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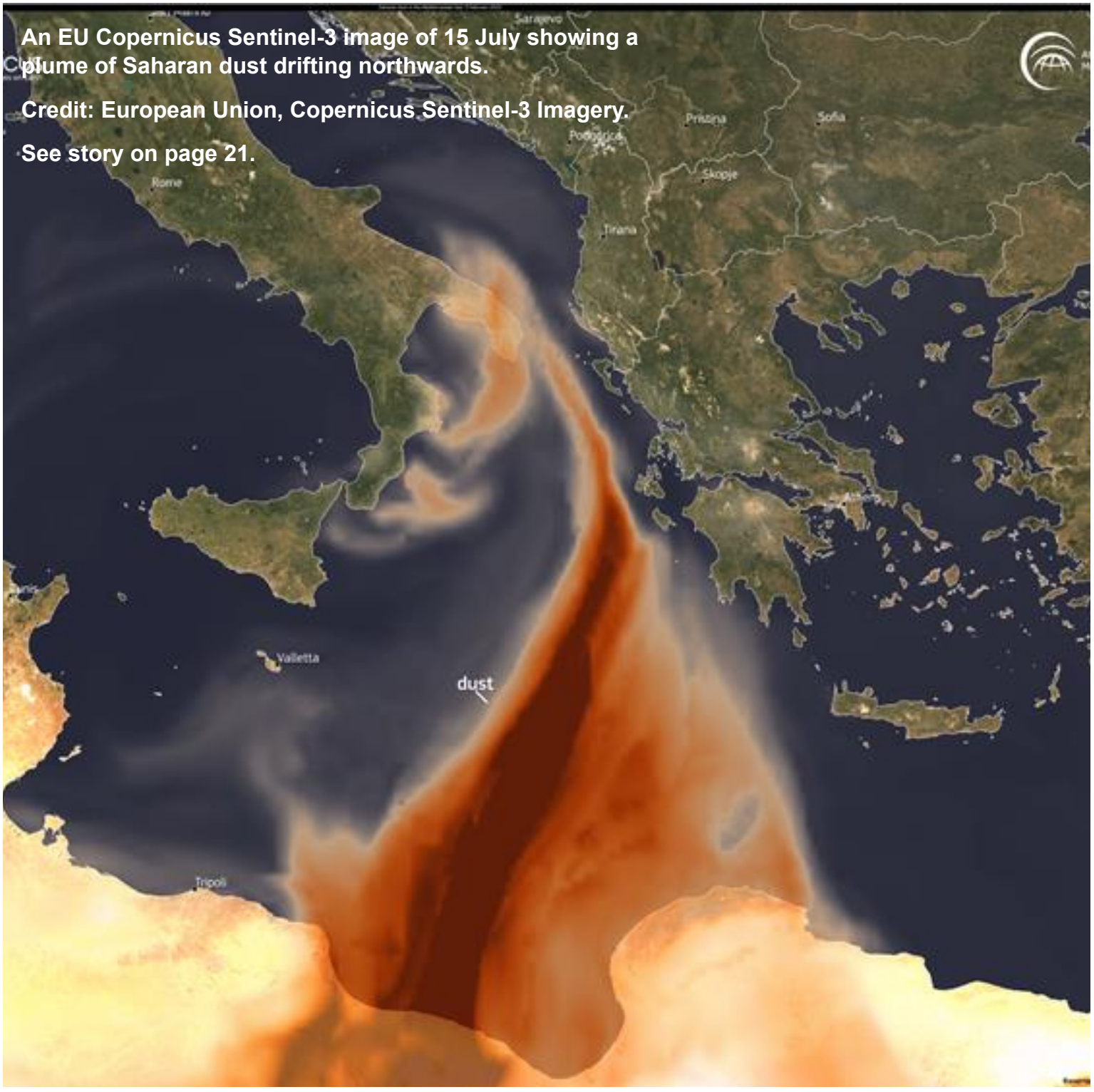
IFSMA NEWSLETTER

The Shipmasters' International Voice



An EU Copernicus Sentinel-3 image of 15 July showing a plume of Saharan dust drifting northwards.

Credit: European Union, Copernicus Sentinel-3 Imagery.

See story on page 21.

UNITY FOR SAFETY AT SEA
IFSMA

International Federation of Shipmasters' Associations (IFSMA)

ITF House • 49-60 Borough Road • London SE1 1DR • United Kingdom • Telephone: +44 (0)20 7261 0450 • Editor P. Owen • News Editor P. Ridgway
Email:HQ@ifsma.org • Website:www.ifsma.org • Facebook:www.facebook.com/ifsma • Twitter:@ifsma • LinkedIn:"Secretary General IFSMA"

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Secretary General's Message

I am very sad to say that we are back in troubled waters again with the recent attacks on shipping. In the Persian Gulf and Red Sea on 6 and 7 June there were attacks on two Greek-operated ships.

These attacks mark a change in *modus operandi* from past Houthi operations, as it is reported that assailants used missiles, waterborne improvised explosive devices, and unmanned surface vehicles. These incidents may serve as a message that the Houthis continue to possess the capability and willingness to strike maritime targets.

It is important to note that both ships had either called at Israeli ports in the past year or had sister ships who had recently called at Israeli ports, making them a Houthi target in accordance with their 19 May declaration of a ban on any Israeli or Israeli-affiliated ships off the coast of Yemen.

It is understood that Israel intends to respond to Houthi missile strikes in due course.

The Philippines government Department of Migrant Workers has announced that all ships with Filipino crew must divert away from the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden and honour the right of Filipino crew to refuse to sail in those waters.

In the Mediterranean Sea a tanker was damaged by a limpet mine attack on 27 June off the coast of Benghazi, Libya, after loading Russian oil in Novorossiysk, east of Crimea. Following this attack, Ukraine's military intelligence unit shared the story of the explosion on their Twitter account. They did not claim responsibility for the attack but labelled the vessel as part of Russia's '*shadow fleet*'

In the Baltic an LPG carrier was struck by a limpet mine on 29 June near the Russian port of Ust Luga, west of St Petersburg, marking the sixth incident in 2025 involving tankers that loaded Russian oil.

Following more reports of GNSS/GPS Jamming, the International Chamber of Shipping (ICS) are working on best practice guidelines for navigating safely during these periods. The guidelines are currently with other industry associations for review and input and IFSMA expects to be consulted.

Finally, on a more cheerful note, I wish to report that after ten years at the helm of this prestigious Federation with an outstanding reputation in the industry, I will be retiring at the end of the year. I am very pleased to say that we have managed to recruit Captain Andrew Cook, a very experienced master mariner both at sea and ashore, who will join us on 1September and shadow me for a period before taking on the responsibility as our next Secretary General. You can find the press release and his CV on our website.

Keep safe

Jim Scorer
Secretary General

Appointment of Captain Andrew Cook FNI

IFSMA Secretary General designate

At IFSMA on 30 July we announced the appointment of Captain Andrew Cook FNI as Secretary General designate to succeed Commodore Jim Scorer FNI RN who will be retiring as Secretary General at the end of the year.

As a former ship Master, Andrew Cook brings a wealth of experience in global ship operations, ship management, crew management and crew welfare.

He is a long-standing Fellow of the Nautical Institute and has sat on influential industry working groups such as the INTERTANKO Human Element committee.

Currently Captain Cook is working alongside Commodore Scorer and will be preparing to lead the IFSMA team at IMO and at other forums in January 2026.

At IMO, IFSMA occupies a seat as a non-governmental organisation (NGO) in consultative status with the organization.

Regarding his appointment Captain Cook said: '*It is an honour to be appointed as the next IFSMA Secretary General and to promote the best interests of the world's ship masters within an ever-changing industry that faces numerous challenges*'.

The Secretary General designate appointment commences on 1 September, 2025.

From the News Editor

The QE2 in the Falklands War: Troopship to the South Atlantic

This book is by Commodore Ron Warwick and David Humphreys. It is published by The History Press (www.thehistorypress.co.uk), is of 320 pages, price £25.00, ISBN 978 1 80399 738 4.

At her launch in 1969, *Queen Elizabeth 2* began a long career as Cunard's flagship. This service was interrupted in 1982 when she was requisitioned by the UK government to carry 3,000 troops to the South Atlantic as part of Operation Corporate, the military operation to recapture the Falkland Islands from Argentina. The passage itself was an immense task which saw refuelling at sea in hazardous weather and navigation by night through an icefield.

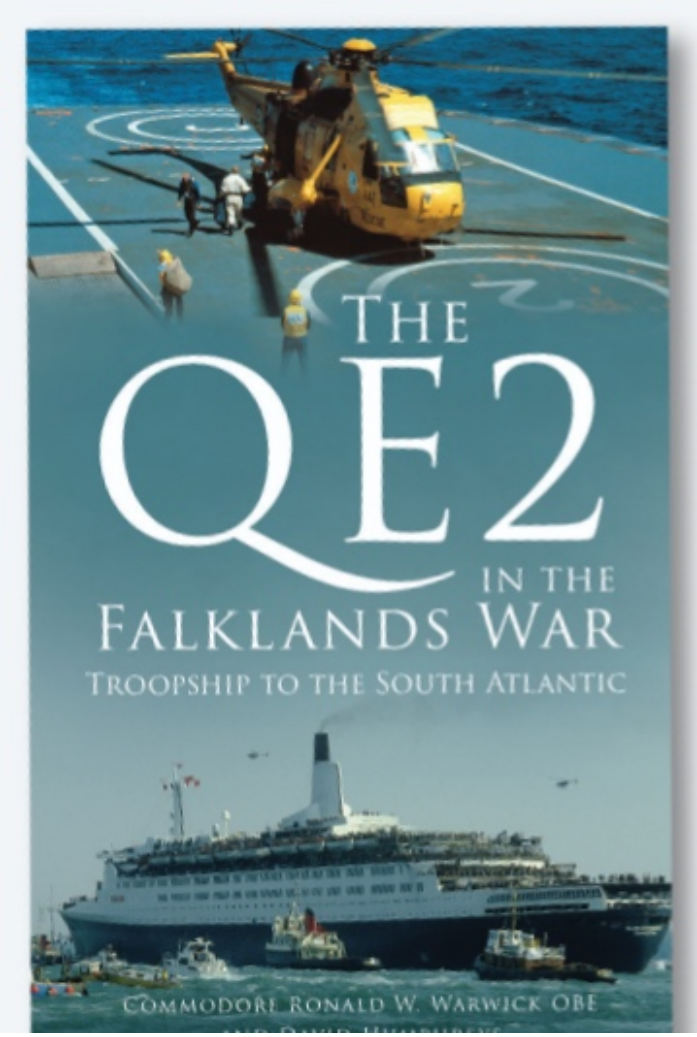
Using interviews and extracts from diaries kept during the voyage by the authors and other crew members, as well as previously unpublished documents, the authors present the fascinating story of *QE2* through her time as a troopship.

Illustrated with numerous photographs showing the conversion to a troopship, on-board training exercises and helicopter manoeuvres this book is said to be the first to reveal the enormous contribution of the ship to the British war effort. Captain Peter Jackson was in command and Ron Warwick was Chief Officer throughout the operation.

One of the most informative documents published here is a *QE2* logbook extract

From 4 May 1982 after the ship had arrived at her Southampton berth for conversion to her trooping role, to completion of discharge of ammunition at the port on 11 June embracing 14,967 nautical miles steamed, 10,594 tons of fuel consumed over a total passage time of 26 days, 9 hours and 54 minutes.

Cunard's *Queen Elizabeth 2* known widely as *QE2* became a STUFT vessel, that is to say a Ship Taken Up From Trade for UK government service in the 1982 Falklands War. At the same time the vessel's civilian crew mostly remained as volunteers in the ship and 660 members were happy to take part in her performing the troopship role for which Cunard's flagship had been requisitioned on a hire of 107 days at a cost of £7,378,405.



To this was added port charges, fuel and lube oil, crew wages, food and liquor. Then there was insurance (£216,390), management costs, eventual overhaul and repair with loss of business / cancellation of bookings compensation to give a grand total of £21,015,093.

QE2's crew included two captains (one in command and one staff captain) and 84 officers and, by example, 51 deck, 67 engine room, 400 catering and kitchen ratings. A full crew list is provided and another lists the military units embarked from Southampton and steaming homeward from Grytviken, South Georgia.

To fight the war in the South Atlantic, some 8,000 miles from home a total of forty-five merchant ships were requisitioned to assist the Royal Navy and, in addition, twenty-four civilian-manned vessels of the Royal Fleet Auxiliary were also part of the global reach.

At short notice major work was required to reinforce the ship's open decks so helicopters could land. Cabins were converted to accommodate more personnel and much protection was necessary to protect the liner's decks and luxurious fixtures and fittings.

Much of this work was carried out in just eight days at the vessel's berth in Southampton, but carpenters, engineers and painters in the *QE2*'s crew and among her military passengers worked on improvements and maintenance during the passage south. Shortly after departure *QE2* had to anchor beyond the Isle of Wight for emergency boiler repairs.

QE2's commission was to carry troops to Ascension Island and South Georgia and to bring home more than six hundred survivors of the sunken warships HMSs *Ardent*, *Antelope* and *Coventry*. This was carried out with kindness and care for Cunard's doctors and nurses provided for injured servicemen on that homeward voyage. It was said that their treatment was so good that only one patient needed hospital care on being landed in Southampton.

This is a fine work and tells the story admirably. It is dedicated to the men and women of the Merchant Navy and is in memory of all who fell in the Falklands War.

The authors remind us of Psalm 107, often forgotten: '*There are those men that go down to the sea in ships and make their living on the oceans of the world. These men see the works of the Lord and his wonders of the deep*.'

In his Foreword Admiral the Lord West of Spithead, who commanded HMS *Ardent*, wrote: '*QE2 was crucial to victory and this tale of her part in it is a wonderful tribute to the ship and her crew.*'

Ronald W Warwick, OBE, is a past-Master of *QE2*, having followed in the footsteps of his father, Commodore William E Warwick, first Master of the ship, in the 1990s William Warwick also acted as the IFSMA Treasurer. He joined the Cunard Line in 1970 and himself became Commodore of the line when he was appointed command of *Queen Mary 2* in 2003.

David Humphreys served as a senior petty officer in *QE2* during the voyage to the South Atlantic. He later served as a supply officer with the Royal Fleet Auxiliary. After obtaining a PhD in international relations from City University, London, he spent twenty-eight years at the Open University retiring as Professor of Environmental Policy.

The IMO Digest

A summary of some of the news received with grateful thanks from the excellent IMO Media service in recent weeks.

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IMO Maritime Safety Committee

Targeting:
Seafarer fatigue,
Work and rest hours,
Harassment at sea

IMO's Maritime Safety Committee seeks stronger compliance with global safety management standards to protect crew welfare

The IMO is taking action to ensure that ships worldwide are safely managed and operated, with a renewed focus on seafarer issues such as work and rest hours, fatigue, and violence and harassment, including sexual harassment, bullying and sexual assault.

Meeting in London for its 110th session held from 18 - 27 June, the IMO's Maritime Safety Committee focused on improving implementation of the International Safety Management (ISM) Code. The Code sets the global standard for safe management and operation of ships and for pollution prevention.

The Committee agreed to carry out a comprehensive revision of the IMO guidelines on implementing the ISM Code, both for Administrations and for companies. It also decided to strengthen the consistent enforcement of the Code, with support from port State control and by updating related IMO guidelines.

This initiative seeks to address identified gaps in the Code's application, while taking into account a series of recommendations outlined in an independent study commissioned by the IMO Secretariat in the previous year, on the effectiveness and effective implementation of the ISM Code.

The revision of the implementation guidelines of the ISM Code will be carried out by the Sub-Committee on Implementation of IMO Instruments (III), in association with the Sub-Committee on Human Element, Training and Watchkeeping (HTW) over three years till 2028.

Addressing violence and harassment on ships

The revision of the guidelines on the implementation of the ISM Code is also intended to address key recommendations for Administrations and shipping

companies related to the prevention of violence and harassment on board ships, including sexual harassment, bullying and sexual assault. These include:

- Incorporating policies into safety management systems to prevent, report, respond to, and document, cases of violence and harassment, including sexual harassment, bullying and sexual assault, with provisions for victim care, protection against retaliation, and clear safety management objectives including risk assessment and safeguards.
- Ensuring safety management systems compliance with all mandatory regulations, including national laws on violence and harassment, and that guidance from relevant industry bodies is observed.
- Assigning clear responsibilities to a company's senior management and maritime administrations for addressing reported cases, and providing adequate resources for onboard and shoreside response, including access to medical and mental health support for victims.
- Providing training and familiarization for seafarers and designated shoreside personnel on company policies and their implementation.

These recommendations were developed by the Joint IMO/ILO Tripartite Working Group to Identify and Address Seafarers' Issues and the Human Element (JTWG).

Hours of work and hours of rest

In addition, the Committee prioritized its work to tackle fatigue and hours of work and rest, by conducting a scoping exercise of relevant legal instruments that may help to address imbalances between workload and crewing levels, and to protect the well-being of seafarers.

In this regard, the Committee instructed the HTW Sub-Committee to take on the work of analysing IMO provisions related to the above-mentioned matters. The HTW Sub-Committee, in association with the III Sub-Committee, will work on this over two years (2026-2027), and consider the recommendations emanating from the study on the ISM Code, related to a holistic review of instruments dealing with resources and personnel.

The study, conducted by a panel of experts during 2023 and 2024, includes a range of recommendations, such as reviewing the ISM Code to introduce a complaint procedure for reporting non-compliance, strengthening the master's authority to escalate breaches of the ISM Code with protection, and embedding a safety culture, as an objective, on ships.

The Committee noted the ongoing comprehensive review of the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (STCW Convention), where a gap in regulations on hours of rest in the STCW Convention and Code was also identified and is expected to be addressed as part of the comprehensive review.

Other MSC outcomes

Aside from seafarer matters, the Maritime Safety Committee covered a wide range of key issues related to the safety and security of international shipping. Key developments were made in the following areas:

- **Towards regulating autonomous ships:** Considerable progress in the drafting of the non-mandatory Code for Maritime Autonomous Surface Ships (MASS), with 24 out of 25 chapters finalized. The Road Map on development of the MASS Code has been updated.
- **GHG fuel safety regime:** The Committee continued its work to develop safety regulations for ships using new technologies and alternative fuels to support the reduction of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, including initiating work to review the IMO Code of Safety for Nuclear Merchant Ships (Nuclear Code).
- **Maritime security:** The Committee adopted a resolution Encouragement of maritime information-sharing through the use of national and regional maritime information-sharing centres to enhance maritime safety and security.
- **Cyber-security:** The Committee endorsed the development of a non-mandatory cybersecurity Code and invited interested Member States and international organizations to submit proposals on a new output in this regard to MSC 111.
- **Pilot transfer arrangements:** The Committee adopted amendments to the SOLAS Convention and related instruments to strengthen safety-related requirements for pilot transfer arrangements, including mandatory performance standards.

A full meeting summary will be provided in due course.

Closing remarks

Delivered by IMO Secretary-General Mr Arsenio Dominguez on 27 June 2025

'*Distinguished delegates,*

'*We have come to the end of another session of the Maritime Safety Committee, which once again achieved many important accomplishments.*

'*Allow me to highlight just some of the important achievements:*

'*The drafting of the non-mandatory MASS Code has seen significant progress at this session, leaving one chapter to be finalized out of twenty-five. Finalization seems to be one step away. Necessary adjustments have been made to the Road Map on development of the MASS Code, with more work to do towards finalization.*

'*With regard to a safety regulatory framework to support the reduction of GHG emissions from ships using new technologies and alternative fuels, instructions on specific tasks for each Sub-Committee, and information to be submitted to relevant Committees, were developed to initiate or continue work on a safety regulatory framework to support the reduction of GHG emissions from ships using new technologies and alternative fuels.*

The Maritime Safety Committee met in London from 18 to 27 June.

'*You have agreed the next steps on maritime cybersecurity.*

'*You have adopted amendments to SOLAS and related instruments strengthening safety-related requirements concerning pilot transfer arrangements, including mandatory performance standards.*

'*You have also adopted amendments to SOLAS chapter II-2 and related instruments mandatory under the SOLAS Convention, and approved draft amendments to the LSA Code inserting new implementation provisions for clarity.*

'*You have made decisions related to the ISM Code, in particular comprehensive revision of guidelines on implementation of the Code by Administrations and companies, taking into account the outcome of considerations on violence and harassment by the Joint ILO/IMO Working Group, and recommendations from the Study on the effectiveness and implementation of the Code.*

'*Furthermore, you have taken the remarkable decision to start a review of the provisions linked with fatigue and hours of work and rest.*

'*As regards to the Group of Chairs, you have started the newly established process for the preliminary assessment of proposals for new outputs. The Group of Chairs has already demonstrated its value, supporting the Committee in carrying out a more structured, transparent, and consistent assessment of new output proposals.*

'*As the process evolves, it will become an essential tool for planning the Committee's technical work and managing its workload.*

'*Normally my closing statements are short, but on this occasion I will prolong it longer than usual to express my appreciation.*

'*My sincere appreciation goes to your Chair, Mrs Mayte Medina of the United States, in her last meeting as Chair. But I will come back to you later.*

'*I would also like to thank your Vice-Chair, Mr Theofilos Mozas of Greece, for his support throughout this session, in particular chairing the GHG Safety WG. And I reiterate my congratulations for your election as President of the Committee.*

'*My thanks also go to the Chairs of the working and drafting groups:*

- *Mr Henrik Tunfors of Sweden;*
- *Mr Vusi September of South Africa; and*
- *Mr Christian Allgeier of Germany, who ensured successful outcomes for their respective groups.*

'*As always, this is also an opportune moment to express our gratitude to those delegates and experts who are leaving and concluding their tenure with us and for whom this marks the final session of the Committee:*

- *Mr Ricardo Romero of Argentina;*
- *Mrs Caroline Branco, Brazil;*
- *Ms Michelle Sanders of Canada;*
- *Ms Lia Melikishvili of Georgia;*
- *Mr Kohei Iwaki of Japan;*
- *Mr Chakir El Aissaoui of Morocco;*
- *Mr Eduardo Zamora Chung of Peru;*
- *Mr Abdulaziz Abdullah Al-Sulaiti of Qatar; and*
- *Mr Shaun Rogers of the United Kingdom.*

A number of long-serving IMO staff are also due to retire, and I would mention, in particular:

- *Ms Heike Deggim;*
- *Mr Brice Martin-Castex;*
- *Ms Tatjana Krilic; and*
- *Mr Vincent Job whose contributions to the work of the Committee and the Organization have been appreciated by all concerned. I am sure you all join me in wishing them well for the future.*

'*Another long-serving staff retiring later this year is the current Director and Secretary of the Committee.*

'*I wish to take this opportunity to say a few words about Mr Hiroyuki Yamada. Hiro, as we fondly call him joined the Secretariat in 2005, beginning his dedicated service at the Organization in the Marine Technology Section, then, the Cargo Section of the Maritime*

Safety Division – a section he would eventually go on to lead. Over the past two decades, Hiro has served under four Secretary-Generals, a testament to both his enduring commitment to the Organization and the trust placed in him over the years.

'*Before joining IMO, Hiro had an accomplished career with the Government of Japan, where he worked in various maritime roles, and represented Japan at IMO meetings while serving as First Secretary at the Japanese Embassy in London, actively participating in the work of the IMO's key committees and bodies.*

'*Hiro is known for his quiet determination, composure and professionalism. Throughout his career, he has remained very respectful in all his interactions - with colleagues, Member States, and external stakeholders alike.*

'*Distinguished delegates*,

'*Let me thank the staff of the Maritime Safety Division for their dedication as a team. As usual, my thanks also go to all staff in the Secretariat involved in MSC 110 and special thanks, as always, go to the interpreters for facilitating our communication which, in view of the highly technical nature of this Committee, can be a challenging task. I wish you all a pleasant weekend and a safe journey.*'

Renewed Red Sea attacks

IMO S-G urges constructive dialogue

Council 134 introduction

IMO Secretary-General Arsenio Dominguez has called for intensified diplomatic efforts following a renewed wave of attacks on merchant ships in the Red Sea.

Addressing the IMO Council in London on 8 July, S-G Dominguez expressed dismay over recent assaults on the *Magic Seas* and *Eternity C*, both targeted on 6 and 7 July. At least three fatalities and several injuries have been reported aboard the *Eternity C*, while all 22 crew members of the Magic Seas were safely rescued.

He said: '*After several months of calm, the resumption of deplorable attacks in the Red Sea constitutes a renewed violation of international law and freedom of navigation.*

'*Innocent seafarers and local populations are the main victims of these attacks and the pollution they cause*.'

He reaffirmed the IMO's commitment to engaging all parties who may help mitigate such threats and continued: '*I appeal to all of you to step up efforts, because the only way to address these geopolitical conflicts affecting the shipping sector is through constructive dialogue*.'

In response, several Member States took the floor to voice statements of solidarity with those affected by the attacks.

IMO Council Chair, Mr Victor Jiménez (Spain), condemned the attacks and echoed the Secretary-General's call for dialogue.

According to IMO data confirmed by flag States, at least 69 attacks on international shipping, linked to broader geopolitical tensions in the region, were recorded between November 2023 and October 2024. Incidents reported here mark the first since October 2024.

The IMO Council convened on 7 July for its 134th session to review the organization's budget, strategic plan and other administrative matters.

On 7 July at the opening of Council 134 Mr Arsenio Dominguez delivered the following address:

'*Good morning distinguished delegates,*

'*Welcome to the 134th session of the Council.*

'*The Organization has learned with deep regret of the incident involving Admarine 12, which occurred on 1 July 2025 while the unit was being towed to a new work site in Egypt's territorial waters, north of the Red Sea Governorate. It has been reported that four lives were lost and search efforts are ongoing for the remaining three individuals. I wish to express my profound sadness and sincere condolences to the families of the victims and all those affected.*

'*In a separate tragic event, I also wish to convey my heartfelt condolences following reports that four lives have been lost and approximately 30 individuals remain missing after a ferry, Tunu Pratama Jaya carrying 53 passengers and 12 crew members sank off the island of Bali on 2 July 2025. The Organization will continue to monitor developments closely and stands ready to support efforts to draw any lessons that may help prevent such incidents in the future.*

'*Additionally, I am also concerned to learn of the attack which occurred last week in the Black Sea, negatively impacting seafarers and port workers. Let me reiterate, there is no justification for any attacks against international shipping regardless of motivation or cause. And I remain committed and available to facilitating dialogue among all parties involved.*

'*I have recently received reports of an attack on a vessel yesterday (6 July) in the Red Sea, whilst*

navigating southwest of Hodeidah, in Yemen. No injuries have been reported to the crew.

'*I urge all parties to exercise restraint and avoid any actions that could further escalate tensions in the region. Seafarers' safety and well-being must remain a priority at all times.*

'*Over the weekend, central Texas in the United States was struck by catastrophic flash flooding resulting in the tragic loss of lives, including children, and leaving many others unaccounted for. I extend my deepest condolences to the families and communities affected by this disaster and stand in solidarity with all those impacted during this difficult time.*

'*With regard to the work ahead of us this week, from the outset of my tenure, I have underlined my commitment to driving positive change – especially where it strengthens our ability to serve you, our Member States, and all stakeholders who rely on IMO's work. Our Organization is known for its efficiency, and the measures proposed to you through this Council are designed to contribute to strengthening it.*

'*I am confident that, under the able leadership of your Chair, Mr Victor Jimenez Fernandez of Spain, and your Vice-Chair, Mrs Amane Fethallah of Morocco, the Council will make meaningful and significant progress on the important matters before you.*

'*You can continue to count on the full commitment and support of the Secretariat throughout your work.*

'*Thank you.*'

2026-2027 World Maritime Day theme

Taking policy to practice

Two-year theme to focus on putting instruments into action, backed by technical support.

From Policy to Practice: Powering Maritime Excellence has been selected as the IMO's World Maritime Day theme for 2026 and 2027, culminating in the annual celebration on the final Thursday of September each year.

Meeting in London for its 134th session from 7 to 11 July, the IMO Council endorsed a proposal from Secretary-General Arsenio Dominguez to keep the theme for a two-year period.

IMO's clear commitment

The theme highlights the Organization's clear commitment to develop Member States's capacity to put policies into practice, by providing technical assistance, training and other essential services.

IMO S-G's comment

Secretary-General Dominguez said: '*The theme transmits a clear message of our commitment to ensuring regulations are put into action and providing the necessary technical assistance for implementation to Member States. This ultimately strengthens the confidence that global rules agreed at IMO can lead to safer, more secure and environmentally sound shipping worldwide*.'

Turning regulations into tangible results

From Policy to Practice in the theme underscores IMO's core mission of ensuring that the global regulatory framework it develops is not merely adopted in principle but translated into concrete national legislation, enforcement and day-to-day operations across the maritime sector.

Powering signals the momentum and targeted support through capacity-building, technical cooperation and knowledge sharing which IMO, together with its partners, provides to drive this transition.

Maritime Excellence conveys the ultimate objective: a consistently safe, secure, efficient and environmentally sustainable shipping industry, operating to the highest international standards and continually striving for improvement.

World Maritime Day is observed globally on the final Thursday of September each year.

Together, the theme conveys a holistic, action-oriented commitment: turning collective regulatory decisions into real-world results that deliver tangible benefits for all.

70 years of regulatory action

For over 70 years, the IMO has worked to develop a comprehensive framework of international maritime conventions, with associated codes, guidelines and recommendations. The full benefits of this framework can only be realized through ratification, effective implementation and constant enforcement. The IMO Member State Audit Scheme (IMSAS) has reported gaps in national legislation and enforcement, indicating a need to improve regulatory effectiveness.

Implementation of all IMO instruments

Global attention on the theme in 2026–2027 could accelerate the national action towards implementation of all IMO instruments.

UN 2030 for SDGs

The theme supports the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), in particular:

- **SDG 9** on industry, innovation and infrastructure.
- **SDG 13** on climate action.
- **SDG 14** on life below water.
- **SDG 17** on partnerships.

The theme highlights the IMO's continued contribution to broader global efforts, as well as the importance of cross-cutting and effective maritime governance in sustainable development.

Seychelles advances national maritime security coordination

IMO support

Government officials gathered at the Coast Guard Base in Victoria for a national workshop and tabletop exercise held from 7 to 9 July and aimed at launching a fully operational National Maritime Security Committee (NMSC).

This event marks a decisive step in transforming how the country coordinates and responds to threats at sea.

Collaboration with IMO

Organized by the Seychelles Maritime Safety Authority (SMSA) and the National Information Sharing and Coordination Centre (NISCC), in collaboration with the IMO, the workshop aimed to enhance national maritime security coordination by developing a robust NMSC structure.

Broad representation

Thirty-four representatives from key government agencies took part in scenario-based exercises and technical sessions aimed at strengthening Seychelles' maritime security architecture.

Reviewing, identifying, drafting

Over the three-day workshop, participants reviewed current coordination structures, identifying operational gaps, and drafting a roadmap for the establishment of a National Maritime Security Committee.

Discussions focused on improving interagency collaboration, enhancing interoperability between maritime and law enforcement bodies, and addressing critical threats such as illicit trafficking, environmental risks and emerging cyber challenges.

The event was opened by the Minister for Transport Hon Anthony Derjacques, who emphasized the critical importance of whole-of-government cooperation in securing Seychelles' maritime domain.

Ministerial comment

He said: '*Seychelles is a maritime nation. Our Blue Economy cannot thrive without strong maritime governance. And strong governance cannot exist without whole-of-government coordination*.'

Minister Derjacques was joined by Minister for Internal Affairs, Hon Charles Fonseka, as well as senior officials from the Seychelles Defence Forces, Police, Immigration, Port and Maritime authorities, Fisheries, Environment, Customs and other national agencies.

EU-funded project

The training is part of the European Union-funded Port Security and Safety of Navigation project[1], which supports nine countries in Eastern and Southern Africa and the Indian Ocean region. Through this initiative, IMO provides targeted technical assistance to strengthen national and regional maritime security in line with the 2050 Africa's Integrated Maritime Strategy.

Government agencies that joined the training included: the Ministry of Internal Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Attorney General's Office, Seychelles Police, Department of Immigration, Seychelles Airports Authority, Ministry of Environment, Seychelles Ports Authority, Seychelles Defence Forces, Seychelles Fisheries Authority, Seychelles Revenue Commission, Disaster Risk Management Division, Seychelles Maritime Safety Authority, National Information Sharing and Coordination Centre, and Ministry of Fisheries and Blue Economy.

[1] https://tinyurl.com/ycxrurm4

The path to net-zero

Barriers for climate-vulnerable countries

SIDS and LDCs

Maritime professionals from small island development states (SIDS) and least developed countries (LDCs) have completed the first stage of an intensive sustainable maritime transport training, as part of the 2025 GHG-SMART Training Programme[1].

These core training sessions, held online from 9-13 June, covered key topics related to maritime decarbonisation including regulatory, policy, technological and financial issues. It addressed a major barrier SIDS and LDCs: accessing finance for environmental and climate action.

Pathways for financing maritime climate action

Twenty-three participants from thirteen SIDS and LDCs from Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, the Pacific and the Indian Ocean regions, discussed pathways for financing maritime climate action. Participants enriched their knowledge about IMO regulations and technologies for reducing emissions from ships and ports.

Comment

Madagascar representative Ms Julia Randrianarivelo, Ministry of Fisheries and Blue Economy, commented: '*Understanding financing opportunities is essential to effectively implement climate-aligned activities.*

'*This training has strengthened my ability to lead inclusive, multisectoral dialogues on maritime decarbonization, aligned with my responsibilities in the blue economy at the regional level*.'

Seychelles representative Ms Rajelle Barbe of Seychelles Port Authority added: '*I really appreciated how the sessions focused on the realities of SIDS and LDCs — it felt relevant and grounded. After this week of learning, I feel better equipped, motivated, and hopeful that I can play a more active role in local efforts to achieve greenhouse gas targets and making real change in our maritime sector.*'

The online training is the first stage of a one-year training programme under GHG-SMART that combines online thematic courses with a hands-on practical field visit to Busan, Republic of Korea (3-7 November 2025) and post-training career-development activities, including at the World Maritime University.

About the GHG-SMART project

The GHG-SMART project is a forward-thinking initiative funded by the Republic of Korea and implemented by IMO. It aims to build the capacity of SIDS and LDCs to tackle the urgent challenges of maritime decarbonisation and implement the 2023 IMO Strategy to Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions from Shipping (IMO GHG Strategy)[2].

Broad representation under training

The 2025 edition of the GHG-SMART training programme comprises maritime representatives from Bangladesh, Belize, Democratic Republic of Congo, Dominican Republic, Guinea-Bissau, Madagascar, Mauritania, Mauritius, Nepal, Seychelles, Suriname, United Republic of Tanzania, and Vanuatu. With the launch of the first annual edition in 2022, nearly 50 SIDS and LDCs have now benefitted from this programme.

Programme

The programme consisted of:

- Needs-based Training: Tailored content addressing the unique challenges faced by SIDS and LDCs in maritime decarbonisation.
- Hands-on Experience: A one-week practical training session in the Republic of Korea, including industry visits, providing real-world insights into maritime decarbonisation.
- Post-training Engagement: Opportunities for continued involvement through the GHG-SMART alumni network.
- Training Structured Training Plans (TSTP) to ensure sustainability and country engagement beyond the training programme.
- Opportunity for advanced learning: Full scholarships for the best performing trainees to pursue a Master of Science in Maritime Energy Management at the World Maritime University in Malmö, Sweden, covering tuition, accommodation, living expenses, and travel.

[1] https://ghgsmart.imo.org/
[2] https://tinyurl.com/36k79z3k

South Africa's decarbonisation plans

South Africa has reaffirmed its commitment to decarbonising its maritime industry, outlining plans to implement key IMO regulations on shipping emissions and establish a national task force and action plan to drive the effort.

These priorities emerged during a national workshop co-organized by IMO and the South African Maritime Safety Authority (SAMSA) in Pretoria on 10 July.

A first cross-sectoral event in SA

The workshop – the first cross-sectoral event in South Africa to be fully dedicated to maritime decarbonisation – brought together over seventy senior officials from government, industry and civil society. Discussions centred on four key areas:

- Alignment with the approved IMO Net-Zero Framework[1]
- Fuel transitions and decarbonization technologies
- Workforce development and training
- Financing the green transition

Comment

In his keynote, Deputy Minister of Transport Hon Mkhuleko Hlengwa urged swift progress: '*Let us move from statements to strategies, from planning to piloting, and from ambition to real action… Africa must be part of designing the route*.'

MEPC October 2025 forecast

IMO technical officer Camille Bourgeon presented an overview of the IMO Net-Zero Framework, which is due to be adopted by the IMO's Marine Environment Protection Committee in October 2025. It comprises a set of mandatory regulations, including a global fuel standard and a global pricing system for GHG emissions.

Bourgeon added:'*The workshop is extremely valuable in terms of linking IMO's global frameworks with nationwide strategies. It also helps us to identify pilot projects, while laying the foundation for stronger coordination among stakeholders*.'

Priority actions

At the conclusion of the workshop, delegates endorsed a set of priority actions, including:

- **Governance:** Ratify and enforce MARPOL Annex VI (IMO treaty which regulates air pollution and ship emissions), establish a national task force on shipping decarbonisation, develop national action plans and raise awareness at all levels.
- **Infrastructure:** Explore government incentives and identify funding mechanisms for alternative fuel production, promote clean fuel infrastructure and bankable projects; Improve access to finance and reduce barriers for green shipping investments
- **Workforce:** Modernize maritime education, initiate skills gap assessments, and invest in training programmes for green maritime careers.

Bold vision and IMO support

SAMSA Acting CEO Ms Mbalenhle Golding welcomed the country's bold vision and IMO's support: '*It is a journey filled with opportunity for green industries, new skills, cleaner communities, and a more resilient ocean economy*.'

The workshop follows the Southern African Transport Conference held on 9 July, which included a session dedicated to maritime issues. Participants from Angola, Ghana, Kenya, Liberia, and Namibia, were supported by the IMO GHG Technical Cooperation Trust Fund[2]. The workshop builds on a previous regional workshop[3] held in Mombasa in February this year.

[1] https://tinyurl.com/5n78p9bm
[2] https://tinyurl.com/vfs7zcmp
[3] https://tinyurl.com/4chacyaa

Green fuels

IMO & GIZ trains the trainers

IMO's GreenVoyage2050 Programme and the German development agency GIZ, through its International Power-to-X (PtX) Hub[1], ran from 14-18 July their first joint Training-of-Trainers course on renewable PtX fuels for shipping. The course equipped a new generation of trainers with the knowledge and tools needed to support the global transition to low and zero-carbon fuels in the maritime sector.

How does that relate to alternative fuels? Participants engaged in interactive sessions covering topics such as the impact of shipping on the climate, emerging fuel technologies, the role of ports in the energy transition, and strategies to decarbonise national fleets. As part of the hands-on methodology, participants also practicing how to deliver selected training modules themselves and receive feedback to strengthen their facilitation skills and adapt content to national contexts.

More than twenty participants from around the world attended the course, held at IMO HQ in London. The course is part of a growing collaboration between IMO and International PtX Hub, aimed at supporting developing countries prepare for a cleaner and more sustainable future in shipping.

Power-to-X converts renewable electricity from wind, solar, hydro, and geothermal sources into sustainable fuels such as green hydrogen, ammonia, methanol, and renewable marine diesel — all with potential to support the decarbonisation of shipping.

Astrid Dispert, GreenVoyage2050 Programme Manager at IMO, commented: '*This programme is a critical enabler for cascading renewable PtX knowledge to national actors in the maritime sector. The shared learning and interactive methodology will empower our trainers to deliver impactful workshops that support the green shipping transition worldwide. We are building a community of trainers who can help share this knowledge across the world*.'

Philipp Wittrock, Lead Shipping & Country Outreach, International PtX Hub added: '*The training modules, co-created with the IMO, now offer a solid tool for scaling capacity development at the nexus of energy and shipping - a key area for climate action. By training experts from different countries, we are helping to turn global ambition into local action. These new trainers will now support their own countries to prepare for the future of shipping*.'

All trainers participating in the course had previously completed a foundational course on renewable fuels. They will now be equipped to deliver tailored national workshops, contributing to broader efforts under the IMO's GreenVoyage2050 Programme and the International PtX Hub's efforts to promote clean energy solutions globally.

GreenVoyage2050 Programme[2]

GreenVoyage2050 is a major technical cooperation programme initiated by the IMO to assist developing countries in reducing GHG emissions from shipping, aligning with the 2023 IMO GHG Strategy.

Phase I of GreenVoyage2050 (2020-2023) supported partnering countries in developing policy frameworks and pilot projects to reduce GHG emissions from ships.

Phase II (2024-2030) continues and expands this support, leveraging funding from the Governments of Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, the Netherlands, and Norway.

The International Power-to-X Hub

The International Power-to-X Hub is a centre of expertise and collaboration for innovative and sustainable green hydrogen and Power-to-X value chains. Together with partners, the PtX Hub identifies Power-to-X solutions that are adapted to the specifics of each country and lead to sustainable economic transformation. The PtX Hub builds and fosters strong networks with industry, academia, administrations, and civil society with hubs in Africa, Asia, Europe, and Latin America.

The International PtX Hub is implemented by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy (BMWE). Financed by the International Climate Initiative, the International PtX Hub is a contribution to the German National Hydrogen Strategy.

[1] https://ptx-hub.org/
[2] https://greenvoyage2050.imo.org/

IMO Exceptional Bravery at Sea Awards

On 10 July IMO announced the 2025 Bravery Awards

Bravery Award for hero seafarer who saved 12 lives at sea

Officer Lee Tae-Young to receive the 2025 IMO Award for Exceptional Bravery at Sea; twenty-two nominees commended.

Officer Lee Tae-Young of the Republic of Korea has been selected to receive this year's IMO Award for Exceptional Bravery at Sea, in recognition of his heroic actions in saving twelve fellow crew members when the fishing vessel *135 Geumseongho* sank in November 2024.

This was endorsed by the IMO Council during its 134th session held in London from 7 – 11 July.

A total of sixty nominations were submitted by twenty-four Member States and one non-governmental organization. An Assessment Panel, chaired by the IMO Secretary-General, conducted the initial review. Nominations were then evaluated by a Panel of Judges, chaired by the Chair of the IMO Council, whose recommendations were submitted to the Council for endorsement.

Mr Lee, who was nominated by the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF), will be presented

with the Award during an official ceremony in London later this year.

In addition, the Council endorsed four recipients for certificates of commendation, and eighteen individuals and groups to receive letters of commendation. (The full list appears below)

A 'profound inspiration' for seafarers

Mr Lee was recognized for his extraordinary leadership, courage and selflessness displayed during an incident last year off the coast of Biyangdo, Jeju Island in the Republic of Korea.

In the early hours of 8 November 2024, the fishing vessel *135 Guemseongho* suddenly listed and capsized, with only the propeller remaining above water. Some crew members managed to hang on to the propeller while others were being swept away by strong currents and waves.

Mr Lee, with no prior search and rescue (SAR) training and at immense risk to his own life, immediately took action to rescue the twelve crew members desperately holding on to the vessel's propeller. He threw two life rings and helped them climb up the ladder of the rescue boat. He was the last to board the rescue boat.

In a statement nominating Mr Lee, ITF stated: '*Lee Tae-young is a brave seafarer who risked his own life to save his colleagues. Honouring his sacrifice and dedication will go beyond the mere act of awarding a prize and it serves as a profound inspiration to all seafarers*.'

The extreme pressure Mr Lee suffered during the incident had an enormous impact on his health. Despite the challenges, he is working to overcome the experience and has continued to convey hope and courage to his colleagues.

Certificates of Commendation

The Council agreed to award certificates of commendation to:

- **The Captain and crew of the Rescue 901 helicopter of the 103 Squadron, Gander NL&L, Royal Canadian Air Force**, nominated by Canada for their courage, tenacity and technical skill displayed during the rescue of the twenty crew members of the 207-meter-long disabled cargo vessel *MBC Baltic III*. The helicopter required hand flying due to turbulence from persistent and extreme aircraft altitude, while the vessel violently rocked amidst 18-foot waves and 40-55 knots of wind. Though the ship's deck grew dangerously slippery due to ice and the bridge in complete disarray with scattered debris, the rescue team successfully managed to hoist the whole crew to safety.
- **Captain Flouris Dimitrios and the crew of the tug supply vessel *Aigaion Pelagos***, nominated by Greece, for their exceptional bravery, exemplary seamanship and resource management skills in the salvage operation of the mt *Sounion*. The Captain and crew successfully averted the catastrophic environmental disaster under adverse safety and security conditions, risking their own lives. The vessel was sailing in the Red Sea carrying about 150,000 metric tons of heavy crude oil and nearly 3,000 metric tons of fuel/bunkers on board, when it was struck by three uncrewed aerial devices and lost engine power. After the crew evacuated, several explosions and fires dispersed on the main deck, causing extensive damage to the vessel. The crew carried out an extensive salvation operation, boarding the abandoned vessel under extreme heat and hazardous conditions, managing to extinguish all the fires and ensure the cargo was stationary. The actions of the *Aigaion Pelagos* Captain and crew were crucial in preventing an environmental disaster.
- **The Members of the Special Rescue Team of the Japanese Coast Guard**, nominated by Japan, for their courage and determination during the rescue of the remaining survivor of the Japanese tugboat *Shouei-Maru* that caught fire and capsized due to a collision with a cargo ship while towing a barge. Divers from the Kobe Coast Guard Office found and rescued the captain of the boat, who unfortunately passed away at the hospital. The Special Rescue Team later arrived at the site of the incident and struck the tugboat with a hammer to check for survivors. When they heard hammering back, the Team dived into the upturned tugboat without hesitation, risking their lives by entering without waiting for safety measures in poor conditions. After half an hour, the crew member was found and brought to safety just before the boat sank. This rescue operation was extremely difficult and carried out at great personal risk to the members of the Special Rescue Team who took part in it to save a life.
- **Aviation Survival Technician Second Class (AST2) Micheal Diglio**, Coast Guard rescue swimmer at the Coast Guard Air Station Clearwater of the United States Coast Guard, nominated by the United States, for his brave and decisive actions during the rescue of two mariners stranded aboard the disabled sailing vessel *Venture* amidst the extreme conditions of the tropical storm Debby. After seeing a distress flair in the darkening sky, AST2 Diglio had to rely on the helicopter's sensors instead of visual cues during the search. Once the vessel was located, he deployed into the sea under time pressure due to the limited fuel reserves, battling rough currents and torrential rain to intercept the survivors. After securing the first

survivor amid towering waves and 50-knot winds, he signalled for the hoist whilst keeping the mariner stable during the ascent. He repeated this for this rescue process for the second survivor. AST2 Diglio displayed selflessness and courageous leadership whilst executing a life-threatening rescue operation.

Letters of Commendation

Letters of Commendation will be sent to:

- **Lieutenant Md Shoiful Alam and the crew of the Bangladesh Coast Guard Tug *Promotto***, nominated by Bangladesh, for demonstrating courage and determination during a fire-fighting operation on the crude oil tanker *Banglar Sourabh*, successfully averting an oil spill and preventing significant marine environmental damage in poor weather conditions.
- **The Master and the crew of the mv *Maersk Leader***, nominated by Brazil, for bravely rescuing all twenty crew members of the *Bram Force*, which had caught fire during a night operation with low visibility and a 2.5-metre swell. The crew completed six round trips between vessels to bring them to safety.
- **Captain Todor Ivanov Todorov and the crew of the mv *Eleen Armonia***, nominated by Bulgaria, for courageously rescuing thirty-four crew members from the burning vessel *Hasil Abadi 28*, which was not visible on radar, battling the fire at great risk of explosion.
- **Captain Xu Jiamin, Master of the mv *Luo Tong 7002***, nominated by China, for leading a successful rescue of all seventeen crew members from the drifting crane ship *Yu Hang Qi Zhong 28* during a typhoon, using expert ship-handling skills in complete darkness and 4–5-metre waves.
- **Mr Li Wenxia**, crew member of the of rescue helicopter B-7312, Beihai No.1 Rescue Flying Service, BeiHai Rescue Bureau, nominated by China, for showing exceptional resolve during the rescue of a fisherman who was holding onto the mast remaining above water of fishing vessel *Jileyu 02163*.
- **Captain Qiang Li and the crew of the hopper dredger *Jun Yang 1***, nominated by China, who bravely towed the powerless *Leo Empire* away from a reef, preventing a fuel spill and saving all seven crew members from a life-threatening situation and serious environmental incident.
- **Captain Xiao Wei and the crew of the mv *Xin An Ning***, nominated by China, for rescuing three people set adrift at sea after their pneumatic boat lost control and contact for five days without food or water.
- **Captain Zhao Guoqiang and the crew of the ms *Amoy Century***, nominated by China, who responded without hesitation to a distress call and rescued by the mv *ASL Bauhinia*, which was on fire with hazardous cargo and twenty-two crew members and three security guards aboard, despite the danger of the explosion.
- **Captain Kondrate Gvadzabia and the crew of the oil/chemical tanker *Owl 5***, nominated by Georgia, for demonstrating exceptional seamanship skills and professionalism by manoeuvring in rough seas and darkness to evacuate a critically ill civilian for helicopter extraction.
- **Mr Albert Buettner, Mr Peter Pfeiffer, Mr Alex Hempel and Mr Rene Baudisch**, the leader and the members of the Towing Assistance Team (TAT), Central Command for Maritime Emergencies (CCME), nominated by Germany, for showing great resolve in towing the powerless mt *Eventin*, preventing it from grounding and causing major environmental damages from the 100,000 tons of crude oil aboard.
- **Captain Soni Thomas and the crew of the INS *Teg*, Indian Navy**, nominated by India, displayed outstanding bravery in rescuing nine survivors from the capsized tanker *Prestige Falcon* during strong winds and limited visibility, though one life was sadly lost.
- **Captain Sabinesh S Vayath and the crew of the mv *Maersk Yukon***, nominated by Panama, for their vigilance and skill in rescuing two fishermen adrift for four days after their boat's engine broke down, manoeuvring the vessel in harsh conditions to bring them to safety.
- **The crew members of the search and rescue vessel BRP *Melchora Aquino* (MRRV-9702), Philippine Coast Guard**, nominated by the Philippines, demonstrated leadership and courage when rescuing sixteen of seventeen crew members from the sinking mt *Terranova* during a typhoon, preventing a massive fuel spill of 1.4 million litres.
- **Captain Byungsuk Park, Master of the fishing vessel *999 Bumsung*, and Captain Hyeongtaek Im, Master of the fishing vessel *621 Yeongsin***, nominated by the Republic of Korea, coordinated the night rescue of ten fishermen from the capsized *136 Danuri*, in conditions of large waves and strong winds.
- **Captain Hyunwoo Park, Master of the fishing vessel *New Angel***, nominated by the Republic of Korea, for bravely rescuing eleven passengers, some of whom were drifting at sea with life jackets and close to hypothermic shock, from the flooded and grounded vessel *Fighting*, rushing to the half sunken vessel to save lives.
- **Captain Atıl Aycan Aksoy, Master of the tug vessel *Kurtarma 5***, nominated by Türkiye, who prevented a collision by skilfully pushing the drifting *Bunun Ace* away from shore and passing boats moored, avoiding disaster.
- **The crew members of the mt *T Caroline***, nominated by Türkiye, for courageously saving two people from the sinking sailing yacht *Delfin and Deniz* in rough seas, when helicopter and tug assistance was deemed unfeasible.
- **Lieutenant Robert Turns, Lieutenant Commander Joshua Womboldt, AMT2 Eric Lamy and AST2 Hunter Joseph, crew members of helicopter CG- 6048, Coast Guard Air Station Kodiak, United States Coast Guard**, nominated by the United States, for carrying out a high-risk night-time rescue beyond operational limits in complete darkness and challenging circumstances to save an unresponsive mariner from the *Alaska Victory*.

IMO Award for Exceptional Bravery at Sea

This annual Award was established by the IMO to provide international recognition for those who perform acts of exceptional bravery, displaying outstanding courage in attempting to save life at sea or in attempting to prevent damage to the marine environment.

The annual awards ceremony will be held this year at IMO HQ in London in November 2025.

Central American Action Plans

Maritime facilitation approved

According to a report from IMO on 21 July Honduras and El Salvador have each approved an Action Plan aimed at modernizing the facilitation of maritime traffic.

It is understood that these Plans are designed to support the effective and sustainable implementation of the Facilitation Convention (FAL Convention) and its amendments in their respective countries.

Each country adopted the Plans, following respective National Workshops on Facilitation, convened by the IMO and the Central American Commission on Maritime Transport (COCATRAM).

Inter-institutional participation and regional cooperation

In Honduras, the workshop took place in Tegucigalpa on 14 and 15 July, under the coordination of the General Direction of Merchant Marine of Honduras (DGMM). Thirty-two representatives from national institutions with responsibilities related to the reception and clearance of ships at ports* as well as private sector stakeholders participated in the workshop.

In El Salvador, a similar workshop was held in El Salvador on 17 and 18 July culminating in the country's adoption of the Action Plan. The workshop gathered eighteen participants from national authorities and agencies involved in ship clearance and facilitation procedures**, as well as representatives from the private sector.

During both workshops, participants analysed the results of virtual consultancies carried out by IMO, the first one in 2021, and the second one in 2023 in Honduras and in 2024 in El Salvador, focused respectively on information gathering and technical follow-up. The national situations regarding maritime facilitation were also reviewed. These activities formed part of Phase 3 of the countries' technical assistance cycle, within the framework of efforts to implement a Maritime Single Window (MSW).

Participants from both countries also had the opportunity to learn firsthand about Guatemala's experience in implementing its own Maritime Single Window.

Content and structure of the Actions Plan

The approved Action Plans envisions a comprehensive modernization of facilitation processes for international maritime traffic. Among its key components is the enhancement of efforts to implement a Maritime Single Window (MSW), a digital platform that allows for the centralization and simplification of procedures related to ship arrival and clearance (departure) at ports.

The documents include several technical sections, such as identified priority gaps, immediate strategic priorities, specific objectives, and priority activities necessary for implementation. It also includes proposed key performance indicators (KPIs), a tentative timeline, and formal channels for submitting technical cooperation requests.

The Plans is designed to ensure alignment with national priorities, the regional priorities agreed within the COCATRAM framework, and IMO's Integrated Technical Cooperation Programme (ITCP) 2026–2027. The documents also include a monitoring mechanism to periodically evaluate the progress and impacts of the implementation process.

*General Direction of Merchant Marine (DGMM), the National Migration Institute (INM), the National Service of Health and Agri-Food Safety (SENASA), the Regional International Organization for Agricultural Health (OIRSA), the Ministry of Health (SESAL), and Customs Honduras.

**Coast Guard Service of the Ministry of National, the Autonomous Executive Port Commission (CEPA), the Customs Authority of El Salvador, the Ministry of Economy, the Ministry of Health, the Pacific Port Union (UPDP).

Tackling marine pollution through Port State Control

African nations united to strengthen port State control (PSC) and combat plastic pollution at sea with the support of the GloLitter Partnerships Project in Madagascar held from 9 to 11 July.

Ten nations attended

Hosted at the south Madagascar Port of d'Ehoala, training brought together ten African nations to strengthen their capacity in ensuring the enforcement, through port State control of MARPOL Annex V regulations for the prevention of pollution by garbage from ships.

IMO's GloLitter Project supports maritime administrations to tackle this global issue.

Port State control as an enabler

This activity trained eleven port State control Officers (PSCOs) to sharpen their skills by practical demonstration on ship-based litter control in compliance with the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL) Annex V. [1]

Critical measures

Port State control is critical in ensuring, at national ports, the conformity of foreign-flagged ships with international regulations. Authorized PSCOs are empowered to inspect vessels and to verify that proper waste management procedures are being followed. By enforcing these standards, PSCO plays a key role in helping reduce sea-based plastic litter and protecting the marine environment.

Comment

Redida Valisoa Erick, Regional Director of Transports and Meteorology of Madagascar said: '*This workshop is a strong testament to the growing commitment of our States to combat marine pollution from ship-generated waste, particularly plastic litter. The issue that brings us together today is of vital importance, as it directly concerns the preservation of our marine ecosystems and the sustainability of maritime activities*.'

National stakeholders involved

The training gathered national stakeholders, including port, environmental and fisheries authorities. It was hosted by Ministry of Transports and Meteorology, the Maritime, Port and Waterways Agency (APMF) of Madagascar, and the Port of Ehoala.

Ten countries attended the event: Cabo Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, the Gambia, Kenya, Madagascar, Mozambique, Nigeria, Senegal, Togo, and the United Republic of Tanzania.

MARPOL Annex V in action

On any voyage, ships generate all kinds of waste, from food scraps and cargo residues to lost fishing gear and plastic litter. MARPOL Annex V plays a central role in minimizing the amount of garbage entering the ocean from ships.

More than 150 countries have voluntarily committed to Annex V, which sets out a comprehensive framework to tackle ship-generated waste. Key provisions include mandatory garbage record-keeping, stricter controls in designated 'special areas', and specific regulations for the disposal of cargo residues.

Erick added: '*The focus of this workshop, MARPOL Annex V, remains one of the core legal instruments governing the protection of the marine environment. However, the full effectiveness of this instrument relies heavily on its implementation – and particularly on your role, port State control Officers, as enforcers of international compliance*.'

GloLitter Partnerships project

The GloLitter Partnerships project, one of the projects under the OceanLitter Programme at IMO, is supporting Small Islands Developing States and Least Developed Countries in identifying opportunities for the prevention and reduction of marine plastic litter from sea-based sources.

Norwegian funding

Jointly implemented by the IMO and Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and funded by the Government of Norway, the Programme supports the objectives of the IMO's Strategy and Action Plan to Address Marine Plastic Litter from Ships in line with MARPOL Annex V and London Convention and London Protocol, as well as FAO's Voluntary Guidelines on the Marking of Fishing Gear.

GloLitter empowers partner countries with the knowledge and tools needed to drive legal, policy, and institutional reforms in the shipping and fisheries sectors, promoting the engagement of women in efforts to combat marine plastic pollution.

[1] **Note here, in French: https://tinyurl.com/3n4feb3j and English: https://tinyurl.com/3cdve8uv**

Preparing seafarers for the fuel transition

A live methanol firefighting exercise and advanced Virtual Reality (VR) tools spotlighted the frontline risks seafarers face in the fuel transition, during a four-day training seminar in Singapore.

The event brought together government officials, maritime trainers and industry stakeholders to advance the preparation of training for seafarers working on ships powered by alternative fuels and new technologies, such as methyl/ethyl alcohol, ammonia, hydrogen, LPG and battery-powered ships, among others.

Held alongside Singapore's International Safety@Sea Conference[1], the seminar from 14 to 17 July formed part of IMO's efforts to ensure that seafarers are well-equipped to meet the demands of the decarbonizing maritime industry.

MET institutions present

Designed to bridge policy, education and practice, the programme featured presentations by Maritime Education and Training (MET) institutions[2], as well as insights from partners of the Maritime Just Transition Task Force[3] and representatives from industry stakeholders.

Sharing practical experiences

A panel discussion with MET institutions explored solutions to key challenges such as limited training capacity and lack of experiences for handling new fuels and technologies. Focus groups allowed participants to share national strategies for aligning their training frameworks with the ongoing development of IMO training guidelines for seafarers on ships powered by alternative fuels and new technologies[4]. Delegates from countries in the region also shared practical experiences with training seafarers for service on LNG-fuelled ships.

Fostering an inclusive and equitable maritime workforce

A dedicated session on gender mainstreaming in training reaffirmed IMO's commitment to fostering an inclusive and equitable maritime workforce.

The sessions culminated in a live methanol firefighting drill, which underscored the importance of emergency preparedness when handling new alternative fuels.

Advanced simulation systems and VR tools

Participants also engaged in hands-on demonstrations of advanced simulation systems and VR tools at the Singapore Maritime Academy, Singapore's Centre of Excellence in Maritime Safety (CEMS) and Wavelink Maritime Institute, gaining practical exposure to cutting-edge instructional technologies.

The seminar was co-organized by the Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore (MPA) and the IMO Secretariat, under IMO's Integrated Technical Cooperation Programme (ITCP)[5], in collaboration with the Sustainable Maritime Transport Cooperation (SMART-C) Programme[6].

Participants are expected to play an active role in the ongoing work at IMO, particularly in the development of training provisions for seafarers serving on ships using alternative fuels and new technologies.

[1] https://www.safetyatseaweek.gov.sg/
[2] https://tinyurl.com/2p52savs
[3] https://tinyurl.com/aevnh45c
[4] https://tinyurl.com/38c7dxkw
[5] https://tinyurl.com/bdz3xpsn
[6] https://smart-c.imo.org/

Legal expert Rosalie Balkin to receive International Maritime Prize

Dr Rosalie Balkin is recognized for her outstanding contributions to international maritime law over a career spanning more than 50 years

Dr Rosalie Balkin, Secretary-General of the Comité Maritime International (CMI) and former Director of Legal Affairs and External Relations Division at the IMO, has been named the recipient of the International Maritime Prize for 2024. The decision was announced by the IMO Council during its 134th session held from 7-11 July.

Nominated by the Government of Australia, Dr Balkin was recognized for her outstanding contributions to international maritime law over a career spanning more than fifty years. Currently, she serves as Secretary-General of the CMI - the world's oldest organization focused on unifying international maritime law, founded in 1897. Appointed in 2017, she is the first woman to hold this position in the CMI's 128-year history.

A pioneering figure in the field, she was also the first woman appointed Director of Legal Affairs and External Relations Division at IMO (1998-2013) and later the first female Assistant Secretary-General (2011-2013).

The Australian Government, in its nomination, praised her '*outstanding commitment, achievements and contributions to the maritime community*,' calling her a deserving recipient of this prestigious honour.

IMO Secretary-General Mr. Arsenio Dominguez said: '*Dr Balkin's distinguished career embodies the dedication, mastery and leadership needed to uphold a robust global maritime legal framework that ensures safety, security and sustainability for this vital industry. Her pioneering contributions have paved the way for greater inclusion and diversity within the maritime community*.'

An impactful career on the global stage

During her tenure at IMO, Dr Balkin oversaw several landmark diplomatic conferences that led to the adoption of new international conventions on maritime safety, pollution liability, wreck removal, and passenger protection. Notable conventions adopted under her leadership include:

- 2001 International Convention on Civil Liability for Bunker Oil Pollution Damage;
- 2002 Athens Convention on the Carriage of Passengers and their Luggage at Sea;
- 2003 Supplementary Fund Protocol which established the International Oil Pollution Compensation Supplementary Fund;
- 2005 Protocol to the Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Maritime Navigation;
- 2005 Protocol to the Protocol of 1988 for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Fixed Platforms Located on the Continental Shelf;
- 2007 Nairobi International Convention on the Removal of Wrecks; and
- 2010 International Convention on Liability and Compensation for Damage in Connection with the Carriage of Hazardous and Noxious Substances by Sea.

In addition, Dr Balkin has made extensive contributions to legal and academic institutions worldwide as a widely published author and lecturer.

She served twice on the Board of Governors of the World Maritime University (WMU) and currently serves as Ethics Officer to the WMU President, offering advice on ethical matters and settlement of disputes.

As Legal Advisor to the International Oil Pollution Compensation (IOPC) Funds since 2014, she was instrumental in preparing the resolutions for dissolving the 1971 IOPC Fund, which was replaced by the 1992 Fund, strengthening the global compensation regime.

She is a founding member of the Advisory Group of Seafarers' Rights International, which advocates for fair treatment and legal protection of seafarers.

Commitment to Australia's maritime sector

In Australia, Dr Balkin has served in senior roles across the public service, including as Primary Legal Advisor to the Commonwealth Ombudsman and later as Assistant Secretary in the Attorney-General's Department's Office of International Law.

During this time, she led the Australian delegation to the IMO Legal Committee meetings and was elected its Vice Chair in 1993.

From 2018 to 2021, she served on the Board of the Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA), emphasizing her long-standing commitment to the maritime sector.

In 2018, she was appointed an Officer of the Order of Australia, one of the nation's highest civilian honours, for her distinguished service to maritime law, global shipping standards, and legal education.

About the International Maritime Prize

Established in 1980, the International Maritime Prize has been awarded annually by IMO to an individual or organization that has made a significant contribution to its work and objectives.

The winner is selected by a panel chaired by the IMO Secretary-General, comprised of representatives from the IMO Council, as well as intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations.

Dr Balkin will receive the award at an official ceremony in November 2025.

BP and Libya's National Oil Corporation sign MoU

Redevelopment of giant Libyan Sirte basin oilfields

Unconventional potential

On 7 July BP signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Libya's National Oil Corporation (NOC) to evaluate redevelopment opportunities in the mature giant Sarir and Messla oilfields in Libya's Sirte basin, including the exploration potential of adjacent areas, and to understand the wider unconventional oil and gas potential within the country.

The agreement provides a framework for BP to assess a range of technical data and to effectively work with NOC to evaluate presented opportunities and determine the feasibility of future development and exploration programmes.

William Lin, BP executive vice president gas & low carbon energy, commented: '*This agreement reflects our strong interest in deepening our partnership with NOC and supporting the future of Libya's energy sector.*

Staff of BP and Libya's National Oil Corporation at the signing of the MoU.

'*We hope to apply BP's experience from redeveloping and managing giant oil fields around the world to help optimize the performance of these world-class assets. We look forward to conducting thorough studies, working closely with NOC, to evaluate the resource potential of this promising region*.'

Background

The Sarir and Messla oilfields, located in the Sirte Basin, rank among Libya's largest. Sarir was discovered in 1961 and Messla in 1971.

The scope of this MoU is a significant potential addition to BP's Libya portfolio.

BP re-entered Libya in 2007, when it signed an Exploration and Production Sharing Agreement (EPSA) covering exploration areas A and B (onshore), and area C (offshore) with Libya's NOC.

The EPSA was later put on hold following the declaration of *force majeure*.

In 2022, Eni (see here: www.eni.com) acquired a 42.5% and assumed exploration operatorship of the EPSA, with BP retaining a 42.5% interest and the Libyan Investment Authority holding the remaining 15%.

In 2023, Eni and BP formally lifted the *force majeure*, resuming exploration operations in the onshore areas.

Spoofing through time

By Michael Grey, IFSMA Honorary Member

"When did all this electronic spoofing begin?" It did not seem to be that difficult a question to answer. We probably began to hear about it some ten to fifteen years ago, when devices bought on the Internet by car thieves started to affect the electronics of ships in the vicinity.

There was particular alarm in the southern North Sea, possibly because of the villains in Essex building up their lucrative trade in high end stolen cars en route to the continent. Soon there were navigational warnings around the Dutch and German ports. From there it sort of went international, and there were soon warnings being issued about hacking in general and the fact that the marine industry was struggling to catch up with landside in its electronic hygiene. I was terribly impressed listening to a surveyor in the offshore sector, who said that contamination was so bad that he simply threw away his laptop every time he came ashore. Seafarers were exhorted to beware of wrecking ship systems with the various devices they had brought aboard. Pilots were warned not to plug in their PPUs lest they contaminated the ship systems or vice versa.

Clearly, over time, these warnings have worked and all hands have got rather better. The hacking and spoofing of navigational equipment have come rather later, and are very much the result of malevolent people, mostly emanating exactly from where you would expect them to be located.

Now we must cope with whole dark fleets of sanction busting vessels, hiding and changing their identities and location almost at will, disappearing from Automatic Identification Systems at the click of a switch. It is a function of conflict and if you think about it, as old as time, if you consider the strategies of pirates and corsairs, who would fly false colours in order to lull their victims into close quarters. It was a ruse practised by legitimate navies to enable a ship to get within range, but even potential victims would carry false colours and forged papers to avoid becoming somebody else's prize.

You might cynically suggest that sowing mistrust has been a useful way, down through the ages, of completing a voyage without harm. And as for spoofing navigational systems, it might be suggested that this is just a modern iteration of what was practised by wreckers, who allegedly would extinguish a coastal light to lure hapless mariners onto the shore, or if they were clever enough, to move it. It was not that long ago that mariners looking for a landfall on the horn of Africa would have seen warnings of the light being unreliable, owing to the light keepers being occasionally kidnapped by hostile tribesmen, who would routinely steal the equipment. It is an irony that while the security situation ashore might be marginally less hazardous today, the GPS aboard any passing ship needs to be closely monitored on account of the hackers and spoofers sending their dubious signals around the very same region.

I have been told that in some congested port approaches, you cannot completely trust the messages from what appears to be VTS, which is somewhat worrying. But even that is not entirely new. I recall many years ago, when VHF was in its infancy, a pilot recounting a story of a colleague using a walkie-talkie being perfectly mimicked by some villain sitting in a car ashore, who, at a crucial moment with the ship in a narrow channel called out "drop both anchors, Mr Mate!" Some rather more naïve souls might suggest that a ship on its "innocent passage"

ought not to be attacked by spoofers, but in reality, we are already at war with these blighters, whether they are state-sponsored or just merely criminal.

People involved in commercial shipping might have come a little late to the conflict, but an industry now so heavily dependent upon electronic communication hopefully recognises that it is now a major target for those who would do it harm and is spending more appropriately on defences. And those afloat have been urged to take precautions, not to trust single sources of information, bearing in mind that the big tanker that is on your port bow and appears not to be showing an AIS signal may well be uninsured, and of questionable quality.

It is what we have to live with, in 2025. A final historical angle might come from the story of the medieval pirate and early spoofer Sir Patrick Spens, who stole the warning bell placed on the deadly Inchcape Rock on Scotland's east coast by a kindly Abbot. May his gruesome fate, as recounted in the poem, be replicated with those today, who wish shipping such ill will.

This article was first published in The Maritime Advocate Online No 886 of 11 June 2025 and appears here by kind permission of the author and of the editor.

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

US Coast Guard Cutter *Healy* departs Seattle

Arctic deployment

On 25 June US Coast Guard in Seattle reported that Cutter *Healy* had departed Seattle at the commencement of its annual Arctic deployment.

Crew aboard *Healy*, a 420-foot loa icebreaker are to support two distinct high-latitude missions to study the formation and movement of sea ice and the pathways followed by Atlantic and Pacific waters in the Arctic, and ocean circulation patterns in the East Siberian and Laptev seas.

It is understood the first mission will be a collaboration with the Office of Naval Research (ONR) to deploy and service instruments for its Arctic Mobile Observing System (AMOS). This system advances autonomous, mobile observing methodologies to enable studies of sea ice dynamics and improve understanding of the circulation of water masses in the Arctic.

Developing technologies

AMOS focuses on developing technologies and approaches for creating a scalable observing system for sustained, persistent presence in the ice-covered Arctic.

In partnership with the US National Science Foundation (NSF), *Healy*'s second mission will include recovering, servicing, and deploying long-term subsurface mooring arrays and conducting multidisciplinary surveys in support of the Nansen and Amundsen Basins Observational System (NABOS).

Healy last supported AMOS and the NABOS missions in 2023.

US Coast Guard Cutter Healy*, bound for Arctic waters.*
Photo: USCG ©

To quote *Healy*'s CO Captain Kristen Serumgard: '*We are eager to return to the Arctic.* Healy *is uniquely positioned to advance scientific understanding of the Arctic environment, directly supporting security and defence of the nation's northernmost borders and maritime approaches*.

Serumgard assumed command of *Healy* early in June, having previously served as chief of operational forces at the Coast Guard's Atlantic Area Command.

Enhancing domain awareness

Healy is the United States' largest icebreaker and the Coast Guard's only icebreaker designed and equipped with scientific instruments to support high-latitude Arctic research. Such research enhances domain awareness of how the physical, operational and strategic environments will evolve, informing national strategic foresight on the Arctic and future Coast Guard operations.

In addition to facilitating science and technology operations, *Healy* conducts a range of Coast Guard missions, such as search and rescue, ship escorts, environmental protection and enforcement of laws and treaties.

ITF on seafarer abandonment

New figures released on 15 July by the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) reveal yet another disturbing surge in the abandonment of seafarers worldwide.

So far in 2025, at least 2,286 seafarers on 222 vessels have been left stranded, often without pay, food, or medical support. By comparison, at this point in 2024, already the worst year on record for seafarer abandonment, there had been 172 cases involving 1,838 seafarers and $11.5 million in unpaid wages.

A staggering 37% of all abandonment cases in 2025 have occurred in the Arab World – the highest proportion of any region globally. Thirty-four percent have taken place in Europe (the majority in Türkiye, yet to ratify the Maritime Labour Convention) – more than double the share of Asia Pacific, the next highest region.

The ITF warns that Gulf states, particularly the United Arab Emirates (UAE), and European states must do more to hold shipowners accountable and prevent abandonments in or near their ports.

Steve Trowsdale, the ITF's Inspectorate Coordinator, commented: '*We are seeing a pattern of abuse that cannot be ignored and that must be confronted. In recent years, the Gulf region, and the UAE in particular, has seen a huge increase in seafarer abandonment cases. Both there and in Europe, much more must be done to crack down on the rogue shipowners who need to know there'll be consequences*.

'*Every single case of abandonment is a disgrace. It's an intentional abuse of human rights, and the failure to end abandonment exposes a systemic problem in the maritime industry*.'

Flags of Convenience under scrutiny

'Abandonment' has a specific definition under international law, meaning many of the cases involve seafarers being denied pay for two months or more, or being left stranded, or left without food or medical support.

The figures also highlight the structural enablers of abandonment. The Flags of Convenience (FOC) system remains central to the crisis. Vessels registered under FOC states, such as St. Kitts & Nevis (26), Tanzania (26) and Comoros (18) dominate the abandonment lists. These flags offer owners anonymity, deregulation and immunity from scrutiny – at the direct expense of seafarer rights.

Nearly 75% of abandoned vessels in 2025 so far are under FOCs. These flag states routinely fail to enforce international obligations or pursue shipowners who dump their responsibilities at the first sign of financial trouble.

Trowsdale added: '*The Flags of Convenience system is parasitic on the maritime industry. It allows shipowners to hide behind paper jurisdictions while seafarers are left abandoned on rusting hulls. And when countries enable these crimes by looking the other way – or worse, profiting from them – they become complicit*.'

ITF demands accountability

The ITF is calling on international regulators, port states, and the IMO to take urgent action.

With global trade dependent on seafarers, the ITF warns that continued inaction threatens not just lives, but the integrity of the shipping industry itself – an industry in the midst of a recruitment and retention crisis.

A lack of enforcement and responsiveness from flag and port states, the absence of adequate insurance for vessels, and shipowners refusing to accept responsibility for crew welfare are common factors that contribute to abandonment – and make it harder to resolve. These failures are not just administrative gaps; they are enabling an industry where seafarers are discarded when no longer convenient.

Trowsdale concluded with: '*There must be accountability. If we allow this exploitation to continue, we destroy the very workforce global trade depends on*.'

More Saharan dust

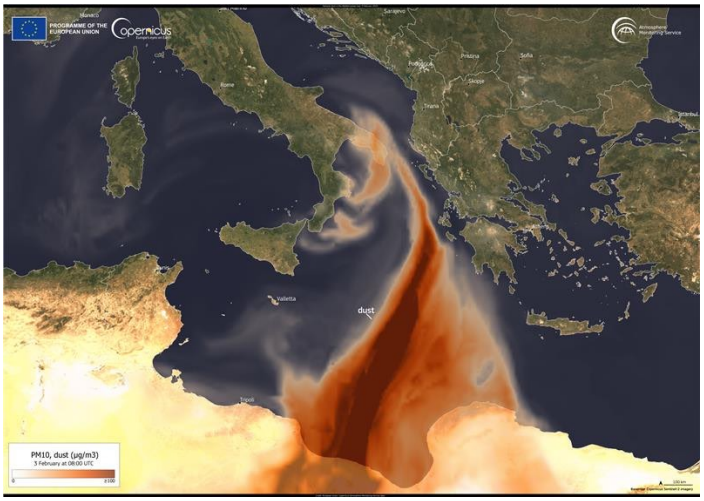
This Sentinel-3 image, acquired on 15 July 2025, shows a plume of Saharan dust drifting northwards across the western Mediterranean Sea.

The dust extends from northern Algeria across the Mediterranean Sea towards the Balearic Islands. Fine particles, lifted by strong desert winds, create a broad, dust-laden veil over the sea surface, producing a hazy effect that contrasts sharply with the deeper blue waters to the north.

These dust events can affect both the environment and human health.

Continuous monitoring

The Copernicus Atmosphere Monitoring Service (CAMS) continuously monitors and forecasts the transport of aerosols and atmospheric pollutants.



An EU Copernicus Sentinel-3 image of 15 July showing a plume of Saharan dust drifting northwards Credit: European Union, Copernicus Sentinel-3 imagery ©

In the first months of 2025, the CAMS tracked several episodes of long-range Saharan dust transport over the Atlantic and Europe. This activity has had far-reaching impact on coarse particulate matter (PM10) concentrations, ultimately affecting air quality in various regions.

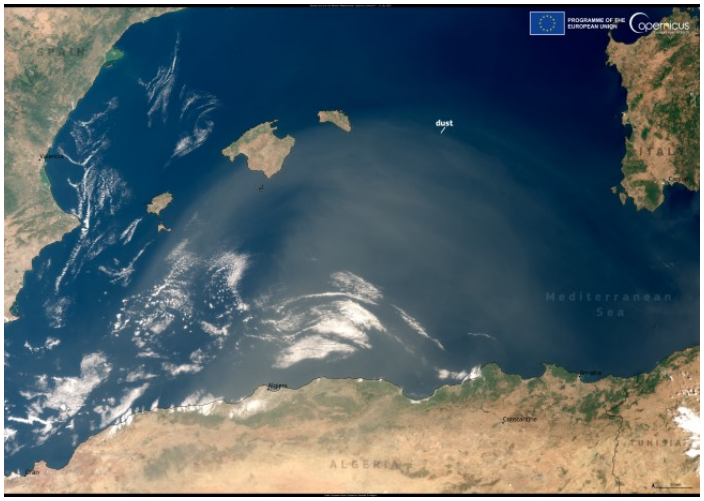
International Day of Combating Sand and Dust Storms

On 12 July the International Day of Combating Sand and Dust Storms, established by the United Nations in 2023, aimed to raise awareness about the effects of sand and dust storms (SDS) on health, agriculture, transportation and the environment.

CAMS, along with partner organisations worldwide, works to monitor such events to reduce their impact.

Traversing the Atlantic

Since the beginning of the year, CAMS has tracked several long-range transport episodes of mineral dust from the Sahara crossing the Atlantic Ocean and reaching the Caribbean.



Dust forecast over central Mediterranean at 08:00 UTC on 3 February.
Credit: European Union, CAMS ©.

During February and March, the wind patterns over the Atlantic resulted in plumes of dust reaching the northeast coast of South America. By the end of April, most of the dust plumes had reached the Caribbean and beyond.

At the end of May and beginning of June, a large plume was transported across the Caribbean and Greater Antilles as far as the Gulf of Mexico. Surface measurements at sites in Guadeloupe and eastern and southern Florida showed peaks which had been well represented by the CAMS forecasts. Similarly, evaluation of CAMS Aerosol Optical Depth (AOD) forecasts against Aeronet measurements at sites located on both sides of the Atlantic attest to the forecasting capabilities for these events.

Dust intrusions have continued to cross the Atlantic during early July with the latest plume predicted to reach the Greater Antilles and Caribbean before the end of the month.

Central and Eastern Med

The central and eastern Mediterranean region experienced several Saharan dust intrusions during the first few months of the year. Plumes regularly reached Italy and Greece resulting in hazy skies and dust reaching ground level between January and May. One of the more notable episodes occurred in early February, as a cyclone originating in North Africa transported Saharan dust across the central Mediterranean towards southern Italy and eastward into Greece.

The Copernicus Health Hub provides streamlined access to environmental data relevant to public health, supporting early warnings, risk assessment, and evidence-based decision-making.

Russian malicious cyber activities

NATO condemnation

On 18 July the North Atlantic Council issued a statement condemning Russian malicious cyber activities. The English version is to be seen below. A French version is also available.

1. We strongly condemn Russia's malicious cyber activities, which constitute a threat to Allied security. We stand in solidarity and recognise that Estonia, France, the United Kingdom and the United States have recently attributed malicious cyber activity targeting several NATO Allies and Ukraine to Russia's military intelligence service (GRU). We recall that in 2024, Germany and the Czech Republic individually attributed activity to APT 28, which is sponsored by the GRU. We also note with concern that the same threat actor targeted other national governmental entities, critical infrastructure operators and other entities across the Alliance, including in Romania. These attributions and the continuous targeting of our critical infrastructure, with the harmful impacts caused across several sectors, illustrate the extent to which cyber and wider hybrid threats have become important tools in Russia's ongoing campaign to destabilise NATO Allies and in Russia's brutal and unprovoked war of aggression against Ukraine.

2. We call on Russia to stop its destabilising cyber and hybrid activities. These activities demonstrate Russia's disregard for the United Nations framework for responsible state behaviour in cyberspace, which Russia claims to uphold. Russia's actions will not deter Allies' support to Ukraine, including cyber assistance through the Tallinn Mechanism and IT capability coalition. We will continue to use the lessons learned from the war against Ukraine in countering Russian malicious cyber activity.

3. NATO stands for a free, open, peaceful and secure cyberspace. We call on all States, including

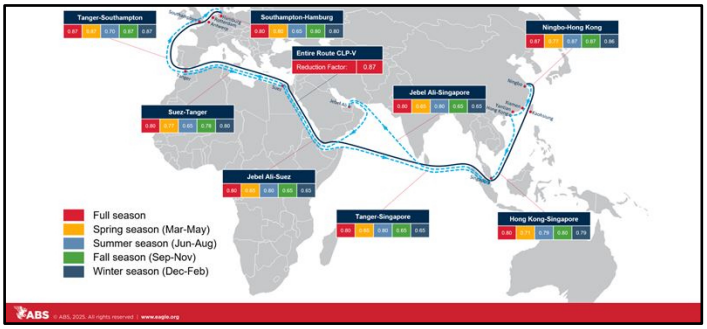
Russia, to uphold their international obligations, also when acting in cyberspace, and to act consistently with the framework for responsible state behaviour in cyberspace as affirmed by all members of the United Nations.

4. We remain united in our determination to counter, constrain, and contest Russian malicious cyber activities and are investing in our defences; including through the establishment of the NATO Integrated Cyber Defence Centre and upholding our Cyber Defence Pledge commitments as well as through the commitments made in the Hague Summit Declaration.

5. We are determined to employ the full range of capabilities in order to deter, defend against and counter the full spectrum of cyber threats. We will respond to these at a time and in a manner of our choosing, in accordance with international law, and in coordination with our international partners including the EU.

ABS notation on parametric rolling and lashings

On 21 July ABS announced that it had enhanced its CLP-V(PARR) lashing notation to include a seasonality factor which gives additional operational flexibility to container ship operators.



An example of CLP-V(PARR) route splitting and seasonal reduction factors for a trade route from Asia to Europe.

ABS computer lashing programme + parametric roll guidance

Introduced in 2024, the CLP-V(PARR) notation combines the ABS computer lashing programme with mandatory parametric roll guidance, allowing operators to optimize stowage and lashing of containers, up to an additional tier of containers on deck, with reduced risk of loss due to parametric rolling.

Seasonality factor

The new seasonality factor, in combination with the route splitting approach, gives shipowners the opportunity to optimize loading on each leg of a voyage, while also gaining flexibility from additional seasonal differences.

Unique approach

In the words of Christoph Rasewsky, ABS Global Container Sector Lead: '*ABS employs a unique approach to calculate load reduction factors on specific routes, sections and seasons rather than on a complete voyage. With the combination of route splitting and seasonality, this new notation is offering valuable options to container operators*.'

A new industrial standard

Peter Kim, ABS Senior Principal Engineer, added: '*By analyzing sea conditions using wave scatter diagrams from hindcast wave data for specific sections and seasons, carriers can apply more specific load reduction factors while reducing the risk of cargo loss from parametric rolling with digital onboard operational guidance. The mandatory parametric roll guidance for this notation is setting a new industry standard for safe ship operation even in adverse weather conditions*.'

	Unrestricted Service	Route-Specific Service	Weather-Based Short Voyage Service	Route Splitting	Seasonal Reduction Factors*
Description	Reduction factor of 1.0 for unrestricted service	Route specific reduction factors	Weather dependent reduction factors for short voyages (<72 hours)	Lower reduction factors on split route sections	Season related reduction factors
CLP	☑	✗	✗	✗	✗
CLP-V	☑	☑	☑	✗	✗
CLP-V(PARR)	☑	☑	☑	☑	☑

ABS optional class notations on container lashing. CLP-V(PARR) offers both route splitting and seasonal reductions factors.

From the voyage of the first containership, *Ideal X*, in 1956, ABS has been at the forefront of providing classification and technical services for containerships operating around the world. Learn more here.

About ABS

ABS, a global leader in classification services, is focused on delivering a safer, cleaner future for the marine and offshore industries. For over 160 years, ABS has been setting standards for safety and excellence and continues to innovate in the fields of clean technology, digitalization and artificial intelligence, providing industry-leading technical advisory services. With a global network of surveyors, engineers, technology specialists and support staff, ABS works with industry leaders including its members and clients around the world to improve safety in operational performance and efficiency with innovative solutions for the complete life cycle of marine and offshore assets.

The images are to be found using the link here: https://tinyurl.com/j8wkczy3

Port of Felixstowe welcomes The Premier Alliance

HMM Southampton

On 22 July Hutchison Ports Port of Felixstowe reported that it had welcomed the first call by The Premier Alliance's FE4 service between Asia and North Europe.

The 24,000 TEU *HMM Southampton* arrived at the UK's largest container port on 20 July from Singapore via the Cape of Good Hope.

The Premier Alliance was formed in February 2025 by Ocean Network Express (ONE), HMM (formerly Hyundai Merchant Marine) and Yang Ming. The alliance is a five-year extension of their previous partnership and aims to deliver a reliable and flexible service with expanded global coverage.

Comments

Commenting on the new service, **Clemence Cheng, Executive Director of Hutchison Ports and Port of Felixstowe CEO**, said: '*The Port of Felixstowe has long been the leading UK port for trade with Asia and we are delighted to welcome the Premier Alliance to our roster of services.*

The first call at the Port of Felixstowe was HMM Southampton *part of the Premier Alliance's FE4 service*.

'*The FE4 service adds further options for shippers through Felixstowe and Felixstowe provides the Premier Alliance with first-class facilities as well as the deepest channel and quayside facilities in the UK.*

'*The unique extent of the deep-water access at Felixstowe is particularly important for services such as the FE4 which call at the UK as first port in Europe. They offer shippers the quickest transit times but arrive with the deepest drafts. Using Felixstowe avoids congestion and minimises delay*.'

Peter Livey, HMM Managing Director (Great Britain), added: '*We are proud to see the HMM Southampton inaugurate the FE4 service at the Port of Felixstowe. This marks a significant milestone in our commitment to delivering efficient and reliable shipping solutions across Asia and Europe. The FE4 service enhances our UK calling capabilities by offering faster transit times and first port access at Felixstowe. This additional call complements our existing UK port coverage and allows us to offer greater flexibility and resilience to our customers*.'

Takahiro Kikuchi, Managing Director of Ocean Network Express (Europe) Ltd, reflected: '*We are pleased to be offering a new UK port call at Felixstowe as part of our FE4 Asia-Europe service. This service, operated in partnership with the Premier Alliance, presents new opportunities to ONE and our customers. We look forward to successful collaboration with the Port of Felixstowe.*'

Jack Wu, Managing Director of Yang Ming (UK) Ltd, concluded by saying: '*The Port of Felixstowe is the historical UK port of call for Yang Ming and we are delighted to be returning with the Premier Alliance updated FE4 loop. This allows us to provide an enhanced level of service scope, complementing our existing services. We look forward to working with the Port of Felixstowe in ensuring the highest quality of service to our customers*.'

FE4 port rotation

The full port rotation of the FE4 service is: Felixstowe – Rotterdam – Hamburg – Le Havre – Algeciras – Singapore – Kaohsiung – Shanghai – Ningbo – Kaohsiung – Yantian – Cai Mep – Singapore – Felixstowe.

New Danish coastal radars

Supply by Terma

It was reported on 16 July that Terma has signed an agreement with the Danish Defence Acquisition and Logistics Organisation (DALO) to deliver thirty-two modern coastal surveillance radars.

The new systems will replace the current radar infrastructure, ensuring continued maritime domain awareness and sovereignty protection across Danish waters.

Deliveries will take place throughout 2025 and 2026.

This radar upgrade will enhance Denmark's ability to monitor maritime traffic, respond to potential threats against critical infrastructure, and protect the marine environment.

VTS inclusion

The systems will also support the Vessel Traffic Service (VTS), which coordinates the safe passage of ships through major Danish straits.

Comment

Henriette Hallberg Thygesen, CEO of Terma, commented: '*This agreement reflects Terma's enduring commitment to supporting Denmark's sovereignty and security. As a Danish company with*

decades of global experience in advanced coastal surveillance, we are proud to deliver solutions that strengthen national resilience and safeguard our maritime domains. This delivery is another milestone in Terma's close relationship with the Danish Defence and contributing to the country's ability to navigate future challenges with confidence.'

AI capability

In addition to the new radar hardware, the project includes a modernized integration platform that will fuse data from all radar sites using Artificial Intelligence (AI). This capability will improve real-time situational awareness and support multi-domain operations by delivering intelligently processed data to decision-makers.

In total

The full procurement package includes:

- 32 new radars to replace existing coastal systems in Denmark.
- AI-supported radar data integration and fusion.
- Spare parts and technical documentation.
- Training and courses for technical personnel responsible for system maintenance.
- Two coastal radars for deployment in Greenland as part of the Arctic capability agreements.

Gradual replacement by end 2026

The new radar systems will be installed primarily on existing towers. Replacement will take place gradually to ensure uninterrupted operational capacity throughout the implementation phase. The entire coastal surveillance system is expected to be fully operational by the end of 2026.

Bridge navigational safety and risk of collision

UK Maritime & Coastguard Agency (MCA) Guidance

Outlining the topic

There have been several recent incidents where failing to keep a proper lookout and poor navigational watchkeeping practices have led to collisions and groundings involving fatalities, and serious injuries.

Navigation is both an art and a science, but neither can be practised effectively unless the watchkeeper is present on the bridge, well rested and able to focus their attention on the complex task of watchkeeping.

Notwithstanding the fundamental requirement for an alert, qualified and rested watchkeeper, technology has been put in place to enhance safety by aiding the watchkeeper in their duties.

Where fitted, proper use shall be made of equipment including the Bridge Navigational Watch Alarm System and zone and CPA alarms on radar and ECDIS. it is important that the equipment is used to best effect and alarms are set appropriately to support, but not replace keeping a proper lookout by all available means and proper watchkeeping practices.

Incidents are occurring because of:

- Distraction from navigational duties due to mobile phones, media devices or other non-navigation related tasks.
- Insufficient lookout or watchkeeping resource in place for the situation.
- Navigational aids, watch alarms or equipment is not used correctly or is muted.
- Watchkeepers are insufficiently rested or under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

MCA prosecutions and investigations

Case 1

A UK-flagged vessel collided with a Danish vessel resulting in the loss of two lives. A Maritime & Coastguard Agency (MCA) investigation led to the Master and Company being convicted. The investigation highlighted insufficient lookouts, distraction of watchkeepers due to the use of a personal tablet device and alcohol use in the hours prior to the watch.

Case 2

A UK-flagged vessel grounded on rocks resulting in serious injury to three passengers and a life changing injury to a member of the crew. The investigation led to the owner being convicted and highlighted a failure to maintain a proper lookout.

Case 3

A UK-fishing vessel collided with an anchored vessel causing injuries to the crew. An MCA investigation led to the skipper being convicted and found that the watchkeeper had fallen asleep prior to the collision.

Legal requirements

1. STCW Convention (1978, as amended):

- Establishes minimum standards for watchkeeping personnel on seagoing ships requires certified competence for officers and ratings assigned to watchkeeping duties and mandates continuous watchkeeping by qualified personnel on the bridge, engine room, and other critical areas.

2. STCW Code – Part A (mandatory standards):
Bridge Watchkeeping (Regulation VIII/2):

- Proper lookout must be maintained at all times using sight, hearing, and all available means.
- Watch arrangements must ensure safe navigation and compliance with COLREGs (Collision Regulations).
- The officer-in-charge must not be assigned other duties that could interfere with the watch.
- Collision Regulations (COLREGs, 1972): complements STCW by specifying the rules for maintaining a proper lookout and safe navigation practices.

3. MGN 137 (M+F) Look out during periods of darkness and restricted visibility:

- During the hours of darkness and restricted visibility, a separate and dedicated lookout must be maintained at all times.

4. Action required by crew and companies

- All seafarers and operators must ensure that they are familiar with the legal and company regulations concerning alcohol and drugs and adhere to its contents.
- Review the Safety Management System to ensure that there is clear guidance and instructions for watchkeeping practices, including the use of alarm systems, where fitted. Distractions which detract from watchkeeping safety must be avoided.

In conclusion

The regulations concerning working hours exist for both the health and wellbeing of individuals and the safety of the ship and all onboard.

Fatigue reduces the capability and safety of watchkeepers, an effect exacerbated over extended periods.

Records of working hours must be maintained accurately and Masters should be given full support from their owners/operators to ensure that the crew remain within hours of work requirements.

Bulk carrier *Achilles Bulker*

Loss of rudder off the Port of Tauranga,

NZ TAIC report: MO-2023-205

In summary

A cargo ship narrowly avoided grounding after its rudder fell off.

- The New Zealand Government's Transport Accident Investigation Commission (TAIC) report highlights the need for careful oversight and quality assurance during installation of safety-critical components and for strong international safety standards.
- The report will be of benefit to: ship owners and operators, classification societies, insurance providers, shipyards, pilots, ship crews, maritime educators, and flag state regulators.

What happened

On 24 July 2023, the cargo ship *Achilles Bulker*, fully loaded and under pilotage, was outbound from Tauranga.

Achilles Bulker of 19,891 gt was a 177-metre bulk carrier built in 2003 by Kanda Shipbuilding in Japan and registered in Panama. The ship was owned by SE Apex Corporation (Taiwan) and operated by Sincere Industrial Corporation's marine division (Sincere Marine).

The ship was originally named *Irene Oldendorff* and had been built for Evermore

Marine Corporation of Taiwan. In 2009 the name of the ship was changed to *Apex Bulker*. The ship was later purchased in 2012 by its current registered owner SE Apex Corporation (Taiwan) – leading to the ship's name being changed to *Achilles Bulker*. Sincere Marine operated the ship throughout its commercial history.

SE Apex Corporation was owned by Sesoda Steamship Corporation, a holding company for 15fifteen companies. Each company owned a bulk carrier.

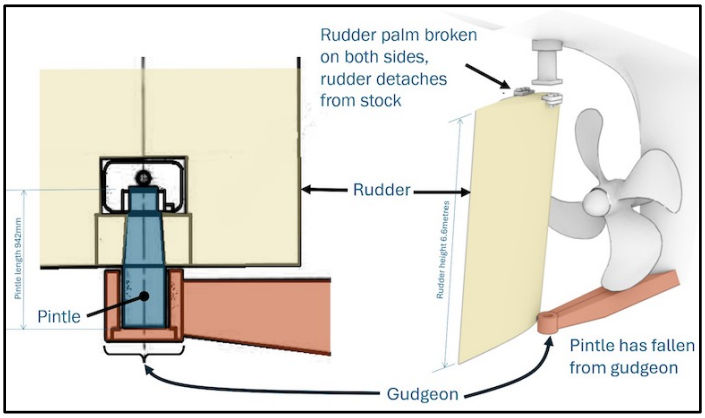
TAIC findings

The ship deviated from the centre of the channel shortly after clearing the harbour entrance. As the crew and onboard pilots tried to steer it back on course, the ship's rudder broke off. With steering impossible, the vessel drifted towards shallow water.

Grounding was averted thanks to swift coordinated action by the pilots and crew successfully deploying both anchors.

Why it happened

Ineffective maintenance of the rudder pintle. Fixed into the base of the rudder assembly was a heavy hinge pin (pintle), which could rotate freely in a matching socket (gudgeon), enabling the rudder to turn.



The ship's rudder's main components.
Image Copyright © 2025 Transport Accident Investigation Commission.

During 2021 dry-dock maintenance, the pintle was removed and refitted, but the securing parts installed

had weak, porous welds. After the ship returned to service, those welds broke under vibration.

The pintle dropped out, induced undesigned rudder movement. With its securing parts broken, the nut that retained the pintle as part of the rudder assembly unwound itself. Sometime before the incident off Tauranga, the pintle dropped unnoticed from its casting and sank.

Without a pintle, the bottom of the rudder increasingly moved side to side and fore and aft. This exerted sideways forces beyond the designed strength of the coupling plate (palm) at the top that joined the rudder to the solid shaft (stock) that connected to the ship's internal steering mechanism.

Fatigue cracks grew until the rudder fell off. The rudder palm developed fatigue cracks that grew steadily until the palm fractured completely on both sides of the rudder stock, and the whole rudder blade dropped off.

Safety issue and recommendations

The total rudder loss occurred because the rudder system experienced damaging forces, the result of insufficient quality assurance during reinstallation of the pintle. Pintles are critical components of steering systems and must be installed with precise fit and robust quality control.

In principle, owners and operators of ships must maintain oversight of critical system repairs, including during shipyard work.

TAIC recommends that:

- The shipyard that did the dry dock work on this ship implement robust quality assurance procedures for rudder pintle installation. (TAIC has notified the Maritime Safety Administration of China of this recommendation).
- Maritime NZ work with the IMO to promote enhanced global standards for quality assurance of rudder systems during installation, maintenance, and repairs.

The Final Report MO-2023-205

To download the Final Report MO-2023-205 from the TAIC website readers are invited to use the link here: https://tinyurl.com/3548xcky

TAIC's mantra

No repeat accidents – ever!

The principal purpose of the Transport Accident Investigation Commission is to determine the circumstances and causes of aviation, marine, and rail accidents and incidents with a view to avoiding similar occurrences in the future, rather than to ascribe blame to any person.

TAIC opens an inquiry when it believes the reported circumstances of an accident or incident have – or are likely to have – significant implications for transport safety, or when the inquiry may allow the Commission to make findings or recommendations to improve transport safety.

Midsummer miscellany – of ships and men

By Michael Grey, IFSMA Honorary Member

It must be summer, when there is the annual alarm in the UK about the potential catastrophe from the detonation of 1400 tonnes of high explosives sitting in the mouldering holds of the Liberty ship Richard Montgomery. They have rested there inoffensively since the ship dragged her anchor and grounded in the lower Thames in 1944, but always available for a regular article explaining how, following any detonation, a wall of water will sweep up the Thames, windows will be shattered from the Medway to Mersea Island and Southend on Sea will be devastated. Only the degree and detail of the hyperbole varies.

It was a good story half a century ago, when ships using the old Edinburgh Channel used to stop their engines and coast past the wreck, lest their vibrations ignite Armageddon. It remains a reliable seasonal pot-boiler on a slack day in the newsroom, when the crack correspondents are on holiday. It can be relied upon for a querulous question in the House when a Member from a threatened constituency wishes to voice concern. This year, the state of the ship's rusty masts was a matter of anxiety. Salvage, which was deemed pointless and hazardous in 1945, would seem to be unlikely today, although some sort of cautious intervention is being talked about.

Wartime wrecks, from both world wars in the 20th century increasingly demonstrate problems that have never entirely gone away. Those from the first great conflagration, the majority of which were coal fired, are less of a concern, but salvors are increasingly having to deal with oil pollution seeping from the rusty tanks of ships sunk in WWII. Cablers and wind turbine planters have also to beware of munitions from those times. The sheer capability of the modern salvor, who has been able to deal with oil leaks from wrecks at extraordinary depths, emboldens authorities, which in an earlier era would have merely concentrated on clean up. Now they will demand that something more dramatic is done, and somebody is traced down the decades to pay for it. And while thinking of highly capable salvors, they did not come much better than Nan Halfweeg, a famous salvage master from the great Dutch company Wijsmuller, whose death was announced recently, at the age of 87.

He achieved heroic status in a salvage operation, which began on Christmas day 1973, when the fully laden and brand new Capesize Ellwood Mead ran aground on the dreaded Les Grunes reef, off the storm-lashed coast of Guernsey. With a vast amount of bottom damage and nearly 123,000 tons of iron ore in her holds, it seemed a forlorn hope that Wijsmuller would succeed, on a reef that was reputed to be a ships' graveyard. There seemed every likelihood that the huge ship would break up in the winter storms. But over the next couple of months, living aboard the

wreck. Halweeg and his team managed, using submersible slurry pumps and a great deal of ingenuity, to sufficiently lighten the vessel and pressurise the holds to enable her to be towed off and taken to Rotterdam.

There, the full magnitude of the damage was established and the ship declared a CTL. She seemed only fit for scrap, but an enterprising Greek owner saw potential and had the ship repaired. Christened Good Leader, (showing commendable economy in painting her new name,) she had a long and useful career, as indeed did Captain Halfweeg. There was a terrifying photograph taken by the salvors from the stricken vessel's bridge at the height of a January storm, with huge waves washing over the decks, which demonstrated very effectively the difficulties they faced in this amazing salvage. So much for famous men.

But another ship in the news this month was the old cruise ship Astoria, which was finally towed away to be recycled in Belgium after a life that had begun as far back as 1948. Built as Swedish-Amerika's ice-strengthened Atlantic liner Stockholm, she achieved notoriety in 1956 when she collided with the elegant Italian Andrea Doria in fog off the Nantucket light. 51 people lost their lives and the Italian ship, mortally wounded in the 19 knot collision, eventually sank.

On New York's doorstep, there was huge publicity, the legal proceedings over which of the two radar-equipped ships was responsible, were to last for years, but the "radar-assisted" collision led to mandatory radar training for deck officers. My generation was among the first to endure this. Stockholm had her reinforced bow repaired and under a variety of names became a cruise "classic." Lasting for 77 years, they had clearly built the ancient Astoria well.

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Michael Grey is former editor of Lloyd's List.

GPS interference in geopolitical conflict zones

Gard introduction

In an increasingly connected world, maritime navigation has become heavily reliant on the Global Positioning System (GPS). This omnipresent technology provides pinpoint accuracy for vessels. However, a growing threat is also emerging - GPS interference and disruption.

Far from being a theoretical concern, recent incidents in geopolitical conflict zones have underscored the very real and immediate dangers posed by compromised global navigational satellite systems (GNSS).

Building on claims Gard has handled stemming from GNSS disruption in such regions, this article looks at the growing problem of GNSS interference at sea, exploring its manifestations, the risks it poses to maritime safety, and the need for countermeasures.

There are several Global Navigation Satellite Systems (GNSS) in operation, including China's BeiDou (BDS), Europe's Galileo, Russia's GLONASS, the USA's GPS, India's IRNSS, and Japan's QZSS. Due to US GPS's extensive history, established infrastructure, and widespread application, this article will focus on GPS disruption.

Case Studies on the multifaceted impacts of GPS disruption in conflict zones

Case study 1

The vessel experienced a loss of GPS signal in the Red Sea and consequently relied on the Estimated Position (EP) function of its ECDIS for navigation towards the port. Hours later, the crew observed an unusual sea surface coloration, which they mistakenly believed was seaweed. The vessel ran aground on corals, at a speed of 11.3 knots, incurring substantial damage to its bottom plating, double bottom ballast tanks, and the coral reef. To ascertain the exact grounding site, the ISM Manager contacted the Flag State, who by using LRIT confirmed the vessel's position was more than 40 nautical miles away from the estimated position displayed on the ECDIS.

Note: Gard handled another similar case involving a vessel approaching an Eastern Mediterranean port, which was also influenced by geopolitical tensions.

Case study 2

While preparing to depart a port in the Red Sea, after cargo operations, the vessel experienced severe GPS interference, showing its position inland in a desert. Other nearby vessels were similarly affected by GPS disruption. The master deemed it unsafe to depart without a functional GPS. The interference lasted over a week, delaying the vessel's departure and leading to a lengthy dispute between the owners and charterers.

These case studies collectively highlight several key points. Firstly, they illustrate that GPS interference is a real and present danger, particularly in regions of geopolitical tension, rendering primary navigation systems unreliable. Secondly, these disruptions force seafarers to make critical 'go/no-go' decisions, with contrasting choices and outcomes observed in the two cases. Thirdly, the first case tragically underscores the dangers of trusting an Estimated Position (EP) derived from ECDIS when underlying GPS data is compromised, and no conspicuous objects are in the vicinity for visual cross-referencing. Finally, the successful use of LRIT in the first incident, operating on a different satellite communication frequency than GPS, emphasizes the vital role of tracking systems other than GPS in confirming the vessel's actual location. We will now elaborate on some of these factors.

GPS interference

Typical causes of GPS signal interference

GPS disruptions are caused by a mixture of factors: natural events like solar flares, equipment problems such as receiver or antenna malfunctions, and, increasingly, deliberate interference. Deliberate interference has become a feature of modern conflict and geopolitical tensions. In areas experiencing conflict, strategic rivalry, or heightened tensions, States are actively using GPS interference for reasons such as –

- Denying adversaries access to crucial positioning data;
- Protecting critical infrastructure from potential attacks; and
- Obscuring military movements.

These deliberate operations frequently impact civilian activities, particularly maritime navigation in nearby sea lanes. Recent instances where GPS interference served as a defensive measure against drone and missile threats targeting critical infrastructure include the Israeli coast and the Red Sea during the Israel-Hamas conflict as well as the Persian Gulf and Arabian Gulf

GPS jamming vs. spoofing

Two terms often used interchangeably but with distinct meanings are GPS jamming and GPS spoofing. GPS jamming is the act of blocking or interfering with legitimate GPS signals by overwhelming them with stronger, unauthorized radio signals. Think of it as trying to have a conversation in a very noisy room – the noise makes it impossible to hear what the other person is saying. GPS spoofing is the act of transmitting false GPS signals designed to deceive a receiver into calculating an incorrect position, velocity, or time. Instead of blocking the signal, a spoofer imitates a legitimate GPS signal, making the vessel's receiver believe it's real. The GPS display will show a position, but it will be inaccurate, potentially by a significant margin. Derived speed and course information will also be incorrect. Below is a summary of key differences:

Feature	GPS jamming	GPS spoofing
Effect	Blocks or denies GPS signals	Deceives with false GPS signals
Result	Loss of GPS signal/No position fix	Incorrect, but seemingly valid, position fix
Indication	'No Fix,' 'Acquiring Satellites'	Illogical position shifts mismatch with other aids

GPS disruption: alarms and indications - Recognizing the signs of GPS disruption

Mariners must maintain heightened attention and awareness for signs of GPS disruption, as numerous onboard systems — including ECDIS, Radar/ARPA, Gyro compass, course recorder, and the autopilot — are heavily reliant on the GPS feed and will likely be impacted by any disruption. Depending on whether the disruption is caused by jamming or spoofing, the tell-tale signs can vary from clear audible or visual alarms to no alarms at all. While specific indications for GPS disruption can vary between equipment and manufacturers, examples shared by Anglo-Eastern's Maritime Training Center, Delhi, India, highlight key signs mariners can watch out for.

When GPS jamming occurs, mariners may observe unusually high HDOP values, e.g., greater than '4' indicating unreliable accuracy, RAIM alerts entering caution or unsafe modes, or elevated Signal-to-Noise Ratio (SNR) values. On ECDIS, jamming can trigger sensor failure alarms, potentially leading to a switch to backup sensors or dead reckoning and may even freeze the chart display if no secondary source is defined. Conversely, spoofing presents a more deceptive threat as the GPS receiver might report an erroneous but seemingly valid position, often without RAIM detection. In such spoofing scenarios, ECDIS can display incorrect positions, and radar/ARPA systems, when GPS-fed, will show erroneous data, while gyro compasses may enter an alarm state if relying on GPS for drift stabilization. It's important to note that a comprehensive list of every possible indication across all bridge equipment is beyond the scope of this discussion.

Alarm fatigue and sensory overload

A significant challenge during GPS signal loss is alarm fatigue. The disruption or loss of GPS signal often triggers numerous simultaneous alarms across the bridge, leading to a sensory overload that can be both disconcerting and distracting for the crew. Effectively managing these alarms and prioritizing critical information is essential to maintain situational awareness and ensure safe navigation.

Beyond Alarms: Covert GPS Failures

There are also situations where no alarms are triggered, making detection much harder. For example, the Australian Transport Safety Bureau reviewed a near-grounding incident involving a vessel navigating the Great Barrier Reef. In this case, a malfunctioning GPS unit (due to an antenna fault) fed incorrect positional data to the ECDIS, radars, and other bridge equipment. Because the ship's position wasn't being monitored through other means and no alarms were activated, the inaccurate GPS data and the vessel's deviation from its planned course went unnoticed by the crew, pilot, and even Vessel Traffic Services (VTS). While not linked to jamming or spoofing, such cases underscore the dangers of unaddressed GPS anomalies, whether from technical faults or external interference. They highlight the inherent risks of relying solely on a single source of navigational data, even when it appears functional, and emphasize the importance of crew training in recognizing and responding to these events.

Responding to GPS disruption - Technical mitigating measures

For detailed guidance on effective mitigating measures in such scenarios, owners and the bridge watchkeepers are encouraged to refer to Intertanko's 'Jamming and Spoofing of Global Navigation Satellite Systems'. This comprehensive resource outlines key strategies such as switching to a secondary receiver different from GPS (if available), employing parallel indexing, utilizing RADAR overlay on ECDIS, and manual position plotting on ECDIS. It's crucial to emphasize that once a GPS interference alarm is triggered, mariners must identify its root cause instead of simply silencing or deactivating it.

Regarding manual position plotting, the varying levels of user-friendliness of ECDIS remains a significant concern. As noted by Anglo-Eastern's Maritime Training Center, Delhi, India, some units allow a manual position fix in just three clicks, while others demand up to thirteen; a difference that can foster negative user biases and deter effective equipment utilization. It is crucial to note that while manual position plotting by range and bearing is possible near conspicuous landmarks, it may not be feasible when a vessel is far from land, navigating a flat coastline, or lacks discernible objects.

Operational decisions and voyage continuation

Beyond the technical measures, vital operational decisions become critical, such as:

- reducing speed, which not only allows more time for assessment but also significantly lessens potential damage during an incident like grounding,
- increasing bridge manning, and
- making informed decisions on whether to proceed with the voyage.

This critical go/no-go decision should be guided by a comprehensive set of considerations, ideally integrated into the vessel's GPS disruption response plan. Such factors include:

- the complexity of the passage,
- room to manoeuvre,
- the availability and capability of pilots or local tugs for assistance,
- the reliability of buoys and fairway markings,
- the presence of safe anchoring points along the route,
- the density of traffic,
- effectiveness of Vessel Traffic Service (VTS) management,
- visibility, and
- the geographic extent of the GPS disruption.

Contractual concerns

As our second case study above illustrates, contractual disputes can readily arise between owners and charterers due to GNSS disruption. The simple fact is that GNSS disruptions will often have an adverse impact on the operation of a vessel. In some cases, forcing speed reductions, causing erroneous deviations from the intended route, or even necessitating the interruption/suspension of the voyage until navigation becomes safe again. In all these scenarios, there will be a loss of time, and potentially significant commercial losses, such as a vessel arriving outside of a laycan or missing a space in the berthing line-up. More serious claims can also emerge, especially if the vessel runs aground, as highlighted in our first case study.

Vessels, of course, do not navigate by GPS alone; and while GPS has undoubtedly enhanced navigation safety, ships successfully sailed without it for hundreds of years. Therefore, a primary consideration is whether a disruption to GPS signals would, in fact, entitle a Master to change speed, course, or intentions. The answer, as explained, is that such actions can certainly be justified. The Master holds an overriding duty to ensure the safety of the crew, cargo, the environment, and the ship itself, all of which may necessitate the adjustment of course plans or voyage suspension. Each case must of course depend on its facts, but if the Master reasonably adjusts speed or suspends a passage because conditions render navigation unsafe without reliable access to GPS, the vessel will typically remain on hire, and the suspension would not be considered a breach of contractual service.

The critical question in such cases is whether the Master's decision to reduce speed, suspend passage, or deviate was genuinely justified by the circumstances, or should he have proceeded as the charterers ordered, despite the GPS disruption? This hinges on the specific facts, including passage complexity, availability of anchorage areas, traffic density, visibility, proximity to hazards, and the presence of clear geographic markers for position fixes. While arbitrators may have some sympathy for Masters tasked with operating large vessels without a key navigational tool, they will also expect Masters to be capable of navigating effectively using alternative methods where prevailing conditions permit. This assessment will be highly dependent on the unique details of each incident.

Insurance implications

There is no explicit exclusion in the International Group Poolable Club cover for losses due to cyber risks providing losses fall within the relevant Club Rules. It is common for Marine risk policies to incorporate Cyber Exclusions, e.g. LMA5403 (Marine Cyber Endorsement) or Clause 380 (Institute Cyber Attack Exclusion Clause). These exclusions will typically exclude Malicious Cyber-attacks. However, due to a lack of clear legal precedent, determining if GNSS interference damage is caught by Cyber Exclusions will be highly dependent on the unique facts of each individual case.

For any cover-related queries, clients are advised to reach out to Gard underwriters.

Key recommendations - Preparedness

Ensure mariners are thoroughly trained in detecting GNSS disruption, understand alarm triggers, and execute appropriate responses. It is worth noting that there have been proposals to the IMO for a new competence on navigating in a GNSS impacted

environment, for example by Intertanko (ref. HTW10/6/6, 2023).

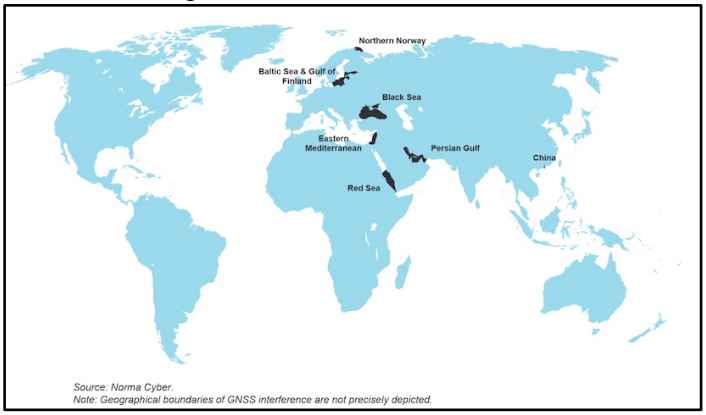
It is important for owners and managers to consult equipment manufacturers for advice regarding indications on their equipment in the event of GPS disruption.

Develop and implement clear, concise and practical procedures for mariners to follow during GNSS disruptions. These procedures should also offer guidance on voyage go/no-go decisions, and the necessary considerations. It is crucial to recognize that loss of or manipulation of position data would also form part of vessel's cyber security and risk management.

Bolstering onboard systems and resilience

Consider equipping vessels with secondary satellite receivers, other than GPS, that are recognized by the IMO as part of the Worldwide Radio Navigation System for both ocean waters and harbour approaches. Ensure all such equipment is reflected in relevant ships' certificates. Additionally, owners can also consider backup systems like eLORAN, acknowledging their limited global coverage.

As illustrated in the map below, a growing number of regions globally have experienced GNSS interference throughout 2025, highlighting the widespread nature of this challenge.



Beyond state actors, criminals are increasingly using GPS jammers for their illicit activities. These devices are employed to disable tracking systems on trucks, containers, and vessels, particularly in and around ports and logistics hubs, thereby facilitating theft and other crimes. This trend underscores the evolving tactics of organized crime groups in the face of widespread GPS tracking.

Consideration can be given to equip vessels with counter-jamming solutions such as receiver filtering, IMUs, CRPAs, and multi-frequency GNSS. For spoofing protection, owners should ensure their equipment actively monitors GNSS Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and incorporates anti-spoofing features. The implementation of CRPA antennas or centralized GNSS data distribution can also be explored, based on vessel configuration and budget, as has also been recommended in Intertanko's 'Jamming and Spoofing of Global Navigation Satellite Systems'.

Communication, reporting, and operational decisions

Making a critical go/no-go decision should be guided by a comprehensive set of considerations, ideally integrated into the vessel's GPS disruption response plan.

Reporting* of all suspected GNSS disruptions to relevant authorities and organizations to aid wider situational awareness and warnings.

Proactive Owner-Charterer dialogue if the vessel is heading towards a region when GNSS disruption can be experienced.

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We would like to thank Capt. Naveen Sharma at Anglo-Eastern's Maritime Training Centre (AEMTC), Delhi, India and Arne Asplem of Norma Cyber for their assistance in this insight.

*Since 2020, Gard has been a member of NORMA Cyber, a non-profit cyber security service company established by Norwegian shipowners and supported by the Norwegian Coastal Administration in their role as sectorial response function for cybersecurity within the Norwegian maritime sector. NORMA Cyber welcomes all voluntary reporting of cyber incidents from Gard's Members and will act as an advisory body to Gard when needed during an incident and crisis management, as well as contribute to warnings and reports.

Editorial Note:

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It appears in this edition of the IFSMA Newsletter by kind permission of Gard.

Singapore International Safety@Sea Week 2025

Singapore strengthens maritime safety with multi-agency chemical spill exercise and safety forums at International Safety@Sea Week 2025

The Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore (MPA) organised the twelfth edition of the Safety@Sea Week, with this year's event being the international edition. It took place from 15 to 18 July 2025.

Themed ***The Future of Maritime Safety: Navigating the Next Frontier***, the annual event brought together local and international maritime experts, and the maritime community to promote awareness and facilitate discussions on maritime safety.

Facing increasingly complex global challenges

Speaking at the opening on 15 July Mr Murali Pillai, Senior Minister of State, Ministry of Law and Ministry of Transport, said that the maritime sector is facing

increasingly complex global challenges, including heightened geopolitical tensions, climate change, and rapid transformation in digitalisation and decarbonisation.

Illustration per www.safetyatseaweek.gov.sg
MPA Singapore ©

He highlighted that Singapore can tackle these challenges by (i) equipping its workforce for future challenges, (ii) harnessing collective expertise through close collaborations and partnerships, and (iii) drawing upon technology and innovation to augment Singapore's capabilities.

IMO S-G's address

In his keynote address, Mr Arsenio Dominguez, Secretary-General of the IMO underscored the need for robust safety frameworks and regulations as the maritime landscape evolves. He cited Maritime Autonomous Surface Ships and new ship designs and systems using sustainable marine fuels as examples of how the maritime sector is transforming and outlined IMO's priorities in those areas. Mr Dominguez also highlighted the importance of government-industry collaboration and initiatives such as the Safety@Sea Singapore Campaign to foster a safety-first culture at sea.

Maritime safety; lessons learned; the human element

This year's conference features nineteen speakers across three plenaries. Discussions focussed on issues shaping the future of maritime safety, including lessons learned from past incidents, and the human element in ensuring safety as the industry transforms.

A new Safety@Sea Community Conversations event brought together representatives from shipping companies, regional ferry operators, harbour craft operators and terminal operators to share their experiences and efforts in fostering a safety culture in their organisations.

Promoting safety awareness and best practices

Over 1,800 participants from more than 40 countries participated in the week's sessions. Other highlights include the Responders Plus Programme (RPP) Maritime Workshop jointly organised by MPA and the Singapore Civil Defence Force, and two safety forums organised by the MPA-Harbour Craft and MPA-Pleasure Craft Safety Work Groups to promote safety awareness and best practices within the local maritime community. Details of the events are still available here: www.safetyatseaweek.gov.sg

Chemical spill exercise

As part of the International Safety@Sea Week, MPA also conducted a multi-agency chemical spill exercise to strengthen Singapore's operational readiness.

Conducted off Singapore's southern coast, the exercise involved eleven vessels and over 150 personnel from more than ten government agencies and industry partners. Mr Murali, Mr Dominguez and Secretary-General, International Organization for Marine Aids to Navigation, Mr Francis Zachariae, observed the exercise.

A methanol spill simulation

The exercise simulated a methanol spill from a collision involving a methanol carrying tanker, triggering a multi-agency response. This included coordinated efforts for spill containment and the evacuation of injured crew. A range of drone-enabled technologies was trialled during the exercise, including 3D imaging to assess vessel damage and a water curtain misting system to limit the spread of chemical plumes.

Deployment of uncrewed surface vessel

An Uncrewed Surface Vehicle was also deployed to monitor air quality, reducing the need for responders to enter hazardous zones to perform such monitoring. The Maritime Digital Twin and chemical plume modelling tools were used to enhance situational awareness and support decision-making throughout the exercise.

This exercise was part of MPA's broader preparations for methanol bunkering and provided a valuable opportunity for agencies and industry partners to better understand the safety and operational challenges, and potential solutions, in handling alternative fuels.

Issue of methanol bunker supplier licences

Following an open call in March 2025, MPA has received thirteen applications for methanol bunker supplier licences, reflecting strong industry interest in supplying methanol on a commercial scale in Singapore.

MPA is evaluating the applications and targets to issue the licences in Q4 2025, which will cover the period from 1 January 2026 to 31 December 2030.

Advancing safety with shore-to-ship drone trials

MPA is also enhancing safety across other areas of port operations. In collaboration with Skyports Drone Services, TFG Marine and CBS Ventures, MPA and the partners will complete Singapore's first shore-to-ship drone trials for delivery and retrieval operations from bunker tankers later this week.

Use of drones reduces reliance on harbour craft for such operations, improving efficiency while reducing pollution and congestion. It also minimises safety risks by removing the need for crew to handle and transfer heavy items between the ship and shore using harbour craft.

Safety considerations, including the management of electro-static discharge risks during the drone operations, are carefully reviewed in preparation for the trials.

Developing safety protocols

Findings from these trials will inform the development of safety protocols and an operational framework to support the phased implementation of this new maritime service.

Enhancing situational awareness with smart buoys to strengthen navigational safety

To enhance navigational safety, MPA will progressively install smart buoys in Singapore's waterways from 2026 to replace selected existing buoys.

These next generation buoys will be equipped with environmental sensors and communication systems to transmit real-time data, such as currents and waves, to MPA. This will enhance situational awareness, support dynamic traffic management, and enable more timely and informed decision-making, strengthening navigational safety.

MPA Safety@Sea Awards

At the opening event on 15 July Mr Ang Wee Keong, Chief Executive of MPA, also presented the MPA Safety@Sea Awards to six companies for their outstanding contributions to search and rescue efforts in 2024, and to one company for its innovative solutions and training to enhance safety.

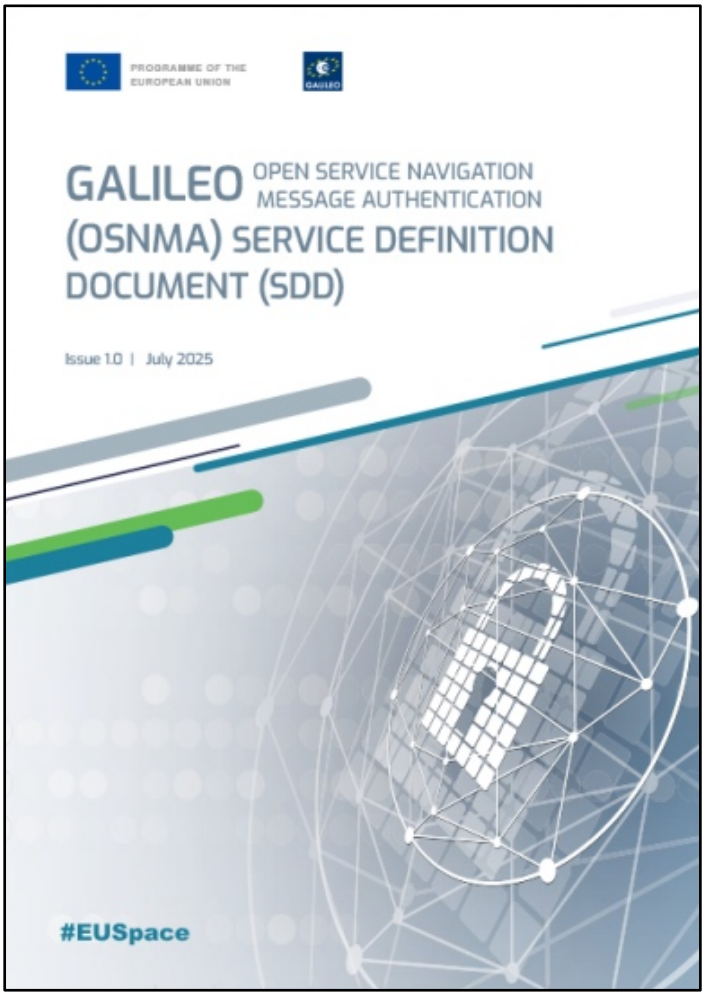
In addition, Letters of Commendation were issued to three companies to recognise their efforts in promoting safety at sea.

Galileo Open Service Navigation Message Authentication

Another layer of protection against GNSS interference

The recently launched Galileo OSNMA, a data authentication function, provides more robust Position, Velocity and Time information to Galileo Open Service users. This was made freely accessible worldwide since the end of July.

GNSS interference is on the rise, with spoofing signals every day, providing unreliable or even fake positioning information.



When spoofing tricks a smartphone or vehicle navigation system into believing it is metres, if not kilometres, away from its actual location, it is a nuisance. When it targets critical applications in sectors such as transportation, finance or telecommunications, it can lead to important service disruptions with associated economic losses. In sectors such as aviation or maritime, this can lead to serious safety risks.

An added layer of protection

The Galileo Open Service Navigation Message Authentication, or OSNMA, is a new authentication mechanism that lets Galileo Open Service users verify the authenticity of their GNSS information.

To quote EUSPA Executive Director Rodrigo da Costa: '*With OSNMA, we increase assurance that the data users receive is indeed coming from Galileo and has not been modified in any way*.'

While the OSNMA does increase the ability to detect spoofing events, it does not prevent their occurrence. Nor does it protect against jamming.

da Costa added: '*Nonetheless, by amplifying the overall robustness and resilience of the Galileo Open Service, this added layer of protection helps keep users one step ahead of hackers*.'

Galileo is the first GNSS system to offer protection from spoofing attacks as part of its Open Service worldwide. The OSNMA declaration of service follows an extensive testing phase where GNSS manufacturers, integrators and application developers utilised the Signal in Space (SiS) to assess the service's performance across a range of scenarios and use cases.

Giving Galileo signals a unique digital signature

An integral function of the Galileo Open Service, OSNMA, provides data authentication to all enabled receivers. Specifically, the OSNMA authenticates data for geolocation information from the Open Service through the Navigation Message (I/NAV) broadcast on the E1-B signal component. This is realised by transmitting authentication-specific data in the previously reserved fields of the E1 I/NAV message.

By using these previously reserved fields, OSNMA does not introduce any overlay to the system; thus, the OS navigation performance remains untouched.

When OSNMA-enabled receivers receive the signals, they can decode the cryptographic data and, thanks to a previously downloaded public key, verify the authenticity of the position and time data.

Because the OSNMA is transmitted in the Galileo Open Service signal, which is already used in most devices, receivers only need to implement the protocol and download the certified public keys from the European GNSS Service Centre (GSC) website. OSNMA relies as well on the implementation of a trusted time source to start up the protocol, accurate to at least five minutes, and a dedicated logic on the receiver side to guarantee the end-to-end authentication process. The service does not require the storage and management of secret keys on the user side, which facilitates the adoption in different communities. All details can be found in the OSNMA Receiver Guidelines*.

The Galileo OSNMA delivers

OSNMA also makes Galileo signals unpredictable, thereby making them difficult to replay. This, combined with basic consistency checks in the receiver and the authentication service in general, makes spoofing an OSNMA-enabled receiver considerably more challenging.

For those segments that rely on accurate positioning information – automotive, timing and synchronisation, professional, maritime, aviation, drones – this is nothing short of a game-changer. Furthermore, and in the context of the frequent spoofing events experienced in recent years, Galileo OSNMA is now being included in the standards for civil aviation receivers, the first step for its adoption by the civil aviation community.

da Costa concluded by saying: '*Stakeholders have clearly articulated the need for more robust GNSS services. The Galileo OSNMA delivers this robustness and, in doing so, provides enhanced security in positioning and timing solutions*.'

Philippe Bertrand, EU Space Security Accreditation Chair, reflected: '*The OSNMA Initial Service declaration has been authorised by the EU Space SAB following independent security checks and cooperation with the Programme to define risk mitigation measures. The cooperation between the SAB, the Commission and EUSPA was instrumental to getting through this very important milestone*."

Christoph Kautz, Director for Satellite Navigation and Earth Observation, at DG DEFIS, European Commission commented, in summary: '*With this new capability, the EU is delivering on its commitment to provide secure, reliable space infrastructure that supports critical sectors and protects users across the globe.*'

The OSNMA will be provided by EUSPA, which serves as the Galileo service provider.

About Galileo

Galileo, the EU's Global Navigation Satellite System (GNSS), provides improved navigation, positioning and timing information. More than four billion users are already benefitting from Galileo.

The Galileo Programme is owned by the EU.

The European Commission, as the Programme Manager, oversees the implementation of all activities.

The European Union Agency for the Space Programme (EUSPA) is responsible for the operational management of the services, ensuring that they are delivered with the defined performance and without interruption.

Galileo's system design and system evolution are entrusted by EUSPA to ESA.

Editorial note:
The text above is based on material kindly provided by the European Union Agency for the Space Programme (EUSPA)

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* https://tinyurl.com/4a4fht9w

Shipowner's order for wind-powered propulsion

On 22 July from Portsmouth BAR Technologies confirmed a landmark order for its WindWings® propulsion system to be installed on two new LR2 dual-fuel tankers, marking one of the first confirmed large-scale wind propulsion deployments on this critical vessel class.

Growing industry momentum

It is understood that the decision builds on the successful integration of WindWings® aboard the UML-operated *Brands Hatch*, demonstrating growing industry momentum behind wind as a core alternative fuel in the maritime decarbonisation transition.

These new 250-metre loa tankers, *Suzuka* and *Long Beach*, will each be equipped with two 37.5m WindWings®, delivering substantial reductions in fuel consumption and emissions. The vessels are being designed by SDARI and constructed by Xiamen Shipbuilding Industry (XSI), with steel cutting confirmed for November 2025 and delivery scheduled for Q1 2027.

Illustration per www.imageline.co.uk with grateful thanks. Image Line ©

John Cooper, CEO of BAR Technologies, emphasised: '*Fitting WindWings® to tankers of this type breaks new ground for wind propulsion. It proves the technology can scale and slot alongside dual-fuel systems as a serious, practical tool for decarbonising even the most energy-intensive vessel types. Wind is no longer an experiment or a future option; it's a proven fuel source that's ready to deliver real impact today*.'

Marshall Islands flagged

Flagged under the Marshall Islands and classed by Bureau Veritas Marine & Offshore, the vessels underscore WindWings®' compliance with the most rigorous international safety and performance requirements.

Simon Bonnett, Deputy Commissioner of Maritime Affairs, Republic of the Marshall Islands Maritime Administrator, commented: '*The Marshall Islands Registry has a long relationship with UML and is excited to be the choice of flag for these vessels. As the world's leading registry for quality, compliance, and technical support regarding innovative technologies, this decision to flag further highlights UML's commitment to responsible and innovative fleet development*.'

Matthieu de Tugny, Executive Vice President, Bureau Veritas Marine & Offshore, added: '*Safety is of vital importance when it comes to integrating new technologies on ships. Bureau Veritas' classification framework helps ensure that these vessels will meet the highest requirements for structural integrity, safety, and sustainable design, demonstrating that next-generation propulsion systems, including WindWings®, are ready for rigorous global deployment*.'

A step change

This LR2 deployment is particularly significant as these tankers are widely used for transporting refined petroleum and chemicals globally. Integrating wind propulsion into such a high-utilisation vessel class signals a step change, moving WindWings® from innovation to infrastructure.

Shougang Shi, Sales Director, CM Energy Tech, confirmed: '*This project marks an important step in scaling wind propulsion through advanced manufacturing and we are proud to support one of the first confirmed large-scale deployments on LR2 dual fuel tankers, a critical vessel class in global shipping.*

'*By combining BAR Technologies' aerodynamic design expertise with CM Energy Tech's production capabilities, we are delivering a high-precision, reliable WindWings® system optimised for real-world commercial use. As demand grows, this partnership ensures the technology can be produced and deployed at scale*.'

Strong operational results

This latest order follows strong operational results from *Brands Hatch,* where the WindWings® installation, commissioning, and early performance exceeded expectations. That vessel now stands as a compelling case study in real-world viability.

Growing confidence in wind propulsion

Choosing to apply WindWings® to a second, different vessel class demonstrates growing confidence in wind propulsion, a free-at-source alternative fuel, as a scalable and commercially sound component of future-ready ship design.

The two 37.5m WindWings® units will deliver an average of three tonnes of daily fuel savings, translating to annual CO_2 reductions of around 2300 tonnes per tanker, equivalent to removing over 500 conventionally powered passenger cars from the road.

These newbuilds are expected to enter service ahead of the IMO's 2030 emissions reduction targets, offering early compliance benefits and long-term operational efficiencies.

Amendments to the International Code for the Safe Carriage of Grain in Bulk

Amendments to the International Code for the Safe Carriage of Grain in Bulk (otherwise known as the Grain Code) have been adopted by IMO Resolution MSC.552(108). These amendments introduce requirements and guidance for a new filling type not covered by the existing code.

Our attention has been drawn to these amendments by a website news item at classification society DNV.

Broad interest

This news is relevant to shipowners and managers of bulk carriers as well as naval architects, shipyards, suppliers and flag states.

Currently, the Grain Code offers three official loading patterns for grain in each cargo hold:

- Full hold, trimmed ends.
- Full hold, untrimmed ends.
- Partly filled hold.

For a partly filled hold, the grain surface is assumed to be 'trimmed' to an approximate even surface at any loading level, also when the hold is near full.

This implies that the space underneath the deck, fore and aft of the hatch, so called 'ends', must also be trimmed for levels inside the hatch perimeter. As a result, the grain must be manually shuffled up under the end girders to reduce the void.

Since trimming the ends is labour-intensive, it is not always carried out. When trimming is omitted in partly filled holds, the actual voids in the ends are larger than those assumed by following the current calculation method. As a result, the actual grain shifting moment will be larger than the calculated value.

What is new?

To address this, a fourth permissible loading pattern has been introduced to the new Grain Code amendments:

This means that if the final filling level of a cargo hold is inside the perimeters of the hatch coaming, measured from the lower level of the hatch end beams and upwards, the ends do not need to be trimmed. The grain surface shall form a natural slope from either the hatch end beam or from the feeding holes in the end girder, depending on the filling height (a 30-degree slope is assumed in the calculations).

Further information

For more material on this important topic including drawings showing loading patterns of partly filled holds readers are invited to use the DNV link here: https://tinyurl.com/2hudd22w

IMO Resolution MSC 552 (108) effective from 1 July 2025 is to be found in pdf form here: https://tinyurl.com/bddvtfcr

Towage and 'certificates of safe delivery'

Gard announced on 30 July that it is aware of an increasing tendency for tug operators to furnish vessels with a 'certificate of safe delivery' upon completion of certain kinds of towage services. A signature from the Master is requested and often obtained.

This generally applies to services provided when the vessel encounters some kind of problem in port, with harbour tugs already in place or requested to attend via agents.

Gard has indicated that it advises shipowners against signing such a certificate. It is not considered a legal requirement and can have negative consequences.

The underlying motivation of tug operators in presenting such a certificate may be to fix jurisdiction for a potential common law claim for salvage to England, rather than the natural jurisdiction of the claim, that is to say where the services are provided.

Common law claims for salvage can be more generous in England than in other jurisdictions such as Germany or the Netherlands and the tug owners in question may seek to capitalize on this disparity.

Validity of certificates

The validity of such 'certificates of safe delivery' has been tested in the English courts and upheld on one recent occasion.

In the ' VB Rebel ' [2025] EWHC 376 (Admiralty) case*, the Master of the vessel signed such a certificate believing it was a simple receipt and without making further enquiries into its nature and effect.

The England and Wales High Court (Admiralty Division) found that commercial parties are bound by the documents they sign unless exceptional circumstances arise, and these were not shown. This case highlights the risk of signing such a document which may unwittingly bind the vessel owner

*For the Admiralty Court judgement readers are invited to use the link here: https://tinyurl.com/ycn8trdx

BP announces oil and gas discovery

Bumerangue prospect in deepwater offshore Brazil

BP reported on 4 August that it had drilled exploration well 1-BP-13-SPS at the Bumerangue block, located in the Santos Basin, 404 kilometres (218 nautical miles) from Rio de Janeiro, in a water depth of 2,372 metres. The well was drilled to a total depth of 5,855 metres.

It is understood that this well intersected the reservoir about 500 metres below the crest of the structure and penetrated an estimated 500 metre gross

hydrocarbon column in high-quality pre-salt carbonate reservoir with an areal extent of greater than 300 square kilometres.

Results from the rig-site analysis indicate elevated levels of carbon dioxide. BP will now begin laboratory analysis to further characterize the reservoir and fluids discovered, which will provide additional insight into the potential of the Bumerangue block. Further appraisal activities are planned to be undertaken, subject to regulatory approval.

BP drillship working offshore Brazil: Valaris Renaissance. Photo BP ©.

BP holds 100% participation in the block with Pré-Sal Petróleo S.A. as the Production Sharing Contract manager. BP secured the block in December 2022 during the 1st Cycle of the Open Acreage of Production Sharing of ANP, on very good commercial terms.

Reflection

Gordon Birrell, BP's executive vice president for Production & Operations commented: '*We are excited to announce this significant discovery at Bumerangue, BP's largest in 25 years*'

'*This is another success in what has been an exceptional year so far for our exploration team, underscoring our commitment to growing our upstream. Brazil is an important country for BP, and our ambition is to explore the potential of establishing a material and advantaged production hub in the country*.'

Ten discoveries in 2025

Bumerangue is BP's tenth discovery in 2025 to date. BP has already announced oil and gas exploration discoveries at: Beryl and Frangipani in Trinidad, Fayoum 5 and El King in Egypt, Far South in the Gulf of America, Hasheem in Libya and Alto de Cabo Frio Central in Brazil, plus discoveries in Namibia and Angola through Azule Energy, its 50-50 joint venture with Eni.

Prospects

BP plans to grow its global upstream production to 2.3-2.5 million barrels of oil equivalent a day in 2030, with the capacity to increase production out to 2035. BP has been in Brazil for more than fifty years, with a diverse portfolio. The Bumerangue block was awarded to BP in December 2022, with terms including 80% cost oil and 5.9% profit oil.

BP holds an interest in eight offshore blocks across three basins in Brazil, with four as the operator. The appraisal well for the Alto de Cabo Frio Central discovery (BP 50%, Petrobras 50% interest and operator) has recently spud (initial penetration prior to rilling).

In addition to the Bumerangue prospect drilling campaign this year, an exploration well is planned for the Tupinambá block in 2026.

Marine pilot transfer

Helicopter accident on bulk carrier

A shipboard helicopter accident likely due to ground resonance emphasises the importance of proper pilot coordination in responding to abnormal situations.

An ATSB investigation report outlines that on 25 February 2025, the Agusta A109E helicopter with two pilots on board – a pilot flying in-command-under-supervision (ICUS) and a pilot supervising – was taking off from a bulk carrier about 200 km north-east of Mackay, Queensland, after dropping off a marine pilot.

As it was lifting off from the ship's helideck, the helicopter developed severe vibrations. The take-off was discontinued but control of the helicopter was lost.

Substantial damage to the helicopter

The helicopter came to rest upright on the helideck, more than 90° counterclockwise from its original position, having sustained substantial damage. No injuries were reported.

Ground resonance phenomenon

The ATSB found that the vibration was likely the result of the helicopter entering ground resonance, a phenomenon that dissipates when airborne, while it was in the process of departing from the ship.

Comment

ATSB Director Transport Safety Stuart Macleod said: '*When the vibrations started, the pilot supervising perceived the pilot flying to be holding the cyclic in an abnormally aft position, and believed the main rotor may have struck the tail boom*.'

In response, the pilot supervising, unannounced, took hold of the cyclic and collective in order to discontinue the take-off, while the pilot flying was still attempting to lift off.

Macleod added: '*In isolation, the immediate responses taken by each pilot following the sudden onset of vibration were understandable. But discontinuing the take-off after the onset of the*

vibration, with the rotor speed in the flight range, probably resulted in the loss of control and substantial damage to the helicopter.

'*Typically, the onset of ground resonance is sudden and if the pilot does not take immediate corrective action, loss of control can occur rapidly*.'

New guidelines created

Macleod noted the accident was a good example of the potentially catastrophic nature of ground resonance. After the accident, the helicopter operator added new guidelines on ground resonance to its procedures.

It has also developed an updated procedure for training and checking flight briefings that will include confirming the roles of each pilot, procedures for transferring aircraft control between pilots, and actions to be followed in the event of an actual emergency.

In conclusion Macleod said: '*Proper coordination between pilots is critical, particularly when responding to abnormal or emergency situations*. *Pilot roles and responsibilities for emergency response and flying duties should be well established prior to each flight*.'

In order to read the final report: Loss of control during marine pilot transfer operations involving Agusta A109E, VH-XUM and bulk carrier Star Coral, about 200 km north-east of Mackay, Queensland, on 25 February 2025 readers are invited to use the link here: https://tinyurl.com/3z8rts2w

New tonnage for Trinity House

The Corporation of Trinity House, London, granted a charter by King Henry VIII in 1514, reported in mid-July that it had launched procurement under its Futures Afloat programme that will deliver two state-of-the-art new-build multi-function buoy handling vessels.

THV Galatea, built 2007 by Remontowa of Gdańsk. 84.2 metres loa. Service speed 12 kt.

Trinity House, London, is the General Lighthouse Authority for England, Wales, The Channel Islands and Gibraltar pursuant to the Merchant Shipping Act, 1995.

It maintains lighthouses, light vessels and marine buoyage amongst other aids to navigation.

Trinity House is one of the three General Lighthouse Authorities that provide aids to navigation in the waters around England, Wales, Scotland, the Isle of Man, the island of Ireland, the Channel Islands, and Gibraltar.

Futures Afloat is a project that includes the replacement of ageing multi-functional buoy handling tenders (MFTs) of Trinity House.

THV Patricia, built 1982 by Robb Caledon of Leith. 86.2metres loa. Service speed 12kt.

It is reported that the scope of this procurement includes the design and construction of two identical ships that will replace THV *Patricia* and THV *Galatea*.

The Authority's detailed technical requirements are included in the procurement document pack which will become available to potential suppliers via the AWARD system in the coming days.

News has been received that organisations can self-register on the AWARD system by way of the link to be found here: https://tinyurl.com/mty3b4z8

Trinity House will notify all registered organisations when the procurement pack is available.

The successful supplier will be awarded two contracts (one contract per vessel) to be executed at the same time.

Nautilus International comment

Nautilus strategic organiser John Coppell said the Union welcomed news of the new vessels.

He commented: '*These modern vessels are expected to feature advanced technology and systems, which may require some adaptation and upskilling from our members. The company has assured us that all employees will be fully supported and given appropriate training to meet the operational requirements of these new assets.*

'*This is a significant development for the organisation and, handled correctly, presents an opportunity for professional growth. Importantly, the company has committed to engaging with the Union throughout the procurement, implementation, and crew training phases. They have indicated a genuine willingness to share information and work in partnership with us to ensure a smooth and considered transition.*

'*At this stage, we have every reason to be constructive and optimistic about this process and will continue to represent the interests of our members at every step.*'

Nautilus International is an IFSMA Member Association.

Photos: Corporation of Trinity House ©