritime social media influencer, reflected: *'I really appreciate ISWAN's vision and mission because it takes a holistic and practical approach to seafarers' wellbeing, especially when it comes to mental health.'*

'Life at sea isn't easy – we deal with long contracts, isolation, and all kinds of challenges that take a toll on us. That's why having an organisation that genuinely looks out for seafarers and their families means a lot. I'm one of the many who have benefited from their initiatives, and I know firsthand how important this kind of support is. It's great to see them pushing for real, seafarer-centred change in the industry.'

Majella Angelie Parreño-Albances, a Third Officer at Wallem Shipmanagement, commented: *'The growing presence and involvement of ISWAN in the maritime industry is proof acknowledging that our seafarers need help with their wellbeing and welfare.'*

'Companies do have their own initiatives and policies, but without staunch support from outside the confines of the workplace, seafarers are reduced to nothing but ordinary individuals who may not know where to seek help. Like ISWAN, may we also endeavour to be involved in improving the quality of life of our seafarers, both onboard and at home.'

ISWAN believes strategic partnerships, joined-up working and cross-sector collaboration is key in avoiding duplication, and the organisation aims to facilitate collaboration and knowledge exchange to improve outcomes for seafarers.

Tina Barnes, Impact Director at The Seafarers' Charity, said in conclusion: *'It is important to listen to seafarers' voices and to hear from them about their needs and aspirations. This is why The Seafarers' Charity continues to fund ISWAN's fantastic SeafarerHelp. As a 24-hour multilingual helpline it*

enables seafarers to describe their challenges in their own words, and importantly, to get the help they need.'

'ISWAN's new strategic plan with a vision of "A safe, fair and inclusive maritime sector" will have resonance for all who care about the psychological safety and wellbeing of seafarers.'

ISWAN's 2025-28 Strategic Plan can be downloaded here: <https://tinyurl.com/4h3t55ck>

Sea-Care Working Group

Looking beyond top-level data

On 1 April it was reported that the Sea-Care working group had concluded its third session in February by confirming commitments to share key data to secure common objectives.

Highlighting a need to look beyond top-level data to pinpoint the root causes of casualties, those attending discussed specific datasets that could enrich findings drawn from Inmarsat's Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS) distress alert data.

Crew welfare surveys, for example, offered a precious resource for developing a more holistic understanding of maritime safety, members agreed.

Improving safety standards

Sea-Care is an industry working group launched in 2024 by Maritime London and Inmarsat Maritime, a Viasat company, to improve safety standards across global shipping,

To quote Peter Broadhurst, co-chair of Sea-Care and Vice President of Safety & Regulatory at Inmarsat Maritime: *'If we look at safety data as a pyramid, what we report on at the top is the number of distress calls, but when we come down the pyramid, we get to the root causes of those top-level issues.'*

'Using other datasets to derive a more complete picture of what's behind the problems at the top could be key to effecting real change and reducing the frequency of serious incidents at sea.'

Sharing data

Several participants agreed to share data from their own organisations – including Andrew Bell, a member of the CHIRP Maritime Advisory Board; Steven Jones, founder of the Seafarers' Happiness Index; and Lydia Ferrad, International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) Accredited Representative to the IMO.

Sea-Care working group session, February 2025.

CHIRP (Confidential Human Factors Incident Reporting Programme) owns and operates a reporting system for incident and near-miss data that participants agreed could help to determine the underlying safety deficiencies behind the consistently high distress call figures reported by Inmarsat. There

was also consensus that data from the Seafarers' Happiness Index and surveys conducted by ITF would provide invaluable insight into the crew welfare-related issues that may influence the frequency of marine casualties.

In conclusion Jos Standerwick, co-chair of SEA-CARE and CEO of Maritime London stated: *'It has long been Inmarsat's ambition to gather more datasets outside of pure GMDSS data to supplement its reports and create a more holistic outlook of safety in the maritime sector.'*

'If we combine the data that Inmarsat receives regarding distress calls with information on the nature of casualties from CHIRP and on seafarers' lived experience from the Seafarers Happiness Index and ITF surveys, it could go a long way to helping us achieve our common goal.'

About Maritime London

Maritime London is the industry-led body representing maritime professional services in the UK. Funded by companies and organisations from a wide range of disciplines, Maritime London works to ensure that the UK remains a world-beating location to base maritime related business and to conduct maritime trade.

Maritime London's vision is to maintain and enhance the UK's primacy as the world's leading provider of maritime professional services.

About Inmarsat Maritime

Inmarsat Maritime is a Viasat company and continues to power the digitalisation of the maritime industry. With over forty years of experience, Inmarsat Maritime offers reliable and innovative solutions that enable ship owners and operators to stay connected, navigate safely, enhance operational efficiency, and ensure crew welfare.

Viasat as a global communications company has offices in 24 countries and is developing the ultimate global communications network to power high-quality, reliable, secure, affordable, fast connections to positively impact people's lives on the ground, in the air or at sea, while building a sustainable future in space.

In May 2023, London-based Viasat completed its acquisition of Inmarsat, combining the teams, technologies and resources of the two companies to create a new global communications partner. See also www.viasat.com

The EU Space Programme

Supporting emergency management and humanitarian aid

When disaster strikes, communication, information and location are key.

Copernicus

The EU Space Programme provides all three. Copernicus is used by civil protection authorities and first responders in all phases of disaster management cycle: from prevention and preparedness – where it helps to map and monitor hazard prone areas – to response and recovery, where it is used to quantify the impact to the environment, human safety and the economy. In humanitarian aid operations, Copernicus is a critical asset for monitoring vulnerabilities associated with conflicts, disasters and climate change, and assists in anticipating crises by supporting informed decision making. It can also be a useful tool for public health authorities to identify areas prone to the emergence and spread of epidemics by providing information on such pertinent environmental factors as water, sanitation, food and air quality.

Galileo/EGNOS

Galileo/EGNOS, on the other hand, plays a key role in locating personnel and vehicles during response operations, but also mitigating the impact of geohazards, through accurate monitoring of areas prone to subsidence and landslides. In addition, Galileo is enabling search and rescue at sea or over land. Galileo enabled beacons decrease the time it takes to detect and localise a distress signal, speeding up rescue response time and increasing the chance of survival. Galileo is also the only system offering a Return Link Service*, a feature that provides users in distress with an acknowledgement indication on their beacon that the distress signal was received and their position is located.

Although Copernicus, Galileo and EGNOS offer emergency responders a unique tool set, EU Space offers even more benefits when these components are used in synergy. For example, during wildfires, public authorities rely on Copernicus' Earth Observation services to monitor the evolving situation, while on the ground, firefighters and emergency first responders use Galileo/EGNOS to safely guide themselves through the smoke, fog and flames.

GOVSATCOM

But what if the end users require secure communication, as is the case during cyber-attacks and other security-related incidents? For situations like these, there's the upcoming GOVSATCOM, which provides secure, cost-efficient communication capabilities to security and safety-critical missions, operations and infrastructure.

Whether used separately or synergistically, Galileo, EGNOS, Copernicus and GOVSATCOM further enhance the EU Space Programme's** ability to protect the environment and keep European citizens safe and secure.

* <https://tinyurl.com/mu857ynn>

** <https://tinyurl.com/rm2tb7zs>

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