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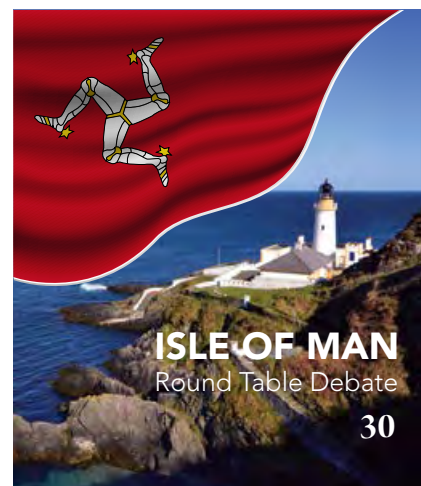


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SMI Next issue

The March/April issue of SMI will feature a hard-hitting round table debate with leading Greek shipowners on the major industry factors facing them. The issue will also contain a preview of the Posidonia event in early June - the first since 2018 - where the magazine will enjoy bonus distribution.

In addition, there will be a country report on Cyprus, which will include interviews with the CEOs of the island's owners, managers and service provider. Our much-awaited Copenhagen Business School webinar will look at the valuable issue of what makes a good board of directors and how they need to be agile to react quickly to industry events

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After two years of quasi-hibernation the world seems to be cautiously emerging and people getting back to work, if not in the same 'normal' as before but at least in a less disrupted way than of late. Economic growth is back on the agenda.

Containerhips have been working all the while flat out, of course, and the results are now plain to see. Major liner companies reported a cumulative estimated profit in excess of \$100bn last year - \$80bn according to Alphaliner but that was without the results of privately owned MSC, which in January was declared 'world's largest' (in capacity terms) having overtaken Maersk – thereby equalling their profits of the last 10 years combined. And they are on course to do the same again, or even better, in 2022.

On our cover two issues ago we asked if the golden box sector was set to tarnish, reporting warnings inside from MSC CEO Soren Toft that lines must look to providing improved client care alongside the higher rates they were charging, a message he delivered in his keynote speech at the London International Shipping Week headline conference.

Now another manifestation of that overheated sector is emerging, with reported massive bonuses

being paid to senior sea staff aboard containerships in order to secure their loyalty – the subject of this issue's Cover Story - especially given the slew of newbuilds waiting to deliver.

But now other segments of the shipping market are surging as well, notably gas and dry bulk, which in turn have filled shipbuilding yards' orderbooks. Also improving are car carriers, ferry, offshore – especially with oil prices having just hit a seven-year high as this issue went to press – and even cruise, with itineraries starting up again. Only tanker remains the weak man of shipping but traditionally its recovery has lagged that of other shipping markets, meaning some are predicting improved fortunes for next year.

Downside threats remain, as Clarksons warned in its 2022 forecast reported in our Notebook pages, as well as longer term challenges for shipowners that are outlined by leading shipping economist Dr Martin Stopford in his 'Waves of change' article published exclusively inside.

For the moment at least, shipping folk continue to have a glint in their eye and are looking forward to this 'Year of the Tiger' to burn brightly. ●

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Drop-off in labour standards reporting mars strong overall Flag State performance

The annual Shipping Industry Flag State Performance Table, from the International Chamber of Shipping, has identified reporting on seafarer wellbeing as a “casualty of the pandemic,” following its publication at end-January.

The Table is intended to encourage shipowners to maintain a dialogue with their Flag States and help facilitate necessary improvements in the interests of safety, the environment and decent working conditions, among other issues. The flag state of a merchant ship is the jurisdiction under whose laws the ship is registered or licensed and is deemed the nationality of the vessel.

This year’s Table highlights a drop in levels of reporting on the status of national ILO labour standards, including the 2006 Maritime Labour Convention (MLC), underscoring the severe administrative pressures of the pandemic and the ongoing ‘crew change crisis’ on seafarers, governments and the industry alike. The Table’s criterion assessing flag states’ reporting on ILO labour standards, including the MLC, revealed a 6% decrease in Flag States successfully meeting their obligations.

The ILO Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations, which compiled the report used by the ICS Table, noted that “there was a sharp decrease in the number of reports received by the deadline of 1 October this year in relation to previous years.” In total, of the 2,004 reports on labour standards requested by the ILO from governments in 2021, only 42.9% of these requests were granted. This is in comparison to a 70.7% rate of reporting received by the ILO the previous year.

The findings were an outlier against a generally strong performance across the board from most Flag States, on criteria such as Port State Control (PSC) records and ratification of international conventions. ICS



noted that while this trend can be partly explained by administrative pressures brought about by COVID-19, it also serves as a reminder that the hardships suffered by the global workforce throughout this pandemic may not be at the forefront of national administrations’ minds.

Guy Platten, ICS Secretary General, commented: “The pandemic has been a challenge for us all and one that Flag States have also had to weather. However, the drop off in reporting against ILO Labour Standards, including the MLC, is further evidence that seafarer wellbeing has been an unintended casualty of the pandemic.

“Hundreds of thousands of seafarers have been trapped on ships for many months beyond their scheduled tours of duty throughout the last two years. This report is a reminder that Flag States must keep seafarer wellbeing as a top priority.”

Amongst the 10 largest ships registers (by dead weight tonnage), covering more than 75% of the world fleet, none have more than two indicators of potentially negative performance, and five have no negative indicators at all.

The findings also suggest that distinctions between ‘traditional’ flags and open registers are no longer meaningful, with many open registers amongst the very top performers, alongside several European registers, the ICS noted. ●

Clarksons' market outlook for 2022



A 'Shipping Market Overview and Outlook' presentation by Steve Gordon, Managing Director of Clarksons Research, delivered at the Maritime London annual dinner in December contained the following key takeaways:

Recovery in shipping markets post Covid-19 should continue, supported by economic recovery and returning volumes with 12.4bn tonnes projected for 2022. But some risks remain including economic cooling, the end of stimulus measures, possible tax changes, and general inflation.

Supply chain disruption and resulting congestion will continue to have an upside effect, impacting and

tightening markets and will take time to unwind.

The ClarkSea Index stands at a 10-year high but market performance is uneven: containers - exceptional, bulkers - very strong, gas and car carriers - strong, ferry and offshore - improving, and tankers and cruise - weak.

Post-Covid-19 planning across the industry is focusing on 'Green & Tech' developments, while questions surround long-term trade trends such as Energy Transition, the issue of Globalisation vs Regionalisation vs Localisation, and China's latest 5-year plan.

The global fleet is up 80% in tonnage since the 2008 crisis and is expected to grow 2% next year

to 1.5bn GT. Meanwhile, the supply side is 'encouraging' since the orderbook still 'short' at 10.8% of the world fleet and available shipyard capacity is low.

Meanwhile, the industry is only at the start of the Fuelling Transition: by 2023, 30% of the fleet will be 'eco', 24% scrubber and 5% alternative fuelled. Emissions reduction policies may serve to 'limit' supply further by causing uneven fleet renewal and slower operating speeds.

The overall fleet renewal scenario suggests \$1 trillion of newbuild investment over the next ten years and \$3.6 trillion to 2050. ●



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Sustainability should be at the heart of strategic decision-making, say Gard senior executives



Rolf Thore Roppestad,
CEO, Gard



Live Jacob Sydness,
VP, Head of Sustainable

With 13 offices in 10 countries and over 580 employees, Norwegian-headquartered Gard describes itself as the world's leading marine insurer providing liability and hull risk insurance for as much as 50% of the world fleet. The mutual has a foothold in every major shipping segment, with a burgeoning customer base in renewables (especially floating offshore wind assets and support services), and over 100 years of industry expertise, having been founded in 1907.

"Insurance is only a small part of the everyday life of shipowners and operators," admits CEO Rolf Thore Roppestad, "but we're obviously a big part of that. And with such a large, geographically diverse membership and customer base we have influence throughout the industry."

"We have reach and a responsibility to make a difference" adds Live Jacob Sydness, VP, Head of Sustainable Business, "not just in protecting people, assets and the environment, but also as an enabler for positive change. Together with our members and clients, we are here to enable sustainable maritime development. That is a driving ambition for Gard, and one that sits at the very heart of everything we do."

"Think about marine insurance in general," Roppestad explains. "We protect. People and assets are one thing, and the environment is another. In our case we work extremely hard alongside authorities and businesses setting up frameworks to prepare for when accidents happen – to act swiftly, mitigate damage and safeguard society. We are also very proactive in ensuring they don't happen in the first place!"

"That is good for the environment, clearly, but also for our members and customers, preventing losses and keeping costs down when they do occur. We now have industry leading low

claims costs, and consequently low premium levels, because of that approach."

Sydness explains how the Gard board, made up with representatives from 25 leading global shipowners, decided to put sustainability at the core of business strategy back in 2018. Good examples of this have been its sector-first sustainable ship recycling policy as well as its active involvement in development of the Poseidon Principles for Marine insurance and commitment to be transparent on the emissions of its H&M portfolio. These show Gard's willingness to 'walk the walk' and prioritize action over perfection, says Sydness.

Another way in which Gard aims to be as strong proactively as it is reactively is in its investment in data-driven loss prevention. The size of the business gives it access to an immense amount of operational data – data it can utilise to understand risk, analyse trends and take meaningful action to reduce incidents and accidents. For example, it now shares data with members regarding collision and grounding risks in key global hotspots.

Gard can also utilise geofencing, weather data and cargo information to send alerts to ships loading cargoes with a potential to liquify (e.g. nickel ore with a high moisture content) ensuring samples are taken prior to loading. This is "critically important", says Roppestad, as around 100 seafarers have lost their lives from ships capsizing because of this over the last 10 years, and also has significant environmental implications.

"So, if we can use data proactively like this it's another way to help our members, while also enhancing industry sustainability," the CEO says. "The two things go hand-in-hand."

Gard will be showcasing its activities at the Nor-Shipping, running from 4-7 April in Lillestrøm and Oslo, where it is main partner of the Blue Economy Hall. ●

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Investing in the right cook can generate big returns

A happy crew makes a happy ship, and a full crew of highly motivated and productive crewmembers put good food and enjoyable mealtimes at the top of their must-have list.

That's the thinking behind Christian Ioannou's leadership of the international catering management and training provider MCTC. However, the fully trained restaurant chef believes onboard cooks are taken for granted, despite being responsible for preparing meals that fuel crewmembers' wellness and productivity.

A highly motivated Chief Cook is worth his/her weight in gold – and rice – because they are the creator of the one thing the crew values so highly: the meal itself.

"The whole idea is to respect the work of the cook," Mr Ioannou explained. "When we visit a restaurant, not many of us take the time to go to the kitchen and thank the chef for the food we have just eaten. We always just tell the waiter to pass on our thanks. What the chef really wants to hear is true appreciation, an element of personal value."

"[As an industry], we need to understand the unique challenges of the profession, because it can be difficult to work 15 hours a day and sometimes not even seeing the people you're serving. We must place focus on how to support and motivate cooks so they can produce the best possible results," he continued.

Taking the time to thank the galley staff can boost the shipping company's bottom line, as a motivated Chief Cook will be more passionate and innovative about what he or she prepares.

Mr Ioannou added: "A cook who takes care of all the provisions onboard and eliminates waste can save up to 15% of the daily ingredients budget. Also, no cook in the world will produce meals from scratch if they are not motivated to do so. A motivated cook will produce healthier, tastier and less expensive items."

But, how can a manager or owner effectively motivate his galley staff? According to Mr Ioannou, it can be as easy as improving communication.



"This is where we come in, because we communicate with the cooks on a weekly basis. We motivate the teams, giving them fresh ideas and strategies. Praising the cook on how nicely they prepared various dishes goes a very long way, especially when the praise is from one cook to another," he explained.

While generating financial benefits, investing time and energy in a good cook can reap other rewards, such as higher crew retention, stronger productivity, healthier crew members and, in turn, lower P&I claims and premiums.

"Crew who feel supported and praised will tend to stay in their positions for longer. Investing in crew is key to reaping long-term benefits," Mr Ioannou concluded. ●

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A manager should not be liable for emissions



By Robert Hodge, Director, ITIC and Barnaby Jordan, Account Executive, ITIC

From 1st January 2023, ships above 5,000 GRT calling to European Union waters are very likely to be subject to its Emissions Trading System (ETS). Shipping companies will have to purchase and surrender ETS emission allowances for each tonne of reported CO₂ emissions by April of the following year.

The crucial question is who is ultimately liable for the emissions and therefore the payment for the emission allowances? The obvious answer should be the polluter or those who have commercial control of the vessel, such as the charterer or the owner.

Unfortunately, the EU Commission has used wording from the EU's Monitoring, Reporting and Verification (MRV) regulation, which requires the Document of Compliance (DOC) holder to monitor, verify and submit data to the EU on CO₂ emissions for a ship. The draft ETS legislation therefore makes the DOC holder ultimately liable for the payment of the emission allowances. This is disappointing; the ship manager having liability for not reporting emissions is one thing but holding them liable for non-payment of the emission allowances is much more onerous and rather unfair.

In practice the ship manager will likely administer the allowances on behalf of the owner who will in turn seek recovery from their charterer (BIMCO is finalising an ETS clause for this very purpose). However, the penalties for non-compliance are huge. These could include publishing the manager's name for failing to comply, the imposition of a fine, or detention of the ship. Furthermore, if one vessel in the ship manager's fleet fails to meet its carbon allowance obligations, the EU will blacklist all other vessels managed in the same fleet.

This raises two major concerns. First, the possibility of owners or charterers refusing to pay for one reason or another leaving the manager out of pocket after they have purchased the carbon credits. Second, the ramifications of blacklisting, although not yet clear, are that the manager will likely face claims from multiple owners not being able to trade their ships to the EU.

What remedies are available to the manager? BIMCO SHIPMAN 2009 provides some protection where it states at CI 13(e) that a manager shall in no circumstance be required to commit their own funds to finance the management services. The owner must reimburse their manager for any payment or associated cost in administering and paying for the allowances. If however, an owner goes bankrupt or a vessel leaves the managed fleet, enforcing a contractual right might prove difficult. Adequate pre-funding or security for the compliance costs is therefore highly recommended. That being said calculating the right level of pre-funding could prove difficult due to the fluctuation in the cost of carbon credits themselves. The risk of being exposed to further costs should make managers consider only working with an owner after thorough due diligence has been carried out.

With the cost for the carbon credits estimated to be as high as the daily hire and the onus for ensuring a ship's compliance falling firmly on the manager, concerns are rising that this new legislation has not been well thought through. ITIC's view is, whilst we can hope the EU Commission will reconsider their position on who is held liable for payment for emission allowances, we strongly recommend that all ship managers follow advice and seek prefunding or security for payment for carbon credits and carefully consider which owners they work with. ●



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How I Work

SMI talks to industry leaders and asks the question

How do you keep up with the rigours of the shipping industry?



John Denholm CBE

*Chairman, The Denholm Group
& Director, Anglo-Eastern Univan*

John Denholm is fourth-generation head of his family's diversified shipowning-to-logistics group and outgoing President of the UK Chamber of Shipping. Before stepping down in that latter role this March, he received a well-deserved CBE in the UK New Year's Honours List, which he modestly tells SMI that he accepted "with alacrity but cannot help feeling others in the industry deserve recognition more".

The Denholm family traces its origins back to a village of the same name in the Scottish Borders region, the 'holm' ending suggesting Viking origins for the settlement. One of his forebears later moved to Greenock, just down the River Clyde estuary from Glasgow. Some years later brothers John and James Denholm founded J. & J. Denholm - still the name of the group's holding company - as a ship agent and broker in the 1860s.

The company soon moved into owning and later became a pioneer in managing ships for third parties, so much so that John's father Sir Ian Denholm has been referred to as the founding 'father of shipmanagement'. The Denholm Ship Management business was then merged with Anglo-Eastern in 2001, of which more anon, and today Denholm Group spreads its business across four main pillars: Shipping, Logistics, Seafoods and Industrial Services.

The fourth-generation head reveals that the Denholm family motto is *Vigilans et audax* ('vigilant and bold'), which

he translates into modern business parlance as "risk-taking and risk management".

Does that still sum up the Group's business philosophy?

"Absolutely," he shoots back. "We take risks, we own three 38,000dwt bulk carriers, and we have an oilfield services business in Kazakhstan these are risky businesses. In my early days in business I came across a poster with a picture of a ship in a harbour and a caption 'The safest place for a ship is in port but you don't earn any money in port!' This poster has been John's mantra: "We're always prepared to take risks," he says, "but we do it advisedly."

Merging the ship management business into Anglo-Eastern was "a very difficult decision" but has turned out to have been fully vindicated.

"The whole Group was known at that time for ship management," its Chairman explains, "but our reputation was very much built on British crews. When the world moved away from European crewing in the early 1980s, our shipmanagement business struggled as we did not have good access to overseas crews." Hong Kong-based Anglo-Eastern shared the same business philosophy and had a better Indian and East European crewing network, so seemed a good fit.

"We delivered a great business, put it together with Anglo-Eastern and made an ever greater one," he continues. At the time of the merger the two companies managed a combined total of around 140 ships and today have more

than 600, making it one of the world's largest shipmanagement companies. The success of Anglo Eastern has been achieved due to the energy and vision of Peter Cremers and Marcel Liedts in the early days, and more recently (after Anglo-Eastern had also taken over Univan) Bjorn Hojgaard.

John Denholm today remains a Director of Anglo-Eastern Univan Group, "very much involved in the strategic management at Board level", and it is sometimes overlooked that with its 26% stake, Denholm Group remains Anglo-Eastern's largest single shareholder.

It was for services to both shipping and charities that the Denholm Chairman received his recent CBE (Commander of the British Empire) Award, and he says that the Group supports a wide variety of charities - as well as having founded the Denholm Bursary for a Scholarship in Engineering at the University of Strathclyde back in 2016 - today one of a number of ongoing charitable donations administered by the Worshipful Company of Shipwrights. Indeed, John Denholm himself is a 'shipwright' in more than one sense, both as a past Prime Warden of that Company and being a descendant of two Glasgow shipbuilding families, the Stephens and the Fergusons - whose tartan he proudly sports on formal occasions.

The Group commitment to 'doing the right thing' is one of longstanding, with all 1,000-plus staff in its 50 offices worldwide required to sign up to 'The Denholm Standard' - a charter

support the values of 'Integrity, Fairness, Upholding the Law, and Respect' in all their business dealings.

"We started it long before the term ESG (Environmental, Social and Governance) was coined," explains John Denholm. "We operate a wide variety of businesses in a wide variety of sectors, but they all run to those standards and that is us," he says, adding: "in many ways it's ESG but perhaps without the 'E' because that wasn't an issue then."

The Denholm Chairman has however not been a laggard on environmental matters at all. On the contrary, he remains an ardent environmentalist and is proud that under his presidency the UK Chamber of Shipping was "one of the first out of the blocks" in calling for the shipping industry to embrace net-zero carbon emissions by 2050 ahead of the COP 26 meeting held last November in his home city.

"It's too early to really tell if COP26 was a success," he says, but there are grounds for optimism. Back in 2008, he recalls, when he was Chairman of BIMCO's Marine Committee (before later becoming BIMCO President in 2013-15), "we started talking about such things. Here we are, 14 years later: we've not really got there yet but at least now I detect a mood that everyone agrees that we've got to do something - it's not 'whether' but 'when' - which certainly wasn't the case in 2008."

"If we're going to have zero emission shipping by 2050," he continues, "then we need non-hydrocarbon power chains within the next six years. Ships built in 2030 are likely to still be around in 2050 and one thing's for certain - building a ship and then scrapping it before its natural life is over is not a very green way of doing things - it's a huge waste of resources."

But it has been successfully leading the UK shipowning community through the dark days of both COVID and Brexit that the outgoing Chamber of Shipping President deems to have been the greatest success of his two-year tenure. Both events "really knocked our members hard," he says, "especially those

Aboard his classic sailing yacht off the West Coast of Scotland



involved in the cruise and ferry sectors". The Chamber lobbied hard to enable continued crew changes and frictionless trade flow with the EU at ports, at the same time impressing on UK government and public opinion the vital importance of shipping for Britain as an island nation.

Outside of work, he and wife Laura split their time between houses in Stirlingshire and North London. Leisure activities include skiing - in the world's oldest downhill resort of Mürren in Switzerland's Bernese Oberland - and sailing, off the beautiful West Coast of Scotland in a vintage 50ft wooden-hulled yacht first built for the inaugural solo transatlantic race in 1968.

John Denholm himself also enjoys traditional Highland field sports, which he tells SMI are really all about the "friendship and companionship" of such outdoor jaunts rather than "any intended quarry". Is this a principle that crosses over to his business life? "Absolutely!" he replies. "Good business usually comes from having good relationships."

The Denholm tradition also continues in a rich vein, its stewardship of the company having stretched back continuously over 156 years (through five chairmen and six CEOs). Besides John's own four daughters and eight young grandchildren, all aged under four, his first cousin once removed, Ben MacLehose, took over as Group CEO at end-2020. With a fifth-generation family member now at the helm, the Denholm shipping brand with its distinctive 'Diamond D' flag looks set to continue for many years to come. ●



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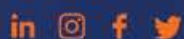


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Carl Schou

CEO & President of Wilhelmsen Ship Management

As a former seafarer with considerable experience aboard ship and as a staff captain aboard cruiseships – including what was world's largest at the time where he was in charge of some 1,000 crew – Carl Schou has an instinctive empathy for the plight of seafarers.

For the past 13 years he has been heading up Wilhelmsen Ship Management (WSM), growing the company to a position where it now manages about 250 ships and about 10,000 crew.

"I'm very passionate about seafarers and crewing," he tells SMI. "My time at sea, and later as a VP of Marine Personnel, has given me the perspective to see things from that side. The crew have been at the sharp end of the stick [during the pandemic], out of sight and out of mind. They are the ones, in my opinion, that have really felt the crunch during the crisis."

Mr Schou laments that a lack of alignment between countries over travel restrictions has made it "practically impossible" to change crews. "What we're seeing now with

this new variant is that crew are getting infected just through contact with shoreside longshoremen."

As a result, the WSM boss has been at pains to be very 'hands on' during the pandemic, making a point of going through the necessary protocols to be able to visit crews about ships calling Singapore where the company is headquartered, and carrying out regular video calls with others.

"I think it's important, especially in these times, to show management is involved and does care," he says, "because I think the perception on ships is that they don't. We ask crew how they're feeling, pick up on 'issues', try to correct whatever's missing."

In addition, since the beginning of the pandemic he has joined his voice to those of others in the industry in lobbying the authorities, government officials and media regarding designating seafarers as essential workers.

WSM has also been in the news of late for having taken over an 80% ownership stake in Ahrenkiel Tankers, as well as management of five tankers. The move consolidates the Singapore-based business's returns to the tanker sector, first begun two years ago, which it had exited with the sale of its specialised arm International Tankers Management (ITM) back in 2009. Of particular note has been the decision to rebrand the Ahrenkiel unit as Barber Ship Management, which was the original name of WMS when it was first

Zoom calls with crew show management's involvement





On walkabout with crew onboard vessel

incorporated in Hong Kong in 1975, later relocating to Malaysia for a period before finally transferring to Singapore in 2018.

There are two separate decisions here, Mr Schou explains. First is the investment in the tanker sector, which he is on record as describing as “very different today from what it was more than a decade ago in terms of quality and safety, with much better regulation on the competence side, and this has given us the confidence to mark our re-entry into the business with this key acquisition.”

Then there’s the re-introduction of the Barber brand, reversing the previous decision for corporate alignment of different company names within the Wilhelmsen.

“there have been so many positive comments from all parts of shipping,” relates the company CEO, who says he knew that Barber was a very strong brand name “since



Cycling to raise funds for Mission to Seafarers

Skiing in the mountains of Norway



it was our original name and had longevity and great familiarity, especially among the older community,” but never realised quite how deep these feelings ran.

Meanwhile, the shipmanagement business remains committed to playing a leading role in the big challenges facing the shipping industry today, such as decarbonisation. At group level Wilhelmsen has received funding to proceed with projects for both hydrogen-fuelled vessels and ships transporting hydrogen. “We’re in the tender process for these ships,” says Mr Schou. “We’re one step ahead of the drawing board.”

On the personal front he normally divides his time between Singapore, his home near Wilhelmsen’s headquarters in Lysaker, south of Oslo, and business trips around the world, but during the pandemic trips have been few and far between. When not spending with his wife Maria and grown-up daughter Tina, he likes outdoor sports such as cycling and skiing, both cross-country and downhill off-piste.

Asia has surprisingly good opportunities for both, the Wilhelmsen Ship Management boss adds. Singapore is not only “the place to be in shipping”, he says, but also offers great routes for mountain biking and road cycling, a popular pastime among WMS employees. And just before lockdown he enjoyed a highly memorable skiing trip to the northernmost island of Japan - a long way from his native Norway but equally blessed with highly scenic landscapes, luxury resorts and large quantities of fine powder snow. ●



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It's raining bonuses for top sea staff

By Bob Jaques

In February a series of articles appeared in the international press reporting that certain senior officers aboard containerships had been paid “massive” bonuses – typically of between eight months’ and one year’s salary, by Asia-based lines - to secure their ongoing services going forward.

With the container sector currently enjoying the most profitable period in its 60-plus year history while the pandemic has heightened the hardships of life at sea, it is perhaps hardly surprising that key officers are now being offered ‘golden handcuff’ arrangements to secure their loyalty. Especially so in a tight labour market where officer shortages loom and in a shipping segment where a slew of new tonnage is set to deliver.

Plus the Ever Given incident earlier in the year showed just how costly and disruptive a containership mishap can be - doubtless also serving to whet the appetite of the mainstream press to expose the confidential workings of an industry it had previously largely ignored.

SMI thought it would look into this commercially sensitive area of sea staff remuneration to canvass views on whether a ‘bonus culture’ really was beginning to take hold in the container sector or elsewhere within the industry, and, if so, whether this was well-deserved reward for professionalism in the face of extreme hardship – the silver lining to the crew change crisis, if you like – or could potentially have a negative impact on the seafaring community.

Two leading ship managers gave their candid views to SMI on the condition of anonymity, saying as follows:

“I’ve seen the reports but have not personally experienced such large bonuses with any of the clients we are working with,” said the first. “Generally speaking, however, the price of hiring seafarers has always been about supply and demand, and with the way seafarers have been treated in the last 24 months I have no doubt that it’s getting harder to find good people.”

The CEO went on to detail how his company had already experienced the ‘unusual’ occurrence that about 5% of its staff had declined to take a new contract during the

last year.

“Whether they are “lost” from the industry for good, or just taking a break, remains to be seen... but if we are moving towards a significant deficit of good, experienced officers, it will be a ‘seller’s market’, so to speak, and costs will go up. We haven’t really seen that yet, but it’s a distinct possibility in the years ahead.”

“All I would say is that even in normal times some companies pay good bonuses to crew to secure their commitment and high retention rate,” commented the head of another leading ship and crew manager company. “So it’s not surprising for companies to offer bonuses to crew in these challenging pandemic times, especially when the charter rates for certain type of vessels are sky high.

“This is a normal supply and demand situation, and I don’t think it sets any unhealthy trend going forward,” he stressed.

Certainly, the container sector is facing a looming escalation of demand for officers and crew. According to Alphaliner, orders for new boxships soared to a record 555 units in 2021, four times the 2020 number. At the same time, demolitions of the older vessels that the new tonnage would normally have replaced, virtually ceased, only four vessels being consigned to scrap during the first half of the year, owners intent on keep whatever capacity they could in the ‘red hot’ market.

As containerhips proliferate, so will the numbers of competent crew needed to man them, which together with the effects of the pandemic are placing new pressures on the crew supply market.

Crew management specialist Danica's focus is on crews from Eastern Europe rather than Asia, MD Henrik Jensen says his company has not seen the scale of bonuses mentioned in the press. However, he does confirm that there has been a rise in both demand and remuneration for Eastern European officers during the pandemic. He attributes it to many Asian crew having disappeared from the market because of stricter travel and quarantine restrictions in those countries. By contrast East Europeans were free to travel and enjoyed a high rate of vaccinations including booster jabs, he says.

Also, ship owners and operators have been keen to diversify their crew supply countries because of the

pandemic and national lockdown risks, he says, and Ukraine being highlighted as a 'crew source of the future' in the 2021 BIMCO/ICS Seafarer Workforce Report further stimulated demand for East European personnel.

Compared to a year ago, Mr Jensen, himself a former captain, reports typical pay increases of 5%-10% for East European senior officers, 5% for junior officers, 10%-20% for senior ratings (Bosun, fitter, cook ranks) and 10% for ratings.

"However, for all ship owners this does not necessarily mean an increase in costs," he notes. "For certain vessel types the Ukrainian and Russian senior officers are still with lower salaries compared to Indians, and a ship owner who formerly used Indian senior officers and is now switching to Eastern Europeans is in fact seeing a saving."

As to the massive bonuses now reportedly being paid by some companies to their senior sea staff, Mr Jensen comments: "For container and bulk vessels we have moved from nearly a decade with low charter rates and during that period owners were forced to turn every stone to reduce

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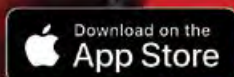
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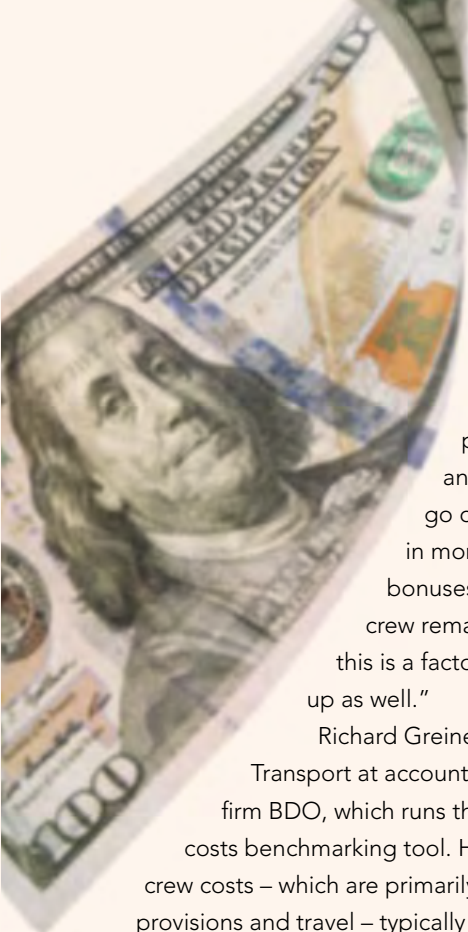
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Richard Greiner is Partner, Shipping & Transport at accountancy and business advisory firm BDO, which runs the OpCost ship operating costs benchmarking tool. He points out that total crew costs – which are primarily wages but also include provisions and travel – typically account for 50-55% of a ship's OpEx (excluding fuel) and that proportion has generally been stable over recent years.

He agrees with others that the current payment of bonuses in the container sector isn't at all surprising given the market context. "The people paying the wage bill are enjoying exceptionally good times and want that to continue, they don't want to lose people." Bonuses will only have a small effect on their total spend, which is dwarfed by the revenues that they have been earning over the last 12 to 18 months and wish to safeguard for as long as possible.

But he notes that the fact these payments are made in the form of a one-off bonus rather than as part of any recurring salary increase is 'informative', showing that they result from an exceptional market situation and "doesn't mean they'll continue ad infinitum." He draws a historical parallel with the crew wages hike that took place during the shipping 'super-cycle' that preceded the 2008 global financial crash, which "people at the time may have thought would last forever but it certainly didn't." How long this

current container boom will continue remains a matter of some speculation, he adds.

The underlying demand/supply balance in the overall crewing market also remains a fundamental driver. According to the aforementioned BIMCO/ICS (International Chamber of Shipping) manpower report – the first time this ongoing joint study has been updated for six years – an estimated 1.89m seafarers operate over 74,000 vessels in the global merchant fleet. Although there had been a 10.8% growth in officer intake since 2015, it noted, this had been outpaced by a greater growth in demand.

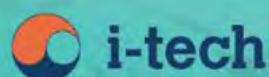
"We know from the BIMCO/ICS Seafarer Workforce Report that demand for officers has outweighed supply for some time, dating back before the pandemic," comments Natalie Shaw, Director of Employment Affairs at ICS. "In fact, if we continue on the same trajectory there will be a shortfall of 26,000 officers (out of 89,000) by 2026. Additionally, we are now seeing some areas where ratings are more difficult to come by.

"We also know that in the past there have been problems in the tanker sector and offshore oil and gas, and when this occurs, inevitably competition sets in. The pandemic has undoubtedly exacerbated the problem, but it's important to note that this labour shortage isn't being seen across all maritime sectors."

So, what is needed to improve seafarer remuneration, working conditions and training in order to replenish and upskill the maritime workforce going forward?

"We need to see a new and enhanced STCW (Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping) Convention so that upskilling can occur to meet the challenges of tomorrow," replies Ms Shaw. "The ILO MLC 2006 has set a minimum standard for working conditions and pay and this is constantly being reviewed to see if it needs any modifications. Amendments to the MLC (Maritime Labour Convention) are under consideration in May this year and are expected to cover some of the challenges experienced during the pandemic.

"As the sector decarbonises, workers will increasingly need upskilling to operate and work alongside new technologies. In conjunction with ITF (International Transport Workers' Federation) and the UN Global Compact, we launched the Just Transition Taskforce at COP26 last year to ensure that no workers are left behind as we green our sector." ●



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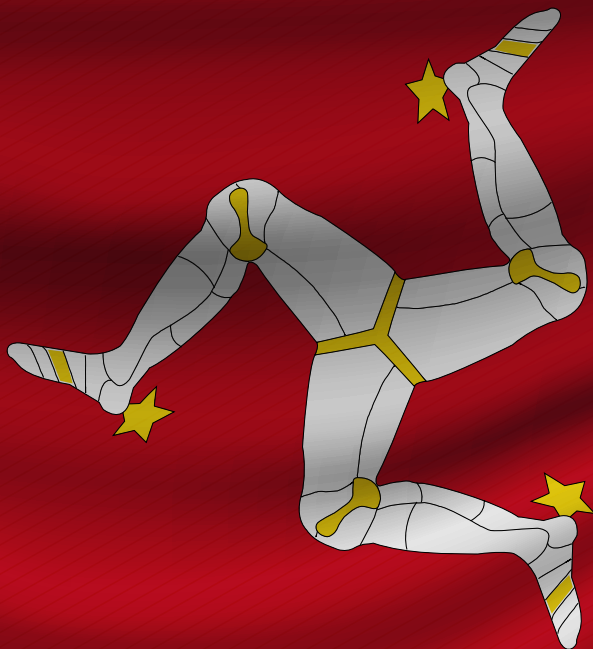
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Isle of Man

Round Table Debate

In the latest in our series of round table debate we talked to industry leaders in the Isle of Man about how they see the future panning-out for this important maritime cluster. Is the future as rosy as they would like or if diversification in the scope of businesses they attract in, the name of the game?

Panellists included: **Lesley-Anne Walker**, Director of the Isle of Man Maritime and chair of the Isle of Man Superyacht Forum; **Lee Clarke**, General Manager Isle of Man Maritime; **Cameron Mitchell**, Director, Isle of Man Ship Registry; **Bruce MacGregor**, Director of PDMS; **Kuba Szymanski**, Secretary General of InterManager; **Tony Whittaker**, Company Contracts Manager & Company Secretary, Shell Ship Management Ltd; **Robert Hockel**, Managing Director Shell Ship Management Ltd; **Luke Tippett**, Managing Director Döhle (IOM) Ltd; **David Furnival**, Executive Chairman Bernhard Schulte Shipmanagement



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Sean Moloney

I would like to welcome everyone here today for our annual SMI Isle of Man round table debate. The Isle of Man is an important maritime cluster, and I am looking forward to hearing your thoughts and views on how the cluster has performed over the past year. A lot has happened as we emerge from this pandemic but, but more importantly, shipping will be looking to change as it seeks ways to drive in new efficiencies. But how well prepared must centres like the Isle of Man be? First of all, I would like the panellists to introduce themselves.

Kuba Szymanski

I just did the quick maths, I've been associated with the Isle of Man 32 years this year. I started as a cadet and then moved through the ranks before locating to the Isle of Man in 2000, twenty-two years ago. I am now Secretary General of InterManager operating from the Isle of Man.

Sean Moloney

Brilliant. Thank you, Kuba. Lee, do you want to tell us a little bit about yourself.

Lee Clarke

Good morning. I am the newly appointed General Manager of the Isle of Man Maritime. I'm celebrating my twentieth year in maritime this year. I started at the Isle of Man Steam Packet getting a cadetship and then moving my way through the ranks. I took over cadet management for Bibby and for V. Ships and then came back to the island just before the pandemic hit in December 2019. I also work for a technology company so I split my time between that and the Isle of Man Maritime and I'm looking forward to driving the new agenda for the Isle of Man Maritime.

Sean Moloney

Brilliant, Lee, thank you very much. Bruce, we always meet once a year and it is

good to see you again. Do you want to just remind us of who you are and what you do?

Bruce McGregor

I'm a Director of PDMS, an IT technology software solutions company. I've been working with PDMS for 28 years. I am also a member of the Isle of Man Maritime Executive Committee so significantly involved in promoting the Isle of Man Maritime Cluster at international events such as the three events we did online during last year's London International Shipping Week (LISW).

David Furnival

Hello, good morning everyone, my name is David Furnival, I'm a marine engineer by background with seagoing marine engineer experience extending through the ranks up to chief, before coming ashore in nineteen something, I can't remember now. But I came to the Isle of Man 24 years ago this year, all that time working for the Schulte Group, Dorchester Maritime and then in 2008 Bernhard Schulte Shipmanagement. I was COO for nearly 10 years and I am currently Executive Chairman for the group. And while I'm based in the Isle of Man, most of my role involves dealing with other parts of the organisation.

Sean Moloney

Brilliant. Thank you very much, David. Cameron, your thoughts?

Cameron Mitchell

Good morning, everyone. My name's Cameron Mitchell and I am Director of the Isle of Man Ship Registry. This will be my third year in post coming up shortly. My background is marine engineering. I went to sea when I was 17 as a cadet and this year I'll have been in the industry for 32 years. Like David, I moved to the island twenty-odd years ago when I was working for Maersk and then took up a position

at the Ship Registry in 2003 and worked my way up to the current Director's role.

Sean Moloney

Brilliant. Thank you very much, Cameron. Robert, if I can just ask you just to introduce yourself.

Robert Hockel

Hi, I'm Rob, I look after Shell Ship Management. My background is computer science and finance and I've worked in various positions in Shell over the years, but in 2019 I started looking after Shell Ship Management and have been on the island since 1986 and still going strong.

Sean Moloney

Thank you very much, sir, thank you. Luke?

Luke Tippet

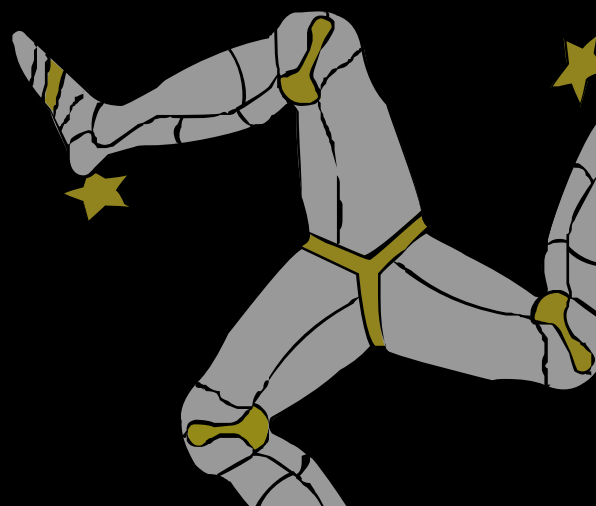
Morning all, thank you, Sean and Karen, for the invitation once again. My name is Luke Tippet, Group Managing Director for the Döhle Isle of Man Group of companies. Working for the company for the best part of 12 years, both here and in the Hamburg office. I have been on the Isle of Man for 14 years.

Sean Moloney

That's lovely. Thank you very much, Luke. And finally, Tony.

Tony Whittaker

Tony Whittaker, Shell Ship Management, been here for 36 years. I think I know most of you, looking round. I am Company Secretary and Contracts Manager at Shell.



Kuba Szymanski



Sean Moloney

But looking at 2022, we've been through a lot over the last two years with the pandemic and certainly the role of the clusters has come into sharp focus as a result. We've seen it with Singapore, with Hong Kong and Dubai, with Dubai actually strengthening its position in its region on the back of the various lockdowns. But looking ahead, what do you think are the challenges and opportunities facing the Isle of Man as a cluster now in 2022 and what is the strategy for growth and development? Lee, let me come onto you first, I'll then go onto Kuba and then onto David and then Cameron. But Lee, if you can just give us your thoughts on that.

Lee Clarke

When I took over the role of General Manager one of the things that I wanted to look at was promotion of the Isle of Man. We're very unique in our cluster in that we are so uniformed in what we do; we're all working in the same direction, which I'm really excited about. I think the challenge going forward is certainly going to be how are we going to come out of

the pandemic, how are we going to reach people that we're normally able to meet face-to-face. So, in certain terms for our cluster, in terms of the Isle of Man, how we promote ourselves, that is going to be very interesting.

Sean Moloney

What would you say is the strategy though? I mean, you've got to be looking to grow the cluster, haven't you?

Lee Clarke

We are, but one of the problems we face is that we need to attract new business to the Isle of Man; we need to attract more ship managers; we're trying to diversify as a cluster bringing in new technologies, bringing in new companies that we wouldn't normally look at as a cluster but with a maritime background as well.

Sean Moloney

Okay. Kuba, let me get your thoughts on this. Your connection with the island goes back a number of decades, as you said, and InterManager is based there and Lee's just been pointing to this whole point about growing the ship management sector. So, talk to me about your responses on that and also looking at the growth and strategy there, do you think, for the island. What should it be doing?

Kuba Szymanski

On this bald head today I will be wearing three hats. One will be ship management, one will be yachting and one will be training. So let me start with

Lee Clarke



training first, because not everybody on this call might be aware that the Isle of Man is extremely successful in training superintendents for the last 16 years and this is something we are growing all the time, thanks to Cameron and David who were the founding fathers of the course 16 or 17 years ago when Peter Döhle and Dorchester Maritime at the time decided to create a platform where superintendents could be trained. And it is extremely successful; we have been doing that for 28 times. Actually, if it wasn't for COVID we would be now well into our thirtieth course, but for the last two years we had to slow down, three times we couldn't organise it, but last April we did and it was successful. Extremely successful actually; we had, if I remember rightly, 16 people on the course which is the maximum we can really accommodate. And it is superb, because the recommendations we are receiving from the students who participated in the course is basically our marketing, and this is very much the teamwork because almost everybody on this call company-wise is participating and training superintendents.





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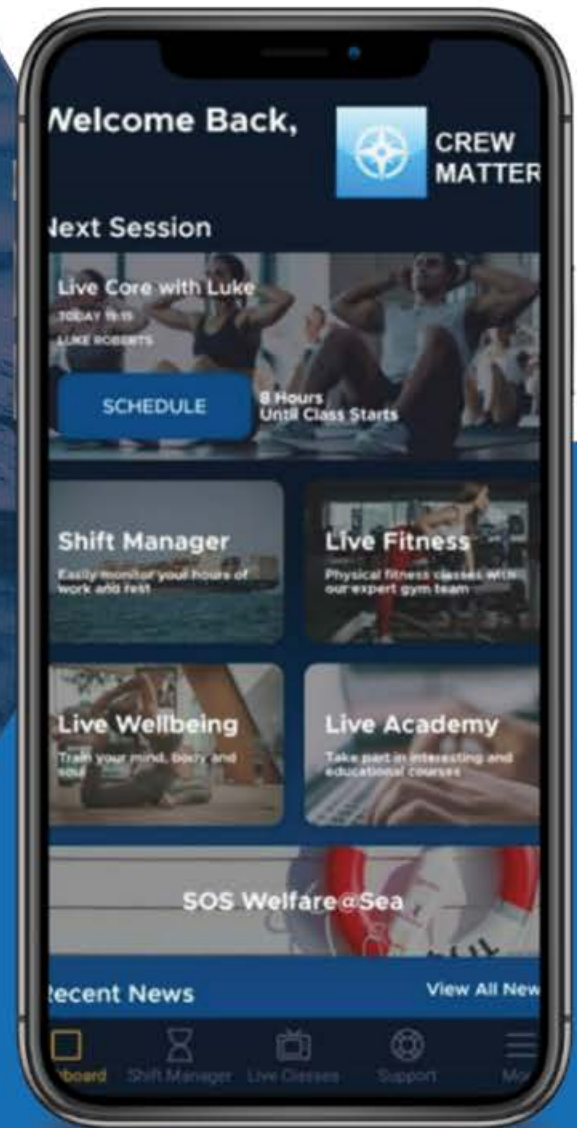
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Isle of Man
Ship Registry

David Furnival



And imagine, this is absolutely superb, first-hand; come to the Isle of Man, touch what is happening here and then go away. And I hope a lot of these guys are actually coming back one way or another to the Isle of Man or at least to have had a very good first impression of the Isle of Man. We've had students from Hong Kong, Singapore, India and across Europe obviously and then we had Americans as well.

So that's the one which I am hoping we will strengthen. Now yachting. The Isle of Man is fabulously positioned in the UK and Ireland, and if we are talking about the UK, we are talking about Scotland, Wales, England and Ireland. I can't remember precisely from the top of my head but I think there are about 32,000 yachts around the Isle of Man and very few of them visit the island, so this is a lost opportunity. So that's what is behind the idea of expanding Douglas and building and completing the new marina in Ramsey. I have to say I'm 56 now and if I retire early then I would love to retire to the Douglas Marina renewed completely because all the posh boats would move to Ramsey and I would be on my boat in Douglas enjoying the atmosphere. But we need Ramsey.

Actually, I wrote some sort of a strategy which talked about 17 small marinas on the Isle of Man, all working together cooperatively and this was put into Tynwald in 2017 when I did a presentation. And now I think we need to invigorate that because of COVID.

There are so many beautiful places on the Isle of Man which we should promote because if somebody comes to the Isle of Man they can spend a week here easily, if not two weeks. Even us, yachties from the Isle of Man, we do not go to some places because it's 'well they're very difficult'. We need to work on it. And I appreciate the fact there is very advanced work already done by my colleagues in Ramsey and working together with Tynwald, working together with the Department of Infrastructure, it is probably three steps back, one step forward, but maybe using this forum, maybe using the pressure from outside of the Isle of Man we can start seeing things happen. So that's the second hat off, that was yachting, and the third one is ship management.

And as far as ship management is concerned, the picture is a bit more bleak in my opinion, unfortunately. I came to the Isle of Man physically in 2000, and I think those were the island's heydays, 2000 to 2005/6, when Dorchester Maritime, David, correct me, had something like one hundred plus people in the office managing ships. Dorchester was one of the best ship management companies in the world, the forefront of LNG vessel management. And we were not alone, Peter Döhle was doing the same, and Shell was vibrant, Maersk was here as was VShips and Bibby's and so on. Sorry to say that 20 years forward and unfortunately, we do not have as many players here. InterManager could be a brilliant example of an organisation which can be managed from the Isle of Man internationally because it's such a good place for human beings, for people who wish to either retire here or bring up children. Communication might be an issue and so on and so forth. But as far as international global shipment management is concerned, I'm very happy to operate from the Isle of Man. Our relationship with the Isle of Man Ship Registry, probably the best registry in the world. And I keep saying that because I

have had my ships with them. So, three hats off, thank you.

Sean Moloney

Thank you, Kuba. David, can you put all these comments into perspective? Looking at opportunities and challenges, as far as ship management is concerned are we seeing the Isle of Man losing its position or consolidating or is there a lot of potential maybe to attract business back in, and what needs to happen if that's going to happen?

David Furnival

I think without a doubt there is a loss of traction when it comes to third party ship management on the island, there's no doubt about that, we had much more going on a decade ago, and I think the reason for that principally is one of cost. And it's not just an Isle of Man issue, it's a Western issue to a significant degree, and there is a huge movement towards Asia. It's where the ship owners want to be based, it's where the commercial operations are significantly being done more and it's where we, as an organisation, have our biggest office, over 135 ships under full management there.

And that migration of ships of course is at the cost of the Isle of Man to some degree and the Isle of Man now for BSM is a crewing location. It's successful because it's specialised and specialisation, in various maritime-related industries, is where the Isle of Man needs to go into the future to be different and to be special and to be able to justify a little bit higher fees than would otherwise be available. So the Isle of Man for BSM is about LNG shipping, it's offshore, specialisation. We have a crew pool from predominantly Eastern Europe, Poland and Latvia, who are very, very loyal, they've been with us for many, many years, and that is the critical selling point for ship management, crew management for us. But it's hard work because the margins are very thin and these last two years, with crew management in a pandemic with all the challenges of mobilising the crews

themselves, has been incredibly hard. And that brings us onto one of the problems we have in the Isle of Man as well and that is getting people who are interested in a maritime career. We've recruited into crewing, a lot of those people didn't stay very long because of the stress of the work. Every task has to be repeated several times before it can be done because of changes, changes to laws, rules or availability of flights. It's a soul-destroying situation or it has been for crewing over the last two years. We have to rebuild on that during the course of 2022, remotivate people and find a source of people who want to make the maritime industry their career going forward, and that's probably the biggest challenge we face from an the Isle of Man perspective. Having said that, we also have a lot of problems getting people, keeping people in India, would you believe? There's a huge migration, whether that's in shipping or in tech. We have an office in Cochin which employs nearly 500 people but we had a high rotation of staff during the last year because they're all in demand and salaries are going up. So it's a complicated challenge. I think if we have a stable year in 2022, we can recover some of the ground we've lost over the last two years but it will take effort.

Sean Moloney

So this point raises a number of issues there with the resource and attracting in the right skills set. Are you basically saying that it is going to be a difficult two to three years ahead for the Isle of Man, do you think, in actually consolidating and growing its ship management position?

David Furnival

I think from the ship management sector, yes, it is. There may be opportunities in other maritime sectors of course which

are not particularly visible to me at the moment but, yes, ship management's going to be a challenge because we have such competition, particularly from Asia.

Sean Moloney

Cameron, let me come to you on this. Taking up that point there that David said, what do you think needs to be happening now on the Isle of Man to continue to drive growth and interest in the cluster there? What are your concerns and what are your hopes?

Cameron Mitchell

I agree with David that any sort of return to the sort of figures that we had in the late 1990s and early 2000s, with ship management companies on the Isle of Man is unlikely, and there are various reasons why I'd say that. We've had a zero/10 tax regime, as everyone here will know, for a considerable amount of time, so ship management companies pay 0% taxation. Now, if that doesn't attract people then what does? For me it becomes a resource issue, it's the human element. It's the cost of the human element, it's the cost of resources, it's the cost of labour in all these other countries.

And, very much along David's lines, what we've noticed in recent years is that Asian Pacific Rim strategies are coming into play more predominantly for shipping companies, especially the big companies that we predominantly deal with. So it's a challenging time, absolutely. I think, as Lee mentioned, diversification of our membership, looking at new technologies, looking at green technologies is key, and we're seeing that but we're not necessarily seeing it in maritime. 'Locate Isle of Man' which is part of the Department for Enterprise.. has seen a big uptake in people bringing new products to the Isle of Man over the

last two years so it hasn't, I would say, stopped people coming to the Isle of Man looking for opportunities, it's just changed; it just isn't currently shipping. So obviously we've got to work on this. I sit on the Executive Committee of Isle of Man Maritime with Lee and we've got to promote ourselves overseas, promote the cluster overseas and see how we can turn this round. But to me certainly autonomous shipping is important. The UK has consultations on regulations for autonomous shipping that are out now. I came across a figure late last year and I think it was something like \$76 billion had been invested in autonomous technology last year, so if you can get a small market share of that investment moving to the Isle of Man, whatever it might be, in engineering, in IT, any of those things, that's going to be a contributing factor to future growth. So we may currently be in difficult circumstances, but there is plenty of opportunity out there, especially as the world starts to open up again.

Sean Moloney

Thank you very much, Cameron. I'm going to come onto Robert and Tony and then I'll go onto Luke and then I've got some special questions for Lesley as well. But Robert and Tony here, I mean, some interesting points here. I want to get an idea, though, looking at the potential for competition within the other sort of



maritime centres within the UK as well because, if the Isle of Man does reduce or lose elements of its maritime expertise, it'll either lose it to the Far East or it could lose it to the UK, to the Newcastle, to the Glasgows. Are there opportunities now where the UK with the right foresight and forward thinking and financial incentives could actually strengthen what it's doing, whether it's in the Isle of Man, whether it's in Glasgow, whether it's in Newcastle? Robert, do you want to have a go at that very long and difficult question?

Robert Hockel

I think during COVID the Isle of Man was a pillar of stability and continuity. Yes, in some way we were probably a little bit lucky that we weren't hit by COVID as much because the borders were closed but if I also reflect on the comments made previously about moving to Asia, David, that you mentioned, it might look easier on paper than it actually then has on operational continuity. So for us I think the Isle of Man has worked out very well. We have been able to continue with staff in the office and even with flexible working hours to continuously and flawlessly execute our crew changes, at least from our perspective, so we didn't have any disruption. If I reflect on the disruption we have had in other countries and even now with some people in India where you have different public holidays, different regimes, you're a little bit nearer the East where suddenly public holidays might be announced at short notice. So for us it has worked quite

well. I fully agree with the technology and the green technology, I think that will be driving through, but I think the trend to continuously move to a lower cost country where you can do the wage arbitrage, that is probably causing you more pain potentially than you benefit from it. The key has to be the technology that you get people to be able to manage more vessels or more seafarers by having something which is seamless and is integrated with the vessel and all the onshore stuff that you need to connect to.

Tony Whittaker

Late last year we advertised for a post within the office and it was surprising to me, I think, how we didn't get anybody with any experience in shipping applying, whereas five and 10 years ago if we'd have put an advert in the paper we'd have had people from various companies with recent or current shipping experience. So it seems that not only have the businesses moved but a lot of the individuals who had the expertise have also moved.

Sean Moloney

Right. That's the worrying point. Luke, let me bring you in. With Döhle you're based in the Isle of Man but what are the opportunities here for the Isle of Man, do you think, as a cluster? Are you going to be just attracting in aligned sectors as opposed to core ship management that we've seen before?

Luke Tippet

I'll try and be as positive as I can, but I think Cameron hit the nail on the head initially when he said that if you can't attract people coming in with 0% corporation tax you're going to struggle, and certainly I have to echo what Kuba mentioned and what David also said about this decline in ship management coming over to the Isle of Man. And it's quite strange to hear David's recollections of the past year because it's almost completely aligned with how we've seen things in our office here as well, having a bit of staff turnover which our group is not really accustomed to but having to deal with other sort of changes and challenges; obviously COVID the last couple of years, having to work digitally, working from home.

But I know you want to concentrate more on the positives, what we can do, and I think for the Isle of Man Maritime getting back out there, hopefully doing some travelling, attending more events this year after not being able to for the last couple of years is a good thing. I won't go too much into the manpower, I know that's a topic for a bit later on, but it's completely true, if we're not having, let's say, as much shipping involvement here on the Isle of Man as we used to many years ago, not as many ship managers coming over, obviously that's a key problem. But if you can't tap into a resource pool of people with shipping experience, even maritime experience, whether that's in yachting or

Robert Hockel



Luke Tippet



Tony Whittaker




Lesley-Anne Walker


Bruce McGregor


corporate services, then you're always going to struggle.

We've discussed this quite a few times over the last couple of years, and everybody I think is on the same page with this, that the Isle of Man maritime cluster is not just about ship management, it's not even just about shipping. I know, for example, getting the younger generation interested in maritime without them thinking all this basically means is going to sea is an area we can push and hopefully can get the interest from the youth of today. I know Lesley and Lee and others involved with Isle of Man Maritime are huge advocates of that and have done a lot to get into the schools and colleges to push this but if we do manage to, let's say, increase the maritime cluster, the maritime community, more ship managers, more yacht managers coming to the Isle of Man, I think it's going to be key to have a resource pool that people can use, people that are interested and want to develop the skills to do well in the industry.

Sean Moloney

And, Lesley, I'm going to tap into something that Luke was saying there as far as looking at attracting in, and encouraging, people to look to maritime as a career. Is the Isle of Man going to have to start thinking outside the box as far as all of this is concerned if it's going to continue to attract the right people? Because it is worrying if you've got 0% corporation tax and 10% income tax and you can't

get companies to come in. So what are your views? You sit on the Isle of Man Maritime but also with the superyachts as well so give me your perspective.

Lesley-Anne Walker

Touching on what Luke was saying, we definitely need to raise awareness and educate the younger generation about the opportunities that are out there in terms of a career in maritime and, like Luke said, to let them know it's more than about just being at sea. One of the other issues we have is that once we've got that interest it's then the pathway in which they get to those careers that also needs to work, and making sure that there's the right pathway for them to secure those jobs at the end of it once they've got the training. I know from the superyacht side, one of the issues some of the yacht crew are having is that they're doing all their qualifications and then when it comes to trying to get jobs the instant response from the recruiters in the yachting industry is: "well go and dock-walk and try and get a couple of days to get some experience and once you've got some of that experience we'll get you a job." But we need to look at how we can incorporate things, whether it is an apprenticeship, onboard mentoring, work experience type roles earlier on. So, I think there are challenges along the whole journey really, it's not just a case of getting people interested in a career in maritime, it's how we move that into the right areas.

Sean Moloney

I want to bring Bruce in on this. With your innovation digital hat on can you give us your thoughts about potential opportunities. There are some very, very important and interesting issues going on here as far as the challenges are concerned, and there has got to be solutions to them. What are your thoughts?

Bruce McGregor

Picking up on some of the subject matter that we've touched on so far, including from Lee's point around the maritime cluster and looking at being innovative. It's important that we correctly target what we're trying to represent as a cluster. There's a lot of service capability represented in the maritime-related organisations on the island so, as Lee was saying and I think Luke picked up on as well, it's making sure we promote and create leading services in the right way. In the last couple of years, the pandemic has really catalysed and focused the need for maritime business, and their operations, to be able to be delivered genuinely digitally. While 'pandemic catalysation' has driven a significant demand in our Digital Transformation solutions space, which is great for business, it's created real challenges for many maritime organisations who aren't already digitally prepared. This challenge is not unique to maritime but has been the case across all sectors in the last couple of years. In this context, I think the Isle of Man Maritime cluster has got to make sure that it is

indeed both ready and able to operate digitally as a cluster and a jurisdiction - and can promote this fact. Whether that's in online service capabilities, modern regulatory alignment, maritime legal, corporate services or with our leading ship registry and their vessel registration services, for example.

Many organisations out there have had a tough time and have had to engage with digital operations, often at very short notice and with perhaps temporary approaches, because they've just had to – business transformation is not really an overnight thing. Digital transformation demands are, however, not going to just go away as the pandemic wanes, so maintaining focus in this regard will continue to drive service transformations.

In terms of the innovation piece and maritime, I think the Isle of Man has to look at itself for areas where it could continue to or really move itself forward into being one of the up there and leading jurisdictions. In relation to my sector (IT) it might be the 'digital identity' piece in relation to Seafarers/ Crew - and the challenge here isn't just about IT, it's about digital identity engagement, its acceptance and with the right regulatory guidelines and so forth.

Coming back to one of the other points as well, on resources (attracting people), of course we want to attract businesses and associated bodies of people to the Isle of Man but, given the drive to more digital operations and the need for the ability for people in organisations to work from anywhere - I think some of it is about how we work well as a cluster in attracting the right parts of leading businesses and their key people for maritime services – which they then co-ordinate and run from the Isle of Man. While accepting that in those businesses some of their people will not move to the island, as they would have done in the past, but will operate from different places around the world. They can all still work in their organisation

seamlessly because they don't all have to be here physically anymore.

So, it's about being attractive as a location and jurisdiction in order to attract the right part of leading businesses. This doesn't stop maritime businesses growing and it doesn't stop exportation of our services from the Isle of Man, in fact it promotes that, but in doing this right then we'd be bringing in top class expertise and learning and differentiating as industries. And I think Kuba mentioned it, it's in part as well engaging with the fact that if globally industries are going to operate more in a 'they can do it from anywhere' kind of way, then we need to attract those businesses and key people to the island and our maritime cluster, including their senior decision makers that are really steering the strategic and modern services that maritime needs.

Sean Moloney

Lee, let me bring you in.

Lee Clarke

I think most people in the room know that my background is training and certainly training of our youth, and so for the past three months now we, as a cluster, have been focused on three areas in terms of growing our own. I think it's always good to have and bring in experience but one of my main priorities is to grow our own and see how we can develop as a cluster with our own people. And the area that we're focusing on is certainly cadetships. We have a very successful cadetship programme on the island, we're taking that further this year and into the future. Apprenticeships, so looking at how even we deal with fisheries, to yachting, to that side of things, even dealing with how do we get young Manx people passionate about going onboard and doing catering onboard our own ships. And, lastly, shoreside. And this was highlighted back in November when I visited a nautical college in the

UK and we're now actively having discussions about how we can do crew management diplomas or certificates with a nautical college in the UK certified by a university. So we're really excited to see how we can develop that because, again, you know, growing our own is important.

Sean Moloney

Kuba, let me bring you in.

Kuba Szymanski

Okay, eleven years ago when I applied for a job which I successfully got as the Secretary General of InterManager, InterManager was based in Monaco and I did a very quick calculation for InterManager, I saved them 40%, and I think people should do things like that, we can help that, showing how cheaper it is to run big organisations from the Isle of Man. Proof is in the pudding. So that was the first thing I wanted to mention. The second thing is the very low-hanging fruit for the Isle of Man is the cruise industry.

COVID will one day go away and before it we were very close to actually having superb discussions with cruise operators who are in Dublin, Liverpool and Belfast and they are dying to come to the Isle of Man for emergencies but also for the Isle of Man itself. And imagine how much we can do for the Isle of Man having all those Americans and Europeans coming to the Isle of Man for even one day or two days, but we need to have space to accommodate them and this is the problem at the moment in Douglas. It's a no-brainer, the Isle of Man has so much to offer and is in the middle of the Irish Sea surrounded by cruise ships just going around – why not stop here for 12 hours. This is very low-hanging fruit and we should be doing this.

Sean Moloney

Lady and Gentlemen, thank you for your valuable input today. ●

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Waves of change



Economist **Dr Martin Stopford** on shipowners' looming '3-D' challenge of Decarbonisation, Digitalisation and De-globalisation

Politicians struggling with the emerging Covid pandemic learnt an important lesson. By the time they were sure what to do, it was too late! Luckily nightmare decisions on this scale are rare. In the maritime industry the last was in the 1960s, when deciding how to transition from general cargo to containerisation defeated a generation of 'rock solid' liner companies.

But suddenly for maritime decision-makers, it's all happening. Just as with buses where you wait ages for the first one to come along, three 'nightmare decisions' have arrived at once – decarbonisation, digitalisation and de-globalisation.

Maritime decarbonisation indecision

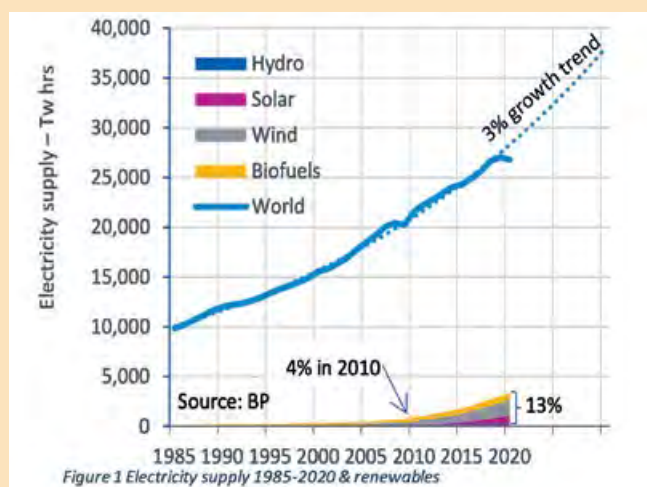
Last year 62,000 cargo ships moved 12 billion tonnes of cargo and their internal combustion

engines (ICEs) produced 3 tonnes of carbon per tonne of Heavy Fuel Oil (HFO) used. In November 2021 the commitment to decarbonise was re-emphasised by the EU deputy head of DG Mobility and Transport, who bluntly told a conference that "we strongly believe that global regulation is what we need". So decision makers must figure out how to make the regulators happy. But the options are disturbingly unclear.

The problem is that for the maritime industry, the voyage to zero carbon propulsion stretches many years in the future. Even if the propulsion technology is available, "it will be years before we can rely purely on sustainable sources of energy". This was the conclusion of a recent study by the authoritative Danish Green Ship of the Future Project and the facts support it in two ways.



Firstly, the global supply of 'green' fuel will be limited for years to come. Deep sea ships need portable energy made from zero carbon electricity but so do many other industries with deep pockets. Currently only a tiny proportion of the electricity needed to produce green fuels is generated by renewables. For example, Figure 1 shows that in the last decade, despite the heroic growth of solar and wind, renewables have not even been able to supply the annual growth of electricity production. So ships will be competing with a long list of big players for the limited supply of green electricity.



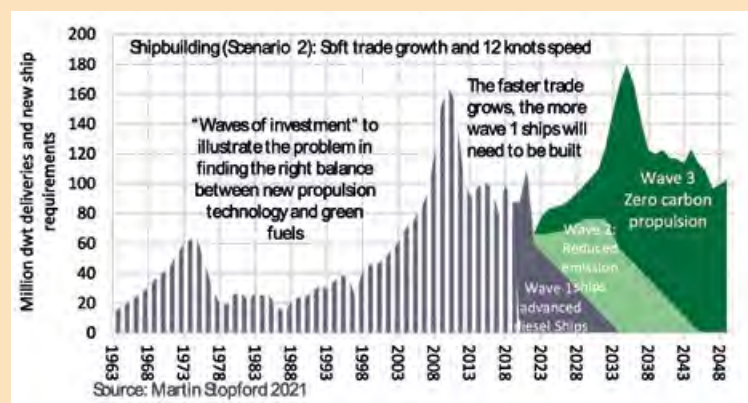
Secondly, even if supplies of green marine fuel (GMF) can be obtained, it will be eye-wateringly expensive. For example, 400 tonnes of green methanol is needed to replace the daily oil consumption of a \$180 million containership at full speed. An offshore windfarm producing electricity to synthesize 400 Mt of methanol costs about \$1 billion, and around \$100,000/day to run.

What decarb strategy will work?

Even when the technology and fuels are available, rebuilding the fleet will take about 20 years, unless the world adopts an emergency shipbuilding programme. The Green Ship of the Future report concludes: "we must constantly seek innovations in existing assets and ensure optimal energy efficiency, to keep the negative impact on environment as low as possible and reduce overall energy costs". But that's easier

said than done because, as the study showed, retrofitting opportunities are quite limited.

Most owners just want to get on with the running their fleet, but these big decisions are hard to nail down. Spend the weekend ploughing through technical reports and by Sunday evening you're confused because some of the things you were sure about turned out not to be true! The answer must be to plot the best course you can, give it to officer of the watch and get a good night's sleep!



Five key strategic variables

At least some of the technical options are reasonably clear - the main propulsion choice is between internal combustion engines (ICE) and electric motors powered by batteries and fuel cells, opening the way for all-electric ships. But there is no 'one size fits all' solution. A viable strategy will need to be adapted to five key variables: the propulsion system, the available fuels, the trade, the fleet, and the relationship with charterers.

Methanol and ammonia will work with internal combustion engines, which would be more robust for the demanding deep-sea trades. Short sea is a better environment to develop the more innovative electric propulsion, powered by batteries and fuel cells. Ferries and short-sea cargo vessels spend much of their time in ECAs and the distances are less demanding.

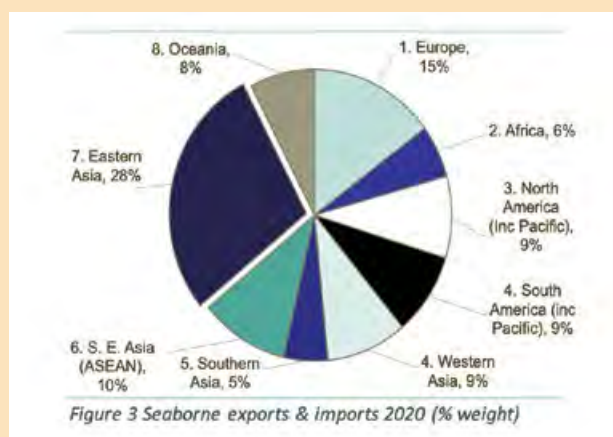
Both technologies are confidently being developed and inevitably innovation is likely to come in a series of waves, illustrated by the scenario in Figure 2, as technology improves and shipyards and investors gain confidence.

Turning to the zero carbon fuels, they are a mixed bag with many drawbacks compared to HFO. But availability is likely to be the biggest problem. Realistically we have no idea when green fuels will be available through the global bunker system, and at what price. With many industries competing for limited supplies, the price likely to be high. If long term contracts are required by suppliers, the participation of cargo interests willing to underwrite them will be important (as it was in the 1960s for the construction of supertankers etc).

Digitalisation - creeping up on industry

Meanwhile the I4 revolution is opening a Pandora's box of satellite communications, the cloud, and data streaming etc. There is no doubt that if shipping companies can apply this technology in the way car manufacturers, cab companies, and land-based logistics services are already doing, sea transport will take a giant step forward, especially in the short sea trades.

But for most maritime leaders, including shipyards, it's an uphill struggle. Information is jealously guarded, so systems integration is difficult. Today's companies were not designed for digitalisation and nor were the maritime regulations they must comply with when they invest in the next generation of maritime transport. Developing technically viable global regulations, like developing integrated digital systems, is easier said than done!



An even bigger problem is that professional and technical staff with practical digital skills are thin on the ground. Regulations like Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping (STCW) were designed for a very different era when craft apprenticeship was the norm. This can obstruct innovation and block the infusion of the bright young technicians. So qualified marine digital engineers may turn out to be even scarcer than green fuel.



This article was prepared exclusively for SMI by eminent shipping economist and technology commentator Dr Martin Stopford, whose authoritative textbook *Maritime Economics* is now in its 3rd edition, based on a paper entitled 'Restructuring ocean shipping and supply chains for the 21st Century' first published by the OECD Forum.

De-globalisation – new trade phenomenon

A third less obvious, but equally pressing challenge is that the tide of globalisation is on the ebb. Climate change, geopolitics, I4 technology and regional evolution are all pushing in that direction. My guess is that in coming decades, globalisation will increasingly focus on regional trading blocks, described by the great historian Ferdinand Braudel as *Weltwirtschaft* ('world economy').

This is likely because multi-nationals who developed global trade are retreating to their home base. There are many reasons why this will continue. Higher transport costs (today's system was designed when bunkers cost \$12/tonne), and I4 technology will narrow the inter-regional cost differential. Consumer tastes will change. The dominant Eastern Asia region (see Figure 3 E. Asia is mainly China, S Korea and Japan) will develop differently from the mature North Atlantic economies. Resource pressures and decarbonisation will push security of supply up the agenda.

Finally, the fossil fuels trade, which today accounts for 40% of seaborne trade, will shrink and may eventually disappear. Will it be replaced by new global trades in green fuel or will the energy trade be intra-regional?

Maritime tactics in a changing world

Decarbonisation, digitalisation and de-globalisation have all been around for years, but have suddenly surfaced, like a nagging headache that has suddenly turned into a fever. Every maritime company needs some sort of vision of its role in the coming decades.

The building blocks for are clear enough. Internal combustion engines, electric ships, zero carbon fuels, I4 technology, the cloud, data streaming, intelligent algorithms, and new customer relationships will all be needed to build something better than we have today. But introducing zero emission vessels, obtaining supplies of green fuels, introducing digital systems that really work and identifying tomorrow's customers will be a tough call.

The starting point must be to build organisations capable of managing this change – at company, industry and regulatory level. A new generation of entrepreneurs, professionals, technicians and enthusiasts will be needed – all educated and dedicated to making the new maritime vision a reality.

Maritime executives, like the politicians managing the pandemic, cannot be sure. But the lesson from the Pandemic is you have to start somewhere and the sooner the better. ●

Vessel spoofing: not everything is what it may first appear to be

Frontline and a number of other major shipping operations are at the moment suffering the increasing practice of vessel mis-identification and international sanction regulation evasion.

The International Group of P&I Clubs (IG), normally quite a conservative commentator, has recently issued a guidance to its Worldwide Membership concerning the increasing risk of vessel spoofing. In doing so the IG notice goes far beyond the existing regulatory position set out by both OFAC (Office of Foreign Assets Control) in the USA and OFSI (Office of Financial Sanctions Implementation) in England and Wales.

"The use of deception in international trade is nothing new" says Global Senior Partner of Ince, Julian Clark. From mis-declaration of condition of cargo, to requests to issue antedated bills of lading, through to the practice of re-naming ships on documents to evade customs or other regulations, these are all activities that have plagued the industry for years.

"But what is new today," he continues, "is a dramatic escalation of the techniques used to evade international regulation which now extend to manipulation of AIS, GNSS, GPS and other data and even the steps taken to change physical appearances of ships."

There has without doubt been an escalation in the number of cargos being moved internationally in breach of international sanction regulations with indications being that as many as an estimated 1.3 million barrels per day, are currently exported from Iran following the US withdrawal from the JCPOA (Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action) in March 2021.

While those engaged in the international trade market are well aware of the significant consequences of finding themselves on the wrong side of a sanctions investigation, they are equally faced by the difficulties in ensuring that when engaging with their trade partners, either conducting ship to ship transfer operations, chartering vessels or indeed engaging in international trade itself, simply identifying the names of a vessel and its ownership is no longer enough.

Ami Daniel, CEO of UK-listed maritime AI company Windward (Lon:WNWD), says that what is needed here is true behavioural analysis in order to identify the relevant risk factors.

Windward utilises maritime AI to help organisations find more trading opportunities with lower false positives.

"A+ players in the market remain A+ in how they operate and trade," he says. "Companies with proper compliance and due diligence processes and technologies are simply assuring that they are conserving their reputation and ensuring smooth operations and not doing business with C players which can lead to oil spills or other worst case scenarios."

What is the legal situation when a third party is actively seeking to confuse other participants in the international supply chain by mis-representing that they are something that they are not? "To be honest it is not a great position to find yourself in as a reputable operator," says Julian Clark. "Frontline were quite right to draw attention to the fact that a number of deceptive players have been using the prefix 'Front' before the other names of a vessel to masquerade as Frontline. But the legal remedies available to Frontline, or any other international operator, are limited."

He explains that while the laws regarding protection of intellectual property are often mirrored in numerous jurisdictions worldwide and that it is in theory possible not only to trademark a vessel name, or indeed seek trademark protection for an unregistered mark, the real issue comes down to enforcement. "The rights to arrest and detain a vessel are contained within the various admiralty jurisdiction provisions worldwide. None of these currently extends so far as the protection of international property rights."

He goes on to say that while there may be ways to create innovative solutions by using intellectual property rights under the law in various jurisdictions the further issue is whether, even if this could be done, the end target will have deep enough pockets to satisfy any claim.

It seems that Owners and other reputable operators will have to work harder to beat the sleight of hand played by deceptive operators. ●

New Singapore arbitration rules - everything you need to know



*From 1st January 2022, arbitrations commenced under the rules of the Singapore Chamber of Maritime Arbitration (SCMA) were subject to new rules, explains **Fiona Cain**, Counsel at global law firm Haynes Boone.*

The 4th edition of the rules was issued by the SCMA to ensure that their arbitrations remain relevant and attractive for parties and also to reinforce cost efficiency for maritime and international trade arbitrations.

Similar to the changes to other arbitration rules in the past 18 months, the SCMA rules have been updated to allow for service of documents by email, and for tribunals to sign awards electronically and/or in counterparts, unless otherwise agreed.

SCMA have also revised the procedure for the appointment of arbitrators. SCMA arbitrations may now proceed following the appointment of two arbitrators until the two arbitrators cannot agree on any matter relating to the arbitration, or until just before the oral evidential hearing, when a third arbitrator should be appointed.

In addition, the appointment of a third arbitrator is no longer necessary if the case proceeds on documents only and the arbitrators agree, while parties may no longer change their legal representatives after constitution of the Tribunal, without its approval.

As to hearings, it is now for a party to request or for the Tribunal to decide if there should be a hearing, instead of the matter being determined on documents only. If there is to be a hearing, it is now clear that this can be conducted virtually. As was commonly the case, virtual hearings were not referred to under the previous rules but were permitted and SCMA had issued Specimen Directions for Virtual Hearings and accompanying guidance in October 2020.

Finally, an Expedited Procedure has been introduced for claims/counterclaims which do not exceed US\$300,000 in value.

The SCMA describes itself as a specialist arbitration institution which provides a neutral, cost-effective and flexible framework for maritime and international trade arbitrations that is responsive to the needs of industry users. Its global and regional members hail from all sectors of maritime, trade and arbitration communities. SCMA attracts disputants in the region by providing tailored solutions to suit the region's interests.

The Secretariat helps the promotion and development of SCMA across the region and also leads educational and training symposiums to foster thought leadership and encourage pragmatic solutions for maritime and trade businesses. The Registrar and Assistant Registrar provide administrative support to disputants and tribunals, when requested.

The SCMA was originally established in November 2004 and was under management by the Singapore International Arbitration Centre (SIAC). Acting on industry feedback, it was reconstituted in May 2009 as a company limited by guarantee and started functioning independently.

Funding for establishment and continued operation of the SCMA comes from the Singapore Maritime Foundation. Management of SCMA is overseen by a board of directors which is led by its Chairman, Senior Judge Chao Hick Tin. ●



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Gibraltar

Special Report

Introductory address by the Minister for Business, Tourism and The Port for Her Majesty's Government of Gibraltar, The Hon. Vijay Daryanani

Gibraltar, in common with the rest of the world, has experienced challenges as a result of the Covid pandemic. To this we have to add the uncertainty which the Brexit situation has brought. However, Gibraltar and its maritime industry has once again stepped up and demonstrated its continuing resilience in the face of adverse situations.

Against the backdrop of the twin challenges faced by our maritime industry, the port of Gibraltar has continued to be a port of choice. Indeed, the uncertain times have led to vessels choosing the familiarity and the safety of the well-regulated port as a haven in these challenging times. And Gibraltar has responded by ensuring that even in the midst of the pandemic, a comprehensive range of services was on offer to the maritime industry.

Of particular note is the fact that Gibraltar deservedly received recognition for its efforts to respond to the plight of seafarers seeking repatriation. Both MedCruise and BIMCO openly applauded the fact

that Gibraltar was responsive and pragmatic in assisting the seafarers and was key in facilitating crew changes for vessels and cruise liners.

2020 saw frenzied activity in the crew change front, particularly at the height of travel restrictions where Gibraltar, thanks to the efforts of the Her Majesty's Government of Gibraltar and our partner airlines, were able to maintain a crucial lifeline for seafarers to carry out crew changes at our port.

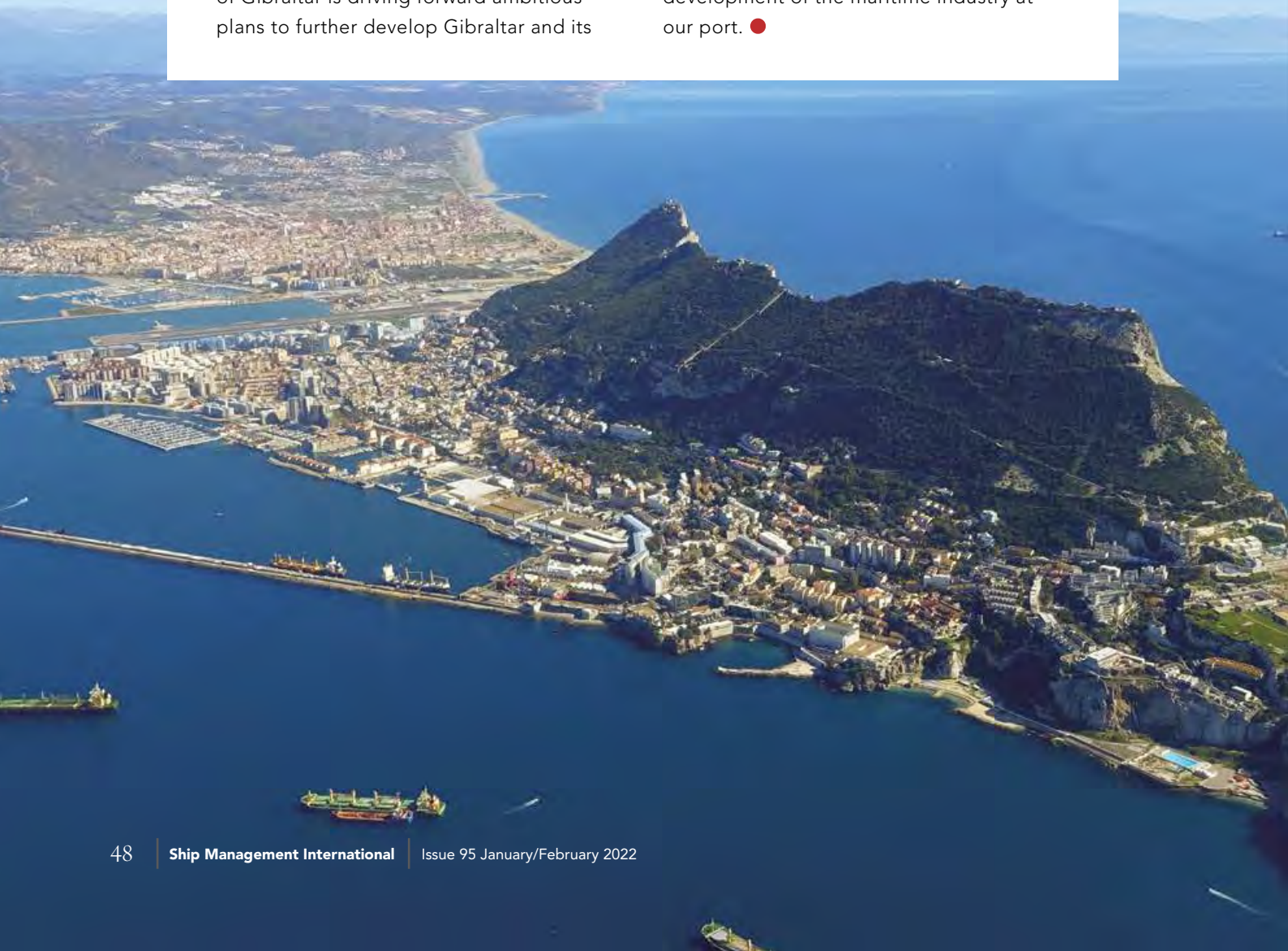
As we move into the 'new normal', business activity in Gibraltar is up year on year from the resilient levels of 2020, with increased activity across the board in the key activities, including bunker calls, number of vessel calls and even the start of the expected recovery for cruise calls.

Gibraltar's resilient performance in these troubled times has not led to us resting on our laurels. In fact, Her Majesty's Government of Gibraltar is driving forward ambitious plans to further develop Gibraltar and its

neighbouring region into a maritime cluster. To this end the Maritime Academy linked to the University of Gibraltar already has its first intake of officer cadets.

November 2021 also saw the second edition of the hugely successful Maritime Week Gibraltar event held in our jurisdiction. This event which showcased what Gibraltar has to offer to the maritime industry, developed on the crucial partnership between the government agencies and organisations and our counterparts in the private sector, to further develop the maritime offering available at this dynamic port.

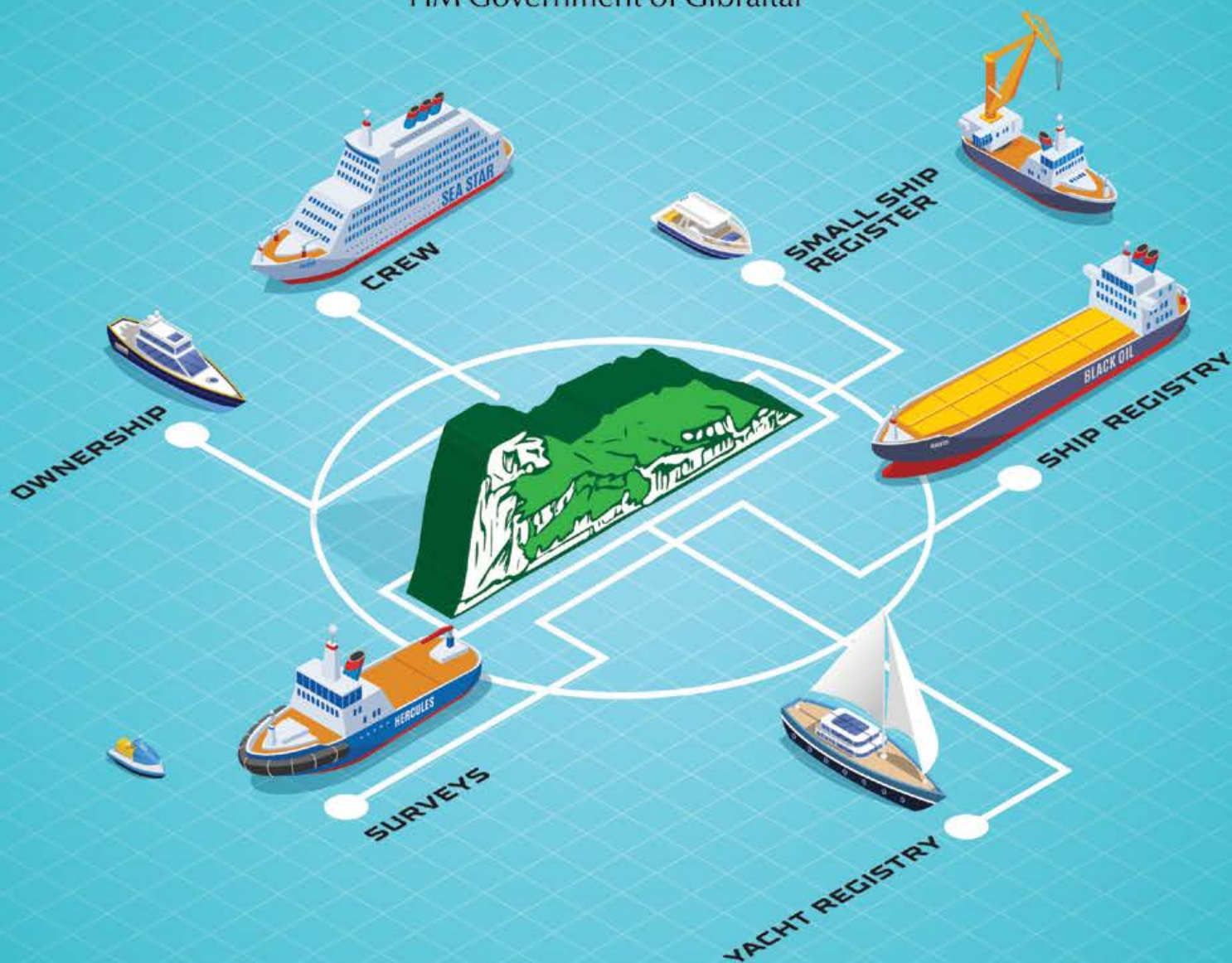
And the first firm steps towards more sustainable shipping were taken in Gibraltar, with the first LNG Bunker supplies being carried out in the port by means of barge to ship deliveries. This is an area where we are seeing increased interest, and which we are sure will be a further factor in the continued development of the maritime industry at our port. ●





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HM Government of Gibraltar



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Vital connector



Since antiquity Gibraltar has owed its maritime prominence to its strategic location as the connecting point, between both the Atlantic Ocean and Mediterranean Sea and the continents of Africa and Europe. Its very name derives from Arabic – Berber commander Jabal Ṭāriq who led the Muslim Umayyad conquest of Spain in the 8th century – while in mythology ‘the Rock’ was one of the two Pillars of Hercules guarding the entrance to the Med.

Today the Port of Gibraltar is a vital bunkering, supply and crew change hub, the latter especially so during the pandemic, while the Gibraltar Ship Registry is part of the Red Ensign Group and enjoys an enviable reputation for quality and client service.

The entire global shipping industry has of course been affected in some way by the Covid-19 pandemic and the Gibraltar Ship Registry and Gibraltar Yacht Registry - which currently number 170 ships representing 1.2m gt and 886 yachts of around 27,500gt respectively - are no exception.

The Gibraltar Maritime Administration (GMA) points out that the registries have had to adapt to ensure the continued facilitation of trade for those vessels registered in Gibraltar and “in order to ensure we could continue to support our clients and seafarers serving on board our registered fleet.” Throughout the pandemic, the GMA has therefore been continuously liaising with all the relevant organisations, agencies and governments and has remained unwavering in its support to its customers and the wider Gibraltar maritime sector in tackling the adverse effects brought about by Covid-19.

Regarding the ‘big issue’ of Brexit, the GMA notes that the UK and Gibraltar are currently engaged in negotiations

with the EU to conclude an EU-UK Treaty on Gibraltar. This will define Gibraltar’s future relationship with the EU. Negotiators will seek to convert, into legal text, a Political Framework for this relationship. This Political Framework was already agreed, on 31 December 2020, with the Government of Spain. The Political Framework foresees the inclusion of a transport chapter in the Treaty covering both maritime and road transport.

Nevertheless, given the global and liberalised nature of shipping, Gibraltar ship operators have of course continued to serve EU ports post-31 December 2020 largely as they do now, it adds.

In terms of safety, security and the protection of the environment, Gibraltar, as part of the UK flag state, continues to cooperate closely with both the EU and the European Maritime Safety Agency. While there has been an understandable decline in the number of vessels on its registries due to the “element of uncertainty” introduced since the Brexit referendum in 2016 – when Gibraltar voted overwhelmingly ‘Remain’ – the GMA points out Gibraltar remains a Category 1 Red Ensign Group register and therefore continues to offer other advantages quite apart from its status as an EU member states register.

With regards to the implications of a potential ‘hard’ border with Spain, the reality is that, since Gibraltar has always been outside of the EU Customs Union, EU exit has not affected procedures through which goods move into Gibraltar for onward transit to vessels.

“The Gibraltar Government has made it clear that a successful outcome to negotiations on Gibraltar’s future relationship with the EU is the best outcome for all stakeholders on either side of the border and beyond,”



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states the GMA. "A fluid, stable and constructive relationship with the EU will continue to attract investment in Gibraltar and the success of Gibraltar, as a whole or as an entity, will no doubt have a positive knock-on effect on the maritime services we are able to provide."

In summary, the GMA says it offers "a credible, prestigious and user-friendly shipping register, based on a well-established legal system based on English law and which operates in a tax-friendly environment serviced by very skilled and experienced professionals. These benefits are accessible to a wide pool of owners from around the world.

"We have been developing new products and enhancements to our systems. These include digital certification (for both ship certificates and seafarers), the provision of a cloud-based GMA/client interface portal for survey related functions, improved online services via our new website and attractive new fees products inclusive of Green ship incentives.

"As always, we continue to engage with our valued customers and thank them for their continued loyalty and support. We consider our good performance within the main MoUs including continued Qualship 21 status is commensurate with the relationships we have built over the years with our clients and is testament to the high standards maintained by the operators of our fleet."

Meanwhile, Gibraltar as a whole remains "a very competitive jurisdiction in which to conduct shipping-related business with a global outreach due to the jurisdictional, professional, legal and corporate advantages it offers," the GMA concludes. "These advantages will undoubtedly facilitate its continued growth as an international maritime centre of excellence into the future.

"Moreover, because our jurisdiction is small and because of the proximity, we have to policymakers, we are very nimble when it comes to capitalising on future opportunities and very quick when it comes to accommodating the needs of our clients as these may evolve."

Returning to the pandemic, Dr Joanna Shelley is founder and owner of the College Clinic in Gibraltar, which each year serves several hundred seafarers transiting through the port as well as local residents. The only UK MCA-approved doctor in the Iberian Peninsula, she carries out ENG1 medicals supporting the Gibraltar Ship Registry and also provides Covid testing, both PCR and lateral flow, for crew transfers happening in the port.

"Gibraltar is a well-respected crew change port," Dr Shelley says, "and the Government made a decision to try to keep that going when the activity was shut down in other ports. which was incredibly laudable. It needed to be very stringent, however, the Port allowing crew changes but with very strict testing protocols."

Seafarers were very appreciative, she adds, providing the example of one Filipino crew member who had been on board ship for 18 months straight without relief, his wife having given birth during that time. "He was most thankful to Gibraltar for being able to travel home at last, and that was very gratifying."

Standard seafarer medicals to ensure fitness to go to sea cover all main areas of general health including checking eyesight, cardio-vascular condition, height, weight, body mass and so forth, continues Dr Shelley. Most common reasons for restriction or failure include colour blindness and previously undiagnosed diabetes (unless regular visits with a doctor can be assured).

Since the start of the pandemic, cases of seafarer anxiety have certainly been on the rise, she continues. College Clinic tries to detect potential psychiatric problems during ENG1 medicals by having Dr Shelley and a nurse both having independent 30-minute conversations with the would-be seafarer and then comparing notes. But problems are hard to diagnose, partly because examinees are so keen to have a job and don't realise they may have problems, which anyway may only become apparent after spending time at sea.

Mental wellbeing among seafarers "is one of the things that worries me a lot," concludes Dr Shelley. "It's not just about protecting other seafarers but protecting them from themselves. If they're not fit to go to sea, they're not fit. It can take very little to set off psychiatric illness and then the whole crew and ship itself is in danger."

The practice has a consultant psychiatrist who is able to attend problems that flare up on board ship, as well as an A&E specialist consultant for cases of trauma or acute medical conditions.

The pandemic and crew change crisis has meant tours of duty are typically now three months on and one month off, rather than two and two as before, Dr Shelley adds, "and this is adding massively to pressures at sea. And then there's the time they spend in quarantine.



"It has added to the stress load on people, there's no doubt about that," she concludes. "That's why it is important that Owners and Charterers ensure their crew are getting enough quality downtime."

Founded in 1810, MH Bland is one of the oldest, if not the oldest, company trading in the Port of Gibraltar, today involved in a wide range of maritime and tourism businesses, recounts Ian Penfold, Director of the group's Maritime Division, handling merchant vessels, cruise ships, superyachts, and project cargo carriers.

All the group's frontline marine services, including port agency and stevedoring, were consolidated into the same offices within the port, and recently these have been joined by the marine accounting department as well. "it's easier to be side-by-side," says Penfold, "the synergies work well together."

The company also owns and operates three harbour craft, providing vessels calling Gibraltar with ship stores, spare parts, and crew transfers, as well as a 600,000-litre capacity tank farm and two lube oil barges. The latter, one of which was a 500,000-litre craft purpose-built in Turkey for MH Bland, are both double-hulled, which Penfold explains is not mandatory in the port but effectively raises the barrier to entry for any would be competitor since the barges carry out lube supply on behalf of oil majors who are always looking for the best in terms of environmental safety, explains Penfold.

Inspection, maintenance, and repair of the group's vessels, as well as of transport vehicles used by MH Bland's Tourism division, are carried out by the group's in-house workshop – which also looks after Gibraltar's iconic cable-car up to the top of 'the Rock'. The company has embarked on a new project that will replace the existing one with a new state-of-the-art facility, Penfold finds only natural after 30 years of service.

Like many other places Gibraltar is currently suffering from shortages of commodities due to the post-Covid disruption of global supply chains. As a British Overseas Territory, Gibraltar's situation is further complicated by the UK's withdrawal from the EU single market and unresolved issues over its land border with Spain. All imported foodstuffs from the UK containing animal products, for example, now arrive on trucks at the Spanish port of Algeciras just across the bay and are then ferried by ship over to Port of Gibraltar, as the new regulations impede these imports from entering through the land border with Spain.

In addition, some 12,000 workers currently cross the border each day from Spain to work in Gibraltar, returning each evening.

"We knew Brexit would be a huge problem for us," explains Penfold, which is why Gibraltar voted massively against it. However, he remains optimistic that a solution to the border issue will be hammered out between the UK and EU - who at press time were still negotiating the matter.

continues on page 56

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Mr John Ghio, Port of Gibraltar CEO and Captain of the Port

Mr John Ghio's appointment as the new head of the Port was confirmed by HM Government of Gibraltar in mid-January following the retirement of his predecessor. Announcing the handover, Minister for the Port, the Hon. Vijay Daryanani MP thanked Mr Manuel Tirado for all his "excellent service" and welcomed his successor as someone with a valuable commercial background who shared his own "ambitious vision" of developing new business for the Port in the "Brexit and post-COVID era".

Mr Ghio started working in the bunkering industry in 1998 when he joined Bunkering

(Gibraltar) Ltd (now Minerva Bunkering) when they first set up in Gibraltar. He then joined the Gibraltar Port Authority in 2011 as Bunkering Superintendent, being promoted to the role of Senior Port Officer in 2015 and to the role of Marine Officer in January 2017.

"Since the beginning of the pandemic, the Port has showed its resilience in difficult circumstances," Mr Ghio told SMI. Overall traffic in 2020 dipped somewhat, reflecting the severe slowdown of traffic worldwide at the height of the first wave of the pandemic, but 2021 saw a "welcomed increase" again.

"One of the things we have been able to do is facilitate crew transfers, which few ports were able to do at the height of the pandemic," he related. "This was thanks to the Gibraltar Government keeping the airbridge with the UK open, and the authorities finding





One of the things we have been able to do is facilitate crew transfers, which few ports were able to do at the height of the pandemic

John Ghio, Port of Gibraltar CEO and Captain of the Port



protocols to conduct transfers safely." In this respect the Port has been recognised by both BIMCO and MedCruise for its efforts, he added.

Cruise traffic in particular suffered a "virtual wipe-out" in 2020 and much of 2021, he continued, but is now showing first signs of recovery. In the two months of October and November 2021 (the most recent for which statistics have been published) the Port received 32 cruise line calls, compared to just five for the whole of the previous year and none in first half 2021. Since then it has received inaugural calls from P&O Cruises' new flagship and Viking Cruises' vessel Viking Sea the month before.

But as far as merchant traffic is concerned, Port of Gibraltar is basically a "service station" for ships entering and exiting the Mediterranean and "not a loading or unloading port," its CEO continued, with bunkering "always the mainstay of activity of the port". Roughly 6,000 ships a year call for bunkers, more than double the number for cargo operations, and a strict regulatory regime for suppliers is in place, as well as a Bunker Code of Practice initially modelled on that of Singapore, reflecting best practice in the sector as recognised by IBIA (the International Bunker Industry Association) and other shipping industry bodies.

Four bunker suppliers offering a widespread range of fuels currently operate in the port: Peninsula, the international major's Gibraltar office liaising closely with Gibunco; Giboil/World Fuel Services, currently planning to build a new fuel terminal at the Port; Minerva Bunker; and Spanish oil & gas major Cepsa. In addition, Shell was awarded a licence in 2021 to supply LNG bunkers in Gibraltar.

Resurfacing of the container terminal, operated by the stevedoring arm of MH Bland, took place recently and "will help speed up container operations," he added, and the Port is looking at other development plans which are "still at conceptual stage".

While the world continues to adjust to a new normalcy in coping with COVID19 and its continued impact on the global maritime industry, Gibraltar Port continues on its evolutionary path in maintaining its status as a key maritime hub within the Med and a Port of Choice, Mr Ghio concluded. The recent introduction of crew training facilities through the Maritime Academy at the University of Gibraltar, potable water facilities being added to the large portfolio of existing support services, as well as ship cargo transfers and underwater services are just a few examples of why he is very optimistic about the Port's future. ●

"A future agreement will be between the EU and UK and not between Gibraltar and Spain," he emphasises. "Co-sovereignty of Gibraltar [i.e., by Spain and UK] Is not going to happen, at least not in my lifetime."

Global Group of Companies is a highly diversified outfit that owns and operates four companies in Gibraltar, described by Founder and Director Tyrone Payas as follows: Global Agency Company, a ship/superyacht agent with a wide experience in all shipping matters; Fendertech Ltd, a STS (Ship to Ship Transfer Services) operator in partnership with STS Marine Solution (former Teekay Marine Solutions) and hire/maintenance of port fenders (the company already operates another STS base from Ceuta, Spain); Wastage Products Ltd, handling slops/sludge/sewage/garbage collection, drainage specialists, tank cleaning, port chemist, Riken Keiki Gas Monitors and Drager Safety local agents; and Training in Confine Spaces and High Pressure Water Jetting. Jebel Tarik Security (JT Security) – providing local and maritime security.

In addition, the group has two established companies based in neighbouring Algeciras: Global Total Solutions (better known as GTS), offering ship repair/maintenance works/technical supplies operations throughout main Spanish ports; and GTS Italmar – running ship agent operations throughout main Spanish ports in partnership with the Italmar Group.

Mr Payas notes that operations across the shipping sector, like elsewhere, were severely impacted by Covid, notably with restriction on flights affecting the movements of crew and ship spares. "Having said that, the Port of Gibraltar has done immensely well in keeping the port open for business," he adds, even if services were limited.

Fendertech was "perhaps the only Global Group company severely affected", he continues, and that "for a significant period of time, since no STS operations was permitted throughout the worst part of the pandemic."

As regards the Gibraltar maritime cluster in general, he believes that will keep strong. Bunker volumes are reported by the Port to be holding up - although he says that personally he believes addition of another supplier would be beneficial – since "Gibraltar with its geographical position will always be an attractive port for vessels to call not only for bunker but also for the wide services - including crew changes for Indian/Filipino crew not requiring visas to transit via London."

The "main challenge" that the Gibraltar cluster faces, he continues, "is obviously Brexit. Uncertainty is still very much present and in particular the shipping sector is concerned about the effect on the frontier movements of goods and people." A 'hard' Brexit will "have a detrimental effect on the shipping community," he adds, "and I do hope that disruption at the frontier is kept to a bare minimum."

As vice Chairman of the Gibraltar Port Operators Association (GPOA), Mr Payas says he personally will continue to encourage the Port Minister "to concentrate on port infrastructure" and on having a greater Port footprint.

"Gibraltar Port has lost substantial land to allow for non-related developments or port activities and it is in this area where we need to have a plan going forward," he says. "Neighbouring ports are doing it and growing their services, we should be looking at doing the same."

"Gibraltar is one of the main offices of our group, and for sure, the one we value most," says Antonio Castañeda, MD of independent shipping agency Alfaship. "Since its inception it has been and continues to be the most strategic location for us. Although our core business in the area is the port agency, we also act as a logistics operator and customs broker.

"We recently had the inauguration of our new office, and our intention is to continue and increase the investment in this port. Our vast experience in the port agency work, along with favourable conditions created for the notorious quality of the local companies, allow us to look to the future with certain optimism."

Asked about the main challenges facing the Gibraltar maritime community, especially following Covid, Mr Castañeda replies: "Maintaining the status of a leading port is more complex than achieving it, and we think this is the main challenge nowadays when the circumstances are more adverse than ever. The excellent management of the current scenario by the local Authorities has guaranteed that the port community can continue to develop their businesses normally.

"In terms of sustainable development, the port's initiative regarding LNG bunkering supply has been a successful beginning. The general demand among the different traffics is increasing gradually, and we are sure that the port will provide satisfactory solutions.

"Experience has shown that Gibraltar port has been and continues to be a strategic point for bunkering. Local Administration is sensitive to the



GIBRALTAR MARITIME WEEK

Delegates attending Petrosport's biennial Maritime Week Gibraltar's Flagship Conference in November enjoyed late-autumn sunshine and were presented with an equally bright outlook for the Overseas Territory's bunker sector, reports Bunkerspot's Rhys Berry.

After a challenging 2020, due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, which saw marine fuel calls at the Mediterranean bunker hub fall slightly compared with 2019, calls for bunkers have bounced back in 2021 and are on course to reach levels last seen in 2018.

The marine fuels sector is a key contributor to the local economy and to retain its position as the Mediterranean's premier bunkering hub, Gibraltar will need to ready itself for a significant transition to zero-carbon shipping in the coming years. The Minister for Business, Tourism and The Port, the Hon. Vijay Daryanani MP, was keen to underscore the government's commitment to the decarbonisation agenda.

"The whole world has sustainability targets – and we are no different," Daryanani told delegates during his Ministerial Address, adding, "Gibraltar is working to position itself to contribute to the sustainability of the maritime sector on the fuel availability side."

Gibraltar's maritime sector was also singled out for praise by Peninsula CEO, John Bassadone, during his address. "Considering our size and our constraints, what we provide to the international shipping industry is absolutely remarkable," he said. "The variety, and in particular the quality of services on offer, ensure that shipowners and operators continue to choose Gibraltar as a key location for business."

Delegates to Maritime Week Gibraltar were also invited onboard for an extra special drinks reception and tour of the mightily impressive HMS Dragon, which starred in the latest James Bond film, 'No Time to Die'. ●



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changes in the industry, which sometimes is crucial. The clients trust that the port knows how to guarantee their future needs for alternative fuels. The commercial approach of the Port Authority is quite proactive and the result is that the Gibraltar brand is highly valued in the maritime world."

"There was an obvious decrease in vessels calling and requiring logistical services at Gibraltar during the initial lockdowns of the Pandemic" notes Danny Gabay, MD of ship supply and logistics service provider Redwood. This proved especially so for yachts and cruiseships, the latter being allowed technical stops at Gibraltar for crew and stores.

However, Redwood did not close down operations and was open throughout the worst period of the pandemic, he points out, since "vessels calling at Gibraltar still required our services 24/7 and with a skeleton staff rotating and or working from home wherever possible the service was maintained at the same level prior to the pandemic."

In fact, Redwood became an "essential service provider" itself during this period, he adds, with regular shipments arriving "for the Hospital, vessels in transit and other essential businesses requiring logistical services."

As a spare parts supplier the temporary closure of the Gibdock shipyard during the peak of the pandemic "obviously reduced the volume of business in our shipping department, by up to 30%" he continues, and Redwood was also negatively impacted by "the restrictions on airplanes bringing spare parts for vessels to and from Gibraltar." But worth noting is that Gibdock - which Mr Gabay describes as "one of the Gibraltar Port's biggest assets" - soon resumed full commercial activities and by autumn 2020 was reporting "solid" forward bookings again. More recently, in September 2021, the shipyard carried out maintenance on Royal Navy vessel HMS Trent, affording her crew valuable rest and recreational opportunities with their families on the Rock after a long tour of duty in the Med, the ship's company in return volunteering to help with refurbishment of the Gibdock Seafarers Centre.

Meanwhile, Redwood went to great lengths to ensure that its staff and clients were fully protected against possible infection during ship supply deliveries. "We adhered strictly to all the advice and restrictions placed by the Health Authorities in Gibraltar," notes Mr Gabay, "taking advantage of the 'Beat Covid 19 Measures' which the Government provided, allowing businesses to readjust manning levels in line with the reduced demand without major financial concerns," meaning companies like Redwood could "continue trading and providing essential services to vessels calling at the Port of Gibraltar". In addition to this financial assistance, the government deserves credit for the fact "no

restrictions were placed on the logistic chains, which allowed the movement of ship spare in transit via Gibraltar to move seamlessly," he adds.

But more generally, the main problems Redwood faced during the height of the pandemic stemmed from the reduction in flights both to Gibraltar and internationally, with many airlines grounded for a specific period of time. This meant a huge reduction in the movement of ship spares via airfreight during this period, which Gabay describes as "one of our strong points due to the proximity of the airports to Gibraltar Port and the guaranteed swift turnover of Spares onto oncoming or outgoing vessels."

Regarding the industry's 'big issue' of decarbonisation, Redwood says it tries to consolidate as much as possible deliveries and collections in order to reduce carbon footprint. It is also moving towards paperless operations for reasons of sustainability over the past few years by measures such as electronic invoicing.

Going forward, Redwood looks forward to "expanding our warehousing facilities at the Port with a view to increasing logistical chain services and storage of essential stocks of Ship Spares," says Mr Gabay.

Both Redwood and Alfaship anticipate favourable resolution of the Brexit talks. "Thanks to the lobbying efforts of the GPOA, the Gibraltar government is fully aware of the issues that are crucial for our survival," says Mr Gabay. "High-level negotiations should try to preserve general stability," concludes Mr Castañeda, "and this should be the prevailing trend." ●

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From a legal perspective...

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The Gibraltar Ship Register is a Category 1 register and with the exception of fishing vessels, ships propelled by nuclear power and ships not classed with one of the recognised Classification Societies, the Register is open to all types of ships irrespective of size, points out law firm Hassans.

The Registry was established in its present form in 1997 and since then has seen steady growth. It has also achieved 'White List' status under the Paris MoU on Port State Control. Additionally, as a British Overseas Territory, Gibraltar also forms part of the Red Ensign Group.

Gibraltar is also exempted from the payment of VAT (because it has always lain outside the EU customs territory) and therefore Gibraltar flagged ships are able to navigate EU waters within the 18-month temporary admission timeframe free from the payment of VAT.

Gibraltar also provides a favourable tax climate for shipping companies as Gibraltar has a territorial based tax system and therefore only income derived and accrued in Gibraltar is subject to tax through a corporate tax of 12.5%

It is worth adding, notes Hassans Partner Yvonne Chu, "that a company not incorporated in Gibraltar would have to be registered as a foreign maritime entity to fly the Gibraltar flag, so it would have to have some form of presence or representative, such as a law firm, here in Gibraltar."

"The Gibraltar Ship Registry is a well-regulated and well-run registry which has the ability to deal with matters at a personal level as a result of the close interaction between the Registry, the Gibraltar registered agents (such as ourselves) and the ship owners / managers," adds James Ramagge, Director of Triay Lawyers. "It is also helped greatly by the fact that the majority of its surveyors also carry out Port State Control inspections and have a depth of knowledge in this area which is of real benefit to clients and assists in how they view and deal with matters."

"From a fiscal perspective, Gibraltar is a competitive jurisdiction in its own right but it is also important to highlight that due to wide ranging policies as regards vessel ownership, corporate entities in other jurisdictions can also own and operate Gibraltar registered vessels."

On the subject of digitalisation, Mr Ramagge adds that the facility to issue certain documentation electronically is being rolled out by the Gibraltar Ship Registry and is welcomed by clients who are required by international conventions to maintain up to date certification aboard vessels at all times and can encounter delays during port state control inspections for example if paperwork is not in order.

Questioned about what legal framework is in place to ensure transactions in Gibraltar are free from



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bribery, corruption, sanctions non-compliance, money laundering and the like, the Hassans legal team informs that Gibraltar has three main bodies of legislation, the Proceeds of Crime Act 2015 (PoCA), the Crimes Act 2011 and the Sanctions Act 2019 which provide for the framework on anti-money laundering and for the implementation of international sanctions in Gibraltar.

PoCA implements the EU's 5th Directive on AML and establishes a statutory framework for the implementation of measures for the prevention of any abuse of the financial system. Under PoCA it is considered an offence for a person to enter into an arrangement which he knows or suspects facilitates the acquisition, retention, use or control of criminal property by or on behalf of another person.

The Crimes Acts 2011 makes acts of bribery an offence whereby a person offers, promises or gives a financial or other advantage to another person with the intention of inducing or rewarding a person to perform a function or activity improperly.

The Sanctions Act 2019, on the other hand, enables the direct imposition of sanctions in Gibraltar, particularly against sanctioned ships.

"So to summarise," says Hassans Partner Lewis Baglietto QC, "Gibraltar has very tight laws that go beyond the original EU money laundering regulations, and on sanctions as well it takes its legal obligations very seriously. A good example of this was the case of the Iranian tanker Grace 1 in 2019 [seized by the authorities on suspicion of being on route to a prohibited refinery in Syria] which put Gibraltar on the map as being able to implement international sanctions urgently and effectively."

Triay's Mr Ramagge comments merely that "Gibraltar's Finance Centre is well regulated and acted early to ensure

its compliance with international obligations on these issues. The professionals in the industry are obliged to have robust procedures in place to identify and act on any suspicious activity."

Regarding Brexit and yet-to-be-resolved negotiations over the Gibraltar/EU border, the Hassans team says the main concern is whether if Gibraltar is accepted into the Schengen area, whether this will also be extended to permit the freedom of navigation in EU waters by both Gibraltar registered vessels and Gibraltar residents who own vessels.

"Clearly, a free-flowing border is of crucial importance to both Gibraltar and the neighbouring Spanish municipalities," notes Mr Ramagge. "This fact seems to have been appreciated by all sides negotiating the new arrangements which are to be put in place and we are hopeful that this will be achieved."

He also observes that "during the last year, Gibraltar has demonstrated once again its important role in the arrest and sale of ships on behalf of mortgagee banks in distressed situations. We continue to provide a fast and efficient service which ultimately benefits the banks, the companies in default, their creditors and the crew of the vessels in question. Triay Lawyers continue to be at the forefront of arrest work in Gibraltar."

Hassans' Mr Baglietto ends by commenting that when the Gibraltar/EU border issue will be resolved is the "multimillion Euro question that everyone here is waiting on with bated breath." Negotiations are ongoing and it's in their nature that these have been conducted confidentially between the parties concerned, he says, without raising anybody's hopes - or the contrary - in the meantime. ●



Small interventions can lead to big changes in seafarer morale, says VIKAND's CEO Peter Hult

Crew Welfare is all about creating an environment where seafarers feel comfortable. Making small improvements to the lives of seafarers onboard can have a huge impact on their overall wellbeing and morale. This, in turn, will have a positive benefit on productivity.

But what do we mean by crew welfare?

Most people immediately think about crews' physical well-being and while this is of course very important, crew welfare is so much more than that.

However, let's start with the physical health of seafarers. The age profile of the global population is getting older as medical advances mean we're all living longer. Shipping is no different as it is a microcosm of society and so ship managers and owners need to manage those seafarers who may have chronic illnesses like diabetes or high blood pressure as the industry cannot risk excluding these personnel as it would lose a lot of experience overnight.

Ship operators may think that implementing fleet wellness programmes to encourage seafarers to take regular exercise and eat more healthily is an expensive option but it only takes small interventions to make big changes. For example, encouraging crew to drink more water by giving them all reusable water bottles will have a positive health impact. Equally regular exercise is important and VIKAND can offer advice on simple exercise regimes that seafarers can perform in their cabins if onboard facilities are limited.

It is well documented that regular exercise can help lower high blood pressure, reduce weight and can even assist with managing diabetes. Studies have also shown that exercise benefits mental health too as it reduces anxiety, depression and negative moods by improving feelings of self-esteem and cognitive function.

By encouraging seafarers to exercise 15 to 20 minutes a day with positive messaging from ship operators on the health benefits then better productivity will follow. Our own experience at VIKAND has shown that with a positive approach to exercise the number of medical incidents onboard can be vastly reduced as well as the costs associated with that.

While I am pleased to see that shipping has put more emphasis on mental health awareness by setting up 24/7 hotlines for seafarers to contact if they are feeling overwhelmed, we should really be concentrating on preventing things getting to such a crisis point in the first place.

VIKAND believes that prevention is better than cure so having information available on the vessel which can help seafarers either self-assess or recognise the warnings signs of a colleague needing help with their mental health is so important. VIKAND can help train masters and officers to recognise when a colleague is suffering mentally and we can also give them some basic materials to help them manage the situation or offer psychological support should it be needed.

We believe health solutions should be really cost effective and easy to access and, with connectivity being more readily available these days onboard, VIKAND can provide app based solutions dealing with every day medical issues.

Similarly, with larger public health concerns like communicable diseases such as COVID-19, VIKAND has been at the forefront of creating protocols and best practices to help limit and reduce transmission rates onboard. Our experience in the cruise sector has meant

that we can adapt the procedures written to protect the hundreds of guests onboard cruise liners to crews in the commercial sector.

However, as mentioned previously, crew welfare does not just cover the physical and mental health of seafarers in my opinion. As a former seafarer myself I know how much family concerns can prey on your mind when you're spending months away from loved ones.

So knowing that they're taken care of with insurance solutions and health care services gives seafarers peace of mind so they can focus on their jobs and not worry about their families while they're working at sea. It not only relieves stress but reduces onboard accidents as they are not distracted by problems at home so their minds are fully on the job.

Equally important to seafarers is getting paid on time. The traditional ways of crew getting paid in cash or having money wired, with all the associated bank charges, is dying out I'm glad to say.

Connectivity improvements onboard vessels means that seafarers can receive their wages electronically and manage their money online as they are able to when ashore. There is no excuse these days for seafarers not getting paid in full and on time, every time.

Education is also key and I'm not talking about the regulatory seafarer training requirements which are important and mandatory in many cases but I'm referring to leadership training and changes in culture.

We also need, as an industry, to be very aware of the aspirations of the younger generation and be willing and able to attract new talent to the industry by creating an inclusive environment where people feel welcomed and accepted.

Many crews are multi-cultural but we need to avoid the forming of cliques onboard where certain crew members may feel ostracised because of their nationality, sexual orientation, gender or religious beliefs. Old macho attitudes

need to be eradicated and it is good to see more women choosing the maritime industry as their career of choice as diversity in the workforce is a positive move.

Unfortunately, some attitudes still lie in the past so education and training is vital to change old ways of thinking and create a level playing field where everyone is treated with respect. We have support lines available for people who have been subjected to sexual harassment for instance to provide emotional and psychological support to victims.

And finally, my favourite subject - food! I think everyone knows that if you have good food on a vessel and everyone eats together around a table then you have a happy and contented ship. Everything starts with a good meal. What we want to do at VIKAND is to launch a cooking channel that will help cooks on vessels and the ashore food & beverage teams work within their budgets but still create nutritious healthy meals.

So crew welfare is about the whole seafarer experience onboard and our aim at VIKAND is make sure that their experience is a positive one. ●



With all the above in mind we are going to launch a Seafarer Human Sustainability Charter with like-minded maritime businesses which will be launched at the US Embassy in Oslo during Nor-Shipping. The aim of the Charter is to encourage maritime businesses to work collaboratively to establish robust ecosystems providing the best in healthcare, connectivity, insurance, working environments and payment solutions for our seafarers and their families. For more information about VIKAND please visit our website www.VIKAND.com



**We at MCTC are asking you
and the wider maritime
industry to come together to
support 'Cooks Day' on
30 May 2022.**

Seafarers can find life aboard a vessel very challenging, especially after spending months away from family or friends. Without their loved ones close by, mariners will often take comfort from the daily routine of eating breakfast, lunch and dinner alongside their colleagues.

Mealtimes in the galley, the beating heart of any ship, bring people together to chat, share stories or discuss the challenges of life at sea. This communal activity can also evoke memories of a special event or family occasion – and it's all thanks to the ship's cook.

Join us as we unite the shipping industry for celebrating Cooks Day on 30 May, to recognise their valuable contribution and to make them feel appreciated.



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30-may-2022-celebrating-cooks-day/](https://www.mctconsultancy.com/30-may-2022-celebrating-cooks-day/)



Crew conflict sparks more yacht crew calls to MHSS

Conflict and work-related stress have sparked an increase in calls from super yacht crew to a mental health support line, a new report reveals.

Workload, isolation, crew conflict and colleagues contracting Covid-19 are the biggest causes of stress and anxiety for the crewmembers calling Mental Health Support Solutions (MHSS), according to the company's latest Quarterly Activities Report.

"They [super yacht crew] are finding it harder to look out for their mental health," said the report, which carries data from the last quarter (October to December) of 2021. "The current workload seems to offer very limited time to rest and replenish energy levels. Most callers' mental health is decreasing due to the onboard environment and crew conflict situations."

The research also shows more incidents of bullying and harassment involving seafarers and shore-based staff.

Most calls to MHSS, which provides 24/7 mental health support to the maritime industry, are made by managers and officers requesting pre-emptive help for, or a risk assessment of, distressed co-workers.

Usage of the phone line has increased significantly among Asian office staff, while general land-based employees that contact MHSS

report adjustment issues with their working environment, colleagues and workflows.

Other stress-related reasons for calling MHSS include errors in communication among coworkers, generational differences between experienced seafarers and their younger colleagues and limited crew change, leading to "anger, conflict and anxiety".

Driven by its findings, MHSS has made several recommendations to support the mental wellbeing of seafarers and shore-based staff: Vessels should increase the number of psychological first aiders on board, as crewmembers are more likely to approach someone working in close contact for help. Seafarers also need support with their onboard work culture to develop their communication, more compassionate

leadership skills and basic knowledge of mental health procedures and practices while surveys can uncover the challenges facing seafarers and highlight areas of mental health that require improvement.

This comes as evidence emerged that cases of psychosis are on the increase among ship officers stretched to breaking point by the pandemic. Before the pandemic, the company might have seen one case a year, but now MHSS has been dealing with three in the past few months alone: two captains and an officer.

"Psychosis is highly unusual, you need a lot of stress to trigger it," Watkins told TradeWinds.

He explained that substance abuse can trigger symptoms, which is believed to be the case for one master in recent weeks. ●



Psychosis is highly unusual, you need a lot of stress to trigger it

Charles Watkins,
Mental Health Support Solutions



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Crew Travel

Round Table Debate –

In the latest in our series of round table debates we focus on the important issue of crew travel at a time when crew repatriation has dominated the Covid debate in the global maritime sector.



Panellists included: **Konstantinos Oikonomou**, CEO, Marine Tours; **Rogier Van Beugen**, Chief Commercial Officer, C Teleport; **Sverre Husby**, Director G Travel; **Nikos Gazelidis**, Global Head of Shipping, ATPi; **Hans Boers**, CEO, Boers Crew Services; **Melanie Quinn**, Head of Business Development Clyde Travel; **Tommy Olofsen**, President & Chief Commercial Officer, OSM; **Mike Tibbert**, General Manager Europe, Global Marine Travel; **Chris Podolsky**, Global Manager, North America, Global Marine Travel. Moderated by **Sean Moloney**, Managing Director of Elaborate Communications.

Sean Moloney

Welcome everyone, and I would first of all like to thank Konstantinos Oikonomou and the excellent team at Marine Tours for kindly sponsoring today's debate. Repatriation of the world's seafarers has been one of the biggest issues facing the shipping industry during the pandemic. What lessons have been learnt and what changes need to take place moving forward?

Tommy Olofsen

When the pandemic hit, it was in a very dramatic fashion. Most airlines were suddenly fighting for survival, so it heavily impacted logistics – and that combined with governments putting strict restrictions on crew change protocols, while not recognising seafarers, was a perfect storm for us managers. Throughout the last two years, there have been some learnings. All our suppliers should be evaluated not only on their financials, but also on how they can manage a pandemic like this. Each of us has had to build our own solutions, because we haven't been a united industry when it comes to creating crew change links. That's been the real challenge from my side.

Sean Moloney

Hans, what are your thoughts?

Hans Boers

We often fight with immigration to get crew from vessels. We try to provide the cheapest way for ship owners to do that, but immigration and governments aren't interested in communicating on everything.

Sean Moloney

Nikos, governments have faced criticism during the pandemic, certainly as far as their responsibilities under the Maritime Labour Convention. Give me your view.

Nikos Gazelidis

We have the Neptune Declaration from the UN, but nothing really happened

with that. As Tommy said, each one of us had to create a solution. In fairness, there were examples of the whole shipping community working together, which we were thankfully part of. Local government, shipping associations, charter companies and airlines came together with shipping companies during the pandemic to ease the Indian crew bottleneck. It didn't happen with other governments or other nationalities to that extent until much later. The most important thing is seafarers' wellbeing. A recent Lloyd's Register survey shows that only 8% of seafarers feel valued.

Sean Moloney

That's not new though, is it? Going back two or three decades, seafarers have always regarded themselves as a commodity. On ship management companies, we've seen them looking to charter flights for crew during the past two years. But keeping seafarers on ships was probably a good way of minimising infection rates and keeping costs down. Mel, what's your perspective?

Melanie Quinn

On restrictions, the situation improved over the course of the pandemic. Initially, announcements on border control, quarantine and testing were made with little lead time and no clarity around the exemptions for key workers, including seafarers. Governments around the world have made rapid improvements on this. If a border comes down, we generally get exemptions at the same time. I think governments realised that the world needed to keep turning in certain industries, and they had to make that clear when introducing changes. There have been improvements and learnings, but it's not perfect – there is no global standard, which would make our jobs, and movements, a lot easier.

Sean Moloney

Konstantinos, let me bring you in. Mel made a valid point about keyworker status. I suppose critics of the IMO

could say that they took too long to act; and when they did, only about 60 countries decided to take part. What are your views?

Konstantinos Oikonomou

Each country treated the pandemic as an internal problem, so everybody was working for themselves. There was limited communication, unification, vision, nothing. Unfortunately, no one truly cares about crew wellbeing, they primarily care about regulations. They haven't shown any real interest in how the travel industry and all its members work together. The issue was addressed by a government working with an airline and border control and that was it. We were then given rules, which had to be followed or we'd be penalised. Taking that approach, you can't do business or work together. Next time this happens, let's hope we see a different response. What authorities forget is that travel is a global industry involving people. In shipping, there is too much emphasis on trade, containers and oil rather than the people manning the vessels. We need to make this a humanitarian issue. We're not in the shipping industry just because there are ships in the sea; there are also people on those ships. For me, the greatest lesson is the reality [for seafarers] and we need to address it.

Sean Moloney

This is all driven through the IMO, but there's confusion over its role





versus the ILO. Who represents the interests of the crew travel sector?

Mike Tibbert

Within V.Group, our whole strategy is driven by crew welfare. We have 44,000+ crew that we move around the world constantly. The big issue for us was why seafarers weren't immediately or automatically awarded key worker status. Ninety percent of the world's trade goes through the shipping industry. I think the public perception is lacking when it comes to the importance of seafarers and their welfare. We've talked about seafarers being stuck on board for nine months or more than a year, which, from a humanitarian standpoint, is unbearable.

We must accept that politics will always be involved. Some of the decisions made purely from a political perspective affected our seafarers, and that wasn't fair on them. With regards to the industry, I think we must shout louder with a unified, consistent voice about the importance of shipping. On that point, I have seen many areas of the sector coming together. Maybe we were a bit fractured before, but we now work together in many ways to standardise and share our message.

Sean Moloney

How can the industry talk with one voice?

Mike Tibbert

Let's look at putting together a programme and working through all the different issues. It won't be easy because of the countries and politics involved. Even within our own organisations, there are politics – but I believe we can work together on this. The people in this discussion are a good starting point for that. We can get the message out and start the discussion.

Sean Moloney

Rogier, what are your views on needing a central body in shipping to look after the industry's interests?

Rogier van Beugen

We go through a cycle where every time we think things are getting better, another wave hits and we find ourselves back at square one. In the past, that's prevented us from taking the necessary action. Now, everybody is positive as some countries open up and people see Omicron as the end of the pandemic. That may be the case, but we could also face another more serious variant. And then we as an industry will be completely surprised, having not taken collective action. If you look at the shipping sector, I think we – particularly ship managers and crewing agents – have all been scrambling to get everybody on or off vessels. That's been such a challenge.

Let's say we create a nice global database; I'm not sure we can expect the industry to constantly update it with the latest restrictions and necessary information. One body that could do it is IATA, but its members are fighting for survival. IATA won't solve this problem and neither will the shipping industry, so who will? What amazes me is that everybody talks about distortions in the supply chain and how they affect global economies. Yet, we don't see a single serious international governmental initiative for solving this. We need all regulations concerning COVID and

essential travel to be dealt with on a global scale. What encouraged me – and it showed the resilience of the industry – is when Omicron hit in late 2021, not much happened with our bookings or the number of people we helped get across the globe. We found the *modus operandi* of dealing with all these restrictions. Today, answering COVID-related questions accounts for up to 80% of our customer support. While information isn't globally available, we as an industry are flexible and resilient when dealing with customers.

Sean Moloney

Governments are lucky that shipping is highly flexible and agile. The concern is around a potential seafarer shortage by 2026, as the ICS predicts, with people working at sea possibly deciding they have had enough. Chris/Sverre, what are your thoughts on what you've heard so far?

Chris Polodovsky

The industry hasn't really done a good job of promoting itself as a globally essential service. More work is needed with governments, international organisations and the shipping community to promote and market the importance of seafarers and the maritime sector. When it came to explaining ourselves and our role during the pandemic, we were starting from scratch. Most people in my world didn't have any idea or hadn't given any thought



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Rogier Van Beugen

as to how they got their toilet paper. Now, they have a better understanding of the importance of seafarers and their role in the supply chain. They understand that if crew can't be moved, the economy is going to slow to a stop. Key worker status is important. When shutting borders and introducing lockdowns, governments have to understand that certain parts of the industry or the supply chain must stay open.

Sverre Gade Husby

There were no business contingency plans for the pandemic. We focused on scaling the business, keeping the service operating and placing crew on vessels or oil rigs. We had to find workarounds for government restrictions on flights into their countries and discover alternative means of travel for our clients. This is the third roundtable we have sat on during the pandemic, and every time we talk about cooperation. Those of us in attendance pretty much moved most of the crewmembers around the world without cooperating fully together. We need to learn from that. Someone said earlier that the airline industry hasn't really supported us. Some airlines have been great, while others are hard to cooperate with when it comes to cancelling flights. It's interesting to see that airline staff and truckers driving lorries around Europe are essential workers – why aren't seafarers? If they were, life would have been much easier.

Konstantinos Oikonomou

We expect IATA to coordinate airline members on basic things. Instead of being a decisive regulator or serious coordinator during the pandemic, it restricted itself in providing airlines with advice. If airlines wanted to follow IATA's guidance, they did; if not, they didn't have to. The same happened with airline groups IAG, Sky and Star Alliance. You didn't see a common approach, with each carrier doing whatever suited them. Their internal plans. Airline groups and IATA have strong lobbying influence within government organisations. I would definitely involve them in getting governments to discuss a unified approach to group travel during a pandemic.

Tommy Olofsen

Countries need to align more on the entry, departure, vaccination and quarantine requirements. If that doesn't get solved, [the crew change crisis] will continue way into 2022 and 2023. At least, we need governments to agree that all manufactured vaccinations should be approved, making sure they are recognised, and to educate the greater population to get vaccinated. If governments start imposing fourth, fifth or even sixth rounds of boosters, this can seriously hamper our efforts as crew managers to get our people moving. Some seafarers in countries such as India or the Philippines still aren't recognised in Europe. Even though we make sure Indian or Filipino crew are vaccinated, they can't travel and that's a major issue. Another challenge is that some nations have introduced restrictions on the number of travellers arriving in their country. For example, the Philippines allows 3,000 people per day, which is ridiculous. It's one of the largest seafaring nations in the world and you're reducing the amount of seafarers coming in. We found a solution, which

involved hiring a private crew manager: use private hire planes, as they don't count towards the 3,000. With the help of Hans Boers and ATP, we filled up 12 planes last year going from London via Rotterdam and Amsterdam into the Philippines. Rogier mentioned that countries aren't doing enough – that's not entirely true. The Cypriot government is extremely active in providing political support to its ship owners and vaccinations for their crew wherever they are in the world. The Danish government has lifted all restrictions, meaning crew can travel in and out, and it's the same with the Netherlands.

Sean Moloney

You raise lots of valid points, Tommy. Denmark and Cyprus have done a great job, but then you have the Philippines handling 25% of the world's seafarers and they're allowing 3,000 people in a day. That's where action needs to be taken. Mike, over to you.

Mike Tobbert

Konstantinos mentioned IATA and its role throughout the pandemic. The immediate issue was that because of cashflow restrictions, many airlines weren't refunding tickets that had already been purchased. You can imagine the effect this had throughout the transport industry chain, which includes all of us here. It's



Melanie Quinn



disappointing when an association like IATA, which has rules for airlines paying refunds within a certain timeframe, comes across as a bit toothless.

When the supply chain breaks down, we must make sure there is a solution.

Sverre Gade Husby

The airline community is fighting to survive, but they're still including flights that they know won't operate in booking systems. That creates havoc for us because we have to guess which flights will go ahead. Travel restrictions on seafarer numbers needs to be lifted. Some European countries have done this, but we have clients in Australia that still face challenges. We recently spoke to Emirates who was allowed 25 seats into Perth per day; how can they operate in that environment? We understand it's challenging for all parts of the industry, but a seafarer should be prioritised over a tourist or business traveller.

Hans Boers

We had an issue where the port agent couldn't sign off all the crew, because of concerns about an infection on board. I jumped in, spoke to a few port authority people and got the crew off. This happens everywhere. Port agents aren't interested in crewing. As crew specialists, we talk with immigration and health authorities at ports all over the Netherlands, so things are organised.

I speak to embassies and immigration nearly every day to arrange visas for seafarers on arrival, to get them on their ship as quickly as possible. But immigration people will often say that seafarers need their visas arranged in their home countries. Another issue is that not all airlines assist people travelling without a visa, making it complicated to get crewmembers from A to B.

Communication with airline people, immigration and the government are key to getting things done. We need to be able to talk to the correct people involved in issuing visas.

Mike Tibbert

It is a good point about the port agents, which relates back to the airlines. We'll find that perhaps it's easy enough to get to the main hub, but the regional or commuter services we need to get to the outlying ports will be affected. The effects of Covid will resonate within the airline infrastructure networks for some time to come, commercial constraints and the large debt piles they are currently sitting will mean they are cautious or even reluctant to restart or begin new routes that are not proven to be viable. This will not be too big a concern for the major destinations which will always be well served but provincial areas and certain destinations out with the major city networks will be affected and of course with shipping ports spread out and more often than not located at the most convenient of destinations there will be an impact.

Nikos Gazelidis

What we've seen even before the pandemic is a set of fragmented processes when the shipping company deal with the port agent, travel agent and manning agent. Shipping companies should take a more integrated human logistics approach to crew change. I understand that the whole thing is about governments and their restrictions, but

everything should be linked together with better visibility for shipping companies. We can all work together for a more coordinated effort.

Chris Polodosky

In the early days of the pandemic, a cohort was put together involving Global Marine Travel, our parent company VShips, Inchcape Shipping Services, manning agencies in the Philippines and several other participants. The aim was to create a safe crew corridor, to move seafarers effectively between the Philippines and Holland. There would be crew rotations, with each leg carefully monitored, and a controlled environment to create a safe bubble for getting crew members repatriated or out to the vessels. We had some moderate success with it. We learnt a lot about the different types of COVID testing, how and where to get them done and the different boxes that needed ticking to make it all happen. Should another pandemic hit, there's now a huge knowledge base of how to manage things during a crisis. It's about understanding the many problems you'll face and that you can't do it all yourself. For every issue you tackle, there's another piece up the supply chain involving somebody else who needs to be switched on and willing to do the work to get it done.





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**Hans Boers****Tommy Olofsen**

For me, mission-critical supplies flight companies, airlines and travel suppliers should be evaluated on their ability to endure pandemic-like events. This would cover financials redundancies, contingency plans, scale etc. The change-route options and the general unpredictability of various operations require professional partners. The travel agents in our discussion need to be recognised for the hard work they've done. The better partners we have, the more flexible and smooth operations will be. My call out to all crew managers and ship owners is to think that through. Looking at cost, I expect competition will keep fares in check in the long run, and we will see new airlines established on better terms than the old network giants. That will lead to costs coming down. Overall, we're heading towards a better future, but we need seafarers to be recognised as key workers and governments to work together more on the vaccine stages.

Sean Moloney

Let's throw this over to the ship management sector, how fit and prepared were you for the pandemic?

Tommy Olofsen

No one was prepared. The larger ship managers were able to find solutions globally by tapping into their global network. We suddenly had to be a specialist in vaccinations and medical, hotel and quarantine management, all while engaging

at a totally different level with our crews. Imagine being a seafarer on a ship while your family is at home. You read the news about the pandemic hitting and realise you're not allowed to go ashore. We have made WiFi on our ships mandatory, so crewmembers can stay connected with their families. We've also made it mandatory to extend the medical support that seafarers receive to their families. The world has changed, and I can't see it returning to normal in a few months.

Sean Moloney

Flights are now three to four times more expensive for ship management companies than before the pandemic, which is a big cost for the industry to bear. Konstantinos, what are your thoughts?

Konstantinos Oikonomou

Air fare cost is relative and dynamic in most cases. Nowadays, most airlines involved in crew travel run macro and micro analysis on the shipping industry and their capacity for tolerance of airfare levels. We will definitely see a more focused approach to shipping fares. In general, rates and fares are likely to rebalance based on seat availability, but a new era of AirFare pricing is going to emerge.

Chris Polodovsky

In 2020, air travel revenues were US\$320 billion, which is about 40% compared to the previous year. In nominal terms, we're back to year 2000 levels for revenue. Analysts expect this sector to experience smaller growth for several years, with no return to 2019 levels for at least another two years. Higher pricing will be the new normal. Airlines have amassed a huge \$180 billion+ debt, which must be repaid, reducing their ability to grow. Until supply matches demand, things will be very tight. Airlines rely heavily on different types of travel. When the pandemic kicked in, corporate and leisure pretty much stopped overnight. That led to airlines operating at a deficit and unable to subsidise their less profitable routes. Crew

routes – particularly involving India and the Philippines – helped airlines to keep some planes in the air. But until corporate and leisure resume, we're not going to see prices coming down.

Sverre Gade Husby

The price will level out eventually when airlines reach capacity level, but it depends on how fast business and leisure travel picks up. Historically, marine travel has been a good source of income for airlines, as we move crew 24/7, 365 days a year. Eventually, there will be a price drop and increase in capacity to support and sustain our routing.

Nikos Gazelidis

The cost, at least for 2022, will remain higher because of seat capacity, passengers not coming back and the oil price, which recently reached a seven-year high. Jet oil, 74% higher now than this time last year, is also pushing up prices. We have to live with that as it's beyond our control. What we can control is the overall cost of crew change. In Europe, there are less restrictions and more ship capacity, so why not shift many crew changes to that region? Some shipping companies have already started looking at the correlation between nationality mix and the vessel or vessel trading area. Let's improve the overall cost rather than fighting a lost war with the airline fares.

Sean Moloney

Lady and gentlemen, many thanks for your time today. ●

**Nikos Gazelidis**



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Alternative Viewpoint



Ethically to carry

By **Michael Grey, MBE**, an internationally respected maritime commentator

If you are operating a shipping company, an organisation that the economists like to call one providing 'derived demand', should you refuse to carry cargoes, which, while perfectly legal, may be considered by some, to be ethically questionable? It's not slaves we are talking about in the 17th century, but cargoes which environmentalists consider threatens the march towards a zero-carbon economy. And it is a question which looks increasingly to be asked in shipping company boardrooms.

Are we not caving in to the green extremists who carry out dangerous stunts as ships carrying cargoes of which they disapprove, approach port? We might think of coal, timber, genetically modified soya or wheat, all of which have been targeted by militant activists in recent times. A friend who commanded a capesize bulker told me of a really frightening incident as his fully laden ship, on the top of the tide, manoeuvred off a lock, with some maniac padlocked to the anchor cable, while others tried to paint slogans on his ship's side.

But, we might suggest, green extremism has now gone mainstream, with COP26 effectively telling us that the panic over "climate change" has altered the whole ethical mindset and people who operate in the world of maritime transport had better get used to the new prescriptions. A few months on and a sizeable bulk carrier operator has said that his ships, many of which were specifically designed for coal cargoes, will no longer carry this cargo. It might be pointed out that this company has already put in substantial orders for new bulkers fuelled by LNG, with the first due to be delivered soon. So, ethics, or perhaps the owner's environmental convictions, have already begun to move the goalposts.

Should a 'common carrier' exercise this sort of judgement, as there is presently no legal prohibitions against carrying all these cargoes which happen to be disapproved of by environmental

activists? Is such a shipping company not "cutting off his nose to spite his face" as the old adage goes?

It is an interesting question. A few years ago, a couple of Norwegian banks which were in the ship finance field caused ructions when they declared that they would look at a company's green credentials when deciding whether to grant a loan to an applicant. I can recall a ship owning friend raging about this move, saying that his creditworthiness and an ability to service the loan should be the lender's only preoccupations and he would never darken the door of such an establishment. A few years on and such a stance would not be seen as remarkable. Ethics have become established.

It is worth wondering, however, where this might all end if carriers start to become exercised about the ethical nature of the cargo that might be offering. Might, for instance, we see those operating car carriers turning away diesel powered vehicles, or gas-guzzlers? If you think about our 'woke' generation, there is an awful lot about international trade of which they thoroughly disapprove and who knows how much of this might be translated into pressure in the carriers' boardrooms.

It's one thing to splash your green credentials along the side of your ships, like ferry operators in northern Europe like to advertise, perhaps for the benefit of potential passengers. But we can now see big containerships telling the world how sustainable they are, because of their LNG-fuelled machinery, although some might suggest that whatever they do will not be sufficient with LNG being tarred as one of the dreaded 'fossil fuels'. It would probably be inadvisable for an owner of VLCCs to get too publicly identified with the demand to do away with this cargo. But I recall an exchange with just such an owner a couple of years ago, who was wondering whether the big tankers he was ordering would be the very last of their type, as we enter the post-oil age. ●

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Nakilat partners with ABS on decarbonisation strategy

Nakilat (Qatar Gas Transport Company), one of the world's largest LNG shipping operators, has partnered with ABS to develop an industry-leading decarbonisation strategy.

Over the past months, Nakilat's project team has worked closely with ABS sustainability specialists to map out decarbonisation pathways for the company's fleet of 69 LNG carriers and four Very Large LPG Gas Carriers. These efforts come as part of Nakilat's drive to become a global maritime sustainability leader.

The project will ultimately see Nakilat's vessels receive the ABS SUSTAIN notation, which demonstrates alignment with the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and establishes a pathway for sustainability certification and reporting.

Nakilat CEO Eng. Abdullah Al Sulaiti said: "Nakilat has rapidly grown over the years to be a leader in the global energy transportation sector. We recognize the important role we play in reducing our carbon footprint and are committed to carry out our operations in a sustainable manner.

"In addition to this partnership with ABS, we are also leading a working group with our joint venture partners to ensure our global fleet operations meet with IMO's decarbonisation targets. Our focus is on sustainable development of Nakilat's fleet beyond 2030, which contributes towards the realisation of Qatar National Vision 2030 and our own vision to be a global leader and provider of choice for energy transportation and maritime services."

The SUSTAIN notations were introduced with the 'ABS Guide for Sustainability Notations' to help marine and offshore operators meet the Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) requirements outlined in the SDGs. The Guide focuses on sustainability aspects of vessel design, outfitting and layout that can be controlled, measured, and assessed. These include: pollution and waste; coastal and marine ecosystems; energy efficiency and performance monitoring; low-carbon fuels; human-centered design; and asset recycling.

"It is a privilege to be able to support Nakilat in achieving their goal of becoming a leader in maritime sustainability," said Georgios Plevrakis, ABS Director, Global Sustainability. "ABS is proud to work with forward looking operators that are not only committed to finding a sustainable footing for the industry but to demonstrating how we can make significant strides toward realising that dream today."

Nakilat is a Qatari Public Shareholding Company which originally listed on the Qatar Stock Exchange in 2005. As a shipping and maritime company, Nakilat provides an essential transportation link in the State of Qatar's LNG supply chain. Its LNG shipping fleet is the largest in the world, comprising of 69 LNG vessels. Nakilat also owns and manages one FSRU and four large LPG carriers.

Nakilat operates the ship repair, industrial and offshore fabrication facilities at Erhama Bin Jaber Al Jalahma Shipyard in Ras Laffan Industrial City via strategic joint ventures: N-KOM and QFAB. Nakilat also offers a full range of marine support services to vessels operating in Qatari waters. ●



Future Fuels

Biofuel blend proves its worth

MTM Ship Management Strives for Greener Credentials.

The Singapore Flagged MR tanker, MTM Colorado, of MTM Ship Management, has successfully concluded a voyage using Biofuel blend (B30 Bio VLSFO) from The Netherlands to Brazil on its journey towards decarbonisation.

The green fuel voyage was undertaken in collaboration with fuel supplier Trafigura, Lloyd's as consultants, MAN/B&W as engine makers, DNV as the vessel's class and MPA as Singapore flag state administration.

B30 Bio VLSFO is a blend of 30% waste oil feedstock and 70% Very Low Sulphur Fuel Oil. Trafigura Marine – set up in 2019 by Trafigura with minority partners Frontline (15%) and Golden Ocean (10%) – began supplying B30 and B20 blends of advanced marine fuel in the ARA (Amsterdam, Rotterdam and Antwerp) area in Q1 last year.

The MTM Colorado project was guided by the vessel performance team of MTM Ship Management

under the leadership of the technical director, Mr Prashant Lokhande who is the driver of this innovation engine at MTM.

Trials were carried out at various load points using special equipment purchased to assess the performance and to record emission levels of the main engine, auxiliary engine, and boiler. No problems were encountered at any step of the process. Engines were inspected before and after the trial. The condition of the fuel tank was assessed post trial. All were found to be satisfactory.

The trial with Biofuel blend resulted in a Well to Tank, and Tank to Wake reduction in emissions of 31.5% for the main engine & 23.1% for the auxiliary engine, and as compared to using only very low Sulphur fuel oil.

Under Mr Lokhande's guidance, MTM believes it has demonstrated that the use of Biofuels is a practical and

sustainable alternative to fossil fuels, which helps to significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions during the operation of our vessels. Based on this successful trial, it says it aims to expand the use of sustainable Biofuels where available, and more testing is planned.

The Managing Director of MTM Ship Management, Capt. Rajiv Singhal, commented: "MTM's mission has always been to not only operate ships at the highest safety standards, but generally go beyond regulatory requirements, and contribute to the effort to reduce the environmental footprint of the company's maritime activities. The ultimate goal being a future with zero GHG emission."

MTM Ship Management is part of the MTM Group. The group owns & operates a fleet of 53 vessels including chemical tankers, MR product tankers and Handy-size dry bulk vessels. High quality ship management and crewing is provided to reputable owners and first-class charterers worldwide through its two ship management offices in Singapore and Mumbai. Manning and Training centers are located in Myanmar, Manila, Mumbai and New Delhi. Additionally, the group has offices in the United States, Hong Kong, Rotterdam and Greece. ●





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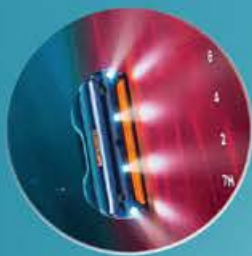
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Using real-time AI tools to trace bunker fuels from earth to air

By **Darren Shelton**, Chief Product Officer and Co-Founder, FuelTrust

Do we really know what's in our fleets' fuel tanks – or better yet, what we're about to add to them? Although charterers, operators, and crew have tools to analyse, report on, and manage data, the maritime industry still has blind spots when it comes to what's running through a vessel's engine.

Marine fuel fraud and quality issues are known issues, and too often accepted as the cost of doing business. But even small discrepancies in quantity delivered add up to significant expense over repeated bunkerings. Additionally, low-quality fuels bring greater risk of fuel inefficiencies, engine damage, potential de-bunkering, and in some instances, cause enough damage to render a vessel inoperable – all which comes with a huge price tag.

The shift to low sulphur fuels post-2020 has largely been smooth, however, fuel market experts S&P Global Platts also predict that “marine fuel quality issues could likely escalate once the world starts to recover from the coronavirus pandemic.”

The reality is, that even on a batch-to-batch level, fuels from the same supplier can differ significantly. Having insight into the different outcomes of each batch of fuel enables cargo shippers to predict the future efficiency and carbon burden of each bunker. For instance, analysing six months of data on bunker deliveries for two large ship operators, covering 28 batches and 14 million metric tons of fuel, we found batches of fuel from the same supplier including differences in energy intensity of up to 3%, even though all batches met regulated specifications.

Additionally, it's going to become more important to better understand which fuels the industry is buying, and their effects on the environment, in support of increased ESG reporting needs to comply with upcoming regulations and tax requirements.

This pressing need for fuel and emissions insight is why FuelTrust has created its Bunker Insights® product that can trace and validate the lifecycle of fuels from source to emissions. Already operational with today's fossil fuels, FuelTrust's AI Digital Chemist®, as part of Bunker Insights, can also analyse new

fuels such as biofuels and ammonia, as well as advanced de-carbonizing additives.

Our cloud-based product, designed for shipowners and fuel suppliers, uses a combination of artificial intelligence (AI), digital twins, and blockchain technologies to establish an unalterable record of fuel transactions and to analyse and identify chemical risks and changes in the fuel.

The platform leverages existing industry-wide standard documentation, including commercial information, bunker delivery notes (BDN), fuel laboratory records, and certificates of analysis, to conduct a digital chemical process via a digital twin of the fuel. It simulates chemical reactions and changes at a molecular level, tracing the fuel's history including temperature, storage time, and any sedimentation or separation. This in-depth knowledge allows FuelTrust customers unprecedented insights. For example, it can determine if the sulphur content has changed because of evaporation or if contaminants were introduced because the fuel was loaded into a dirty tank.

Effective monitoring with our Bunker Insights solution can catch all these issues in real-time. The same technology can analyze per batch, per bunker fuel type, and per voyage, resulting in carbon potentials, impacts, and improvements and can produce accurate and optimised EEXI and CII assessments and baseline reports.

Soon to be added to our portfolio is the Validated Green Voyage product. This will provide cargo shippers with accurate real-time data validation and reporting on current and past ship emissions improvements for their cargo as soon as it arrives at port, saving shipowners and shippers significant time, labour cost and tax liabilities.

Shipping's energy transition will impose tremendous logistical challenges and financial risk – but by accurately simulating and analysing the contents of fuel tanks and engines, digital technology will create a trusted, transparent, and sustainable global commercial shipping fleet - a brighter future for the industry and for society. ●



Will your Ballast Water Management System fail in sediment-rich waters such as Shanghai?

*The following article has been contributed by **FilterSafe**, a provider of automatic water filtration solutions for Ballast Water Management Systems.*

Ship operators expecting blanket exemptions to the Ballast Water Management Convention's D-2 standards for treatment systems that are not performing adequately in high-sediment waters are likely to be disappointed.

The Convention was adopted in 2004, yet it entered into force in 2017 with key questions about treatment system efficacy still being debated. The laboured pace of regulatory development continued at MEPC77 in November last year. The IMO members deferred work on a resolution dealing with challenging, high-sediment waters until MEPC78. But in doing so, they reinforced the status quo.

Blanket exemptions are unlikely to be granted. This would be contrary to the environmental aims of the Convention and to UN Sustainable Development Goal 14 Life Below Water.

From a practical viewpoint, it would be difficult for the IMO to clearly define what constituted challenging water quality and then reach agreement on the conditions in which an exception could be exercised.

Some of the factors to consider are the different legal frameworks between ballast water uptake ports and ballast water discharge ports. For vessels operating on the spot market, the issue would be more acute, as ship operators may not know where their vessel will be calling next.

Despite these difficulties, there are many voices calling for blanket exemptions, and this highlights the challenges that

operators have faced calling at Shanghai and other high-sediment ports such as Hamburg. Owners should know if their vessel's BWMS and filter has passed the Shanghai Test and therefore that clogging will not be an issue when the water's total suspended solids (TSS) reach levels typical of Shanghai (1,000 mg/L).

The Convention only tests that systems function at 50 mg/L, so it's not surprising that some ballast water management system manufacturers have settled for low-performance filtration.

However, in sediment-rich waters, these low-quality systems result in costly disruptions for the operator, potentially damaging the management system itself and exposing them to the risks of non-compliance.

Operators have two options. The first is to seek concessions for their low-quality system – a risky and time-consuming approach. The second is to make informed purchasing decisions based on the vessel's route and a true evaluation of both CAPEX and OPEX costs.

The first option is not a long-term solution. You will waste time, and therefore money, negotiating with the port on current water quality and whether you are compliant or not. There remains a high risk that you will not comply with regulations, resulting in fines, damage to your reputation and the eventual need to install an effective system at additional cost anyway.

Additionally, using contingency measures may result in contamination of your tanks and piping, increasing the risk of downstream compliance testing failures long after leaving a challenging port.

The good news is that it is possible to buy a ballast water management system and filter that is designed for your vessel's current and future operating profiles. There is sufficient technology and equipment available on the market today.

CAPAX costs may be marginally higher, but OPEX costs are much lower. Operational delays and disruption are minimised, trading time is maximised and your competitive advantage is safeguarded.

Operators, ask your vessel owners to purchase a high-quality system, and don't charter a vessel with a poor one. Owners, ask shipyards to fit a system with a high-quality filter.

Will your BWMS fail in sediment-rich waters such as Shanghai? Make sure the answer is "no". ●



Innovating to Net Zero – what kind of entrepreneurship does shipping need?

By Philip Chaabane, CEO, I-Tech AB

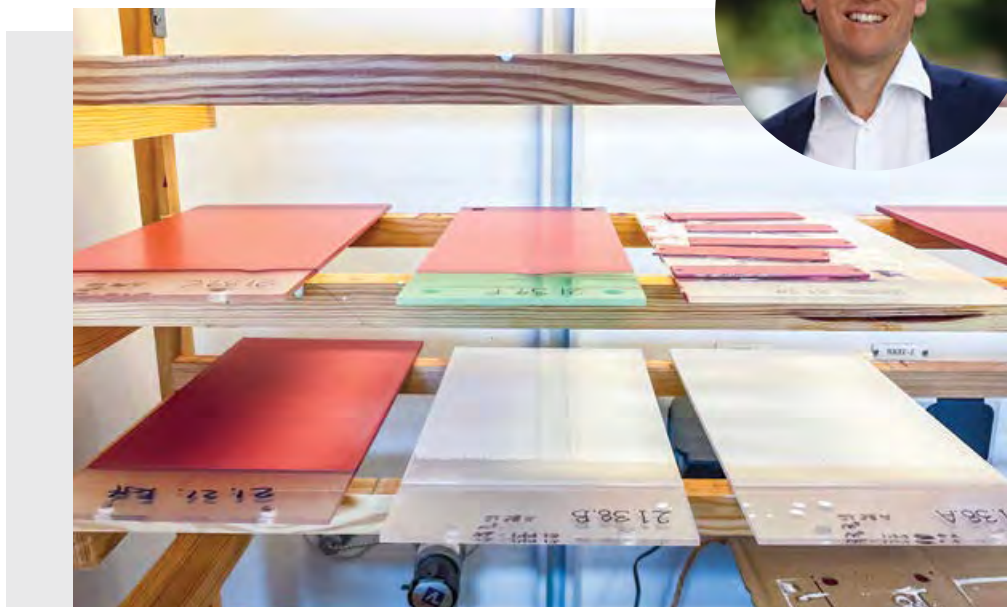


In an industry awash with environmental regulations, the emergence of new technologies alongside the use of low, or zero carbon, fuels play a vital role. The past decade has welcomed a great number of highly innovative clean technology solutions into the maritime industry that seek to facilitate vast improvements in ship efficiency and emissions to air and sea. Some solutions hail from the R&D efforts of already-established, often large corporations. However, many are from entrepreneurial start-ups, fuelled by passion and investment from early believers.

In response to great successes achieved by maritime technology start-ups in the past few years, we're seeing efforts to replicate this kind of success through the expansion in the number of start-up incubators, hackathons and even internal start-ups emerging from within larger incumbents. One could say that this trend of rapid innovation development and uptake in the maritime industry has become synonymous with a Silicon Valley model of entrepreneurship, which primarily comes from the world of software, a process of rapid iteration, failing fast, and ability to pivot. This is, in many ways, often positioned as the diametric opposite of shipping; one that has previously had a slow moving, cautious 'ain't broke don't fix it' mindset.

But there is a seismic shift in mindset happening. In such a slow-moving, safety-critical industry the fostering of innovation and taking a chance on new technology for long-term gains is needed to move the needle, and I think that is happening.

I speak from experience, having been a part of launching I-Tech's antifouling agent, Selektope®, onto the market and working to normalise its use as an



emerging, disruptive technology within the antifouling paint toolbox. This is a first-of-its-kind biotechnology product for coatings that brings together over twenty years of scientific research and immense entrepreneurial spirit held by our team and investors. This combination has established Selektope® as a powerful tool in the fight against biofouling.

Its journey has included some bold pivots upon learning new information, a small, agile team that was able to move fast, and taking risks that larger companies would have been unable to.

The original research for Selektope® began back in the 1990s, when a research group recognised the need for a future-proof solution for antifouling coatings that relied on bio sciences, rather than lethal or toxic compounds taken from other industries. This was in anticipation that the use or variety of biocidal compounds would become more restricted in the future.

The aim of the research undertaken in the early days involved understanding

the barnacle's receptors and the various molecules that could fit into these receptor pockets to create a desired reaction.

Having found the target receptor (the octopamine receptor), the researchers tested how various molecules worked and affected barnacle larvae behaviour. A substance called medetomidine was used as a negative control – a molecule originally used as a sedative for large mammals. However, the findings were astonishing. Instead of the expected sedating effect on the barnacle larvae, the opposite took place: they became hyperactive. The medetomidine caused an amplification in the frequency of the swimming legs kicking meaning that the affected highly mobile barnacle larvae could simply not stop kicking. Forcing them to swim away from a coated surface. The brand name for the use of the medetomidine molecule and its antifouling properties in coatings was Selektope®.

Around 2005-2006, there was a particularly strong focus on reducing



emissions in shipping, leading to a renewed interest in advanced coatings technology. Therefore, a product like Selektope®, which could be used in tremendously small quantities and still be very selective and efficient at preventing barnacle attachment on wetted surfaces, was very desirable on paper, particularly given growing biocide restrictions were coming into effect.

However, turning the molecule into a product was a particularly challenging process. One of the biggest challenges was the time needed to get the regulatory certifications and permissions in place. Overall, we spent six years just trying to get relevant study data to be able to do a risk assessment on the molecule, solely on the environmental side and the human exposure side.

This is where it becomes clear how different the 'Silicon Valley' rapid iteration conception of entrepreneurship is from the processes required to introduce a new technology to the coatings industry. If you compare the journey of Selektope® with going home to your basement and coming up with a genius idea of a new app, a game – one that you can iterate rapidly – it's a radically different process.

Lessons learned

Given the Selektope® story, what useful takeaways are there for the next generation of innovators? For us, there are four main conclusions:

- Investment in cleantech must be strategic. Investors need to be committed to a long-term result, not just short-term profits.
- Understanding a regulatory framework from the beginning — and knowing that such a framework is changeable — is essential. Regulatory processes can add years to the development process when it comes to deep tech innovations. Subject-specific knowledge from (for instance) the pharmaceutical industry can help here.

- Be prepared to pivot from a research phase to a commercial phase, and ensure you find the right people. At the research and regulatory phase, commercial concerns are less important than getting the science right; however, this will need to change very quickly to a more commercial focus – and in shipping, this certainly requires some industry knowledge. Aligning both teams and mindsets around a common purpose is essential.
- Similarly, focusing on purpose is what ultimately led to success for I-Tech so far. Our research was based on a passion for science and making a difference, this was supported by investors and researchers with a vision for a lower carbon future.

Today, marine antifouling coatings have a more important role than ever in shipping's decarbonisation journey. With ocean temperatures rising on a global scale, marine biofouling hotspots will increase in size and severity, leaving more ships at risk of the negative impacts of biofouling on ship efficiency and fuel use.

In 2019, I-Tech undertook a study with the Safinah Group that assessed hull fouling conditions on the hulls of 249 ships drydocked between 2015 and 2019. Over 40% of the vessels surveyed had over 10% hard fouling coverage on the hull. If we were to assume this to be the status of 40% of the global shipping fleet, it would amount to billions of dollars in excess fuel consumption and millions of tonnes of excess carbon emissions each year.

Moreover, ships are spending longer periods of time idle which intensifies the risk of barnacle fouling. Based on recent in-depth analysis of the global fleet patterns, we found a substantial increase in the numbers of idling vessels over the past decade. We discovered that 'Fouling Idling' – idling where ships are at risk of hull fouling – has increased constantly since 2009, with a starting point of 25.4% to a peak of 35.0% of the total fleet in May 2020. Since the fleet has grown in numbers of vessels during the past decade, this means that the absolute number of vessels idling in the global fleet has increased by 200% between 2009-2020.

Innovation, focused on long term impact, with a clear purpose, will be crucial in the cleantech space to achieve net zero carbon emissions by the maritime industry. Alternative fuels, such as hydrogen or ammonia, are likely to be more expensive and have a much lower energy density than traditional fossil fuels, so the capacity to burn as little fuel as possible will be a critical advantage for all fleets. The time for shipping to take advantage of the great technological entrepreneurship at play in the industry is now. ●



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Seably: helping seafarers manage work and life at sea more ably

Seably CEO Andrea Lodolo describes his company as “a global marketplace for maritime training with Swedish roots,” so named to convey the idea of skill sets that allow seafarers to work and live more ably sea. The Scandinavian heritage is reflected in its ‘first mover’ approach to using advanced technologies, he adds, as well as its underlying concern for social values.

Five years ago, the Swedish Shipowners’ Association – which comprises some 60 companies owning and operating wet, dry and passenger vessels - decided to invest in a digital solution for training of their own seafarers, he relates, and then spent the next two-and-a-half years on R&D and trial operations.

“It’s a product that was built together with seafarers and with the industry,” he stresses.

In 2020, seafarers started using Seably and towards the end of the year Mr Lodolo met with SSA to discuss product development ideas. “The Association wanted to move it from being a training provider scheme purely for their own seafarers and start to develop into an open marketplace for maritime training, and we decided to do it together,” he recalls.

“The vision was rather than use the technology that allow companies to offer maritime training,” he explains, “to build training that seafarers can attend themselves,

with e-learning either through apps or offline.” Crucially, content would include both regulatory training, such as courses approved by flag states or as according to STCW, but also ‘soft’ skills and other non-regulatory matters.

The company’s resulting remote training platform can now be seen to chime perfectly with these post-pandemic times - both in terms of harnessing latest developments in digitalisation and connectivity that have made e-learning and -leisure more commonplace in periods of near-global lockdowns, but also with heightened concern for seafarer wellbeing at sea during tours of duty often forcibly extended on account of Covid.

“We thought it better for all concerned to open it up to the industry as a marketplace where anyone can build a course, which anyone with a licence can attend,” explains Mr Lodolo. “There is a saying that ‘knowledge at sea stays at sea’ but that’s not true anymore. Content providers can build a course, with our help if needed, to teach a specialized skill - such as for example how to throw a heaving line in a more effective way or how to tie knots - and if it’s successful they can make money from it as well as benefit other seafarers.”

Mr Lodolo himself hails from Milan and was a highly successful corporate career ending up as a CEO of a major electrotechnical manufacturer. After selling it to an investment fund he decided



Andrea Lodolo, Seably CEO

to undertake a new challenge and started cadet training at Warsash Maritime Academy in Southampton, UK. “It was an amazing experience to be a 40-year-old cadet,” he says. “As a mature student you have more insight and are more critical.” He also has the distinction of being the first Italian national to complete a cadetship at Warsash.

He then went on to serve a year at sea as a 3rd officer before coming ashore and heading up a training centre in Malta. He also holds a Masters degree from the World Maritime University in Maritime Safety and Environmental Protection.

Seably has already enjoyed significant success since opening to a wider market. It now adding over 30 courses a week - from a mixture of

training providers, professional vendors but also individual seafarers with specialized knowledge - and has grown to enjoy 35,000 users, expecting to exceed 100,000 by year-end.

Mr Lodolo attributes the success to what he terms Seably's '3 E' model.

Firstly, it's Empirical," he explains. "If you carry training for seafarers you have to 'do things for real' and not just in a theoretical way

"Secondly, E-learning allows you to do your training in your own time and place of choice.

"And thirdly it's Experimental, making use of all the upcoming new technologies such as VR (virtual reality) and others to be announced shortly. Seably wants to lead the industry in upskilling seafarers for the digital age."

Many of the courses are company-specific, where ship operators buy licenses that they then offer to their seafarers, selected by specific rank, categorization or ship(s), such as vessel familiarization courses. "With our technology they can also monitor attendance," says Mr Lodolo, "and input

directly into their HR system." Users also have access to a Seably Studio, he adds, which can provide technical help with producing courses.

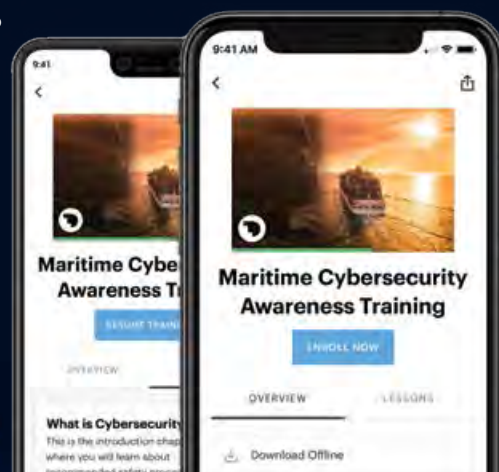
"A lot of the courses we are passionate about concern wellness at sea and helping seafarers with their personal development," the CEO continues. "It's very important that they have all the certificates but seafarers also have to manage relationships with their bosses have a good C.V. and know how to keep fit in their own cabins."

The company has 41 employees at present and will undergo significant expansion in the first half of year with the opening of new offices in Singapore. It also plans a new phase in its business model, moving on from selling licenses to companies to retailing them directly to seafarers.

Corporate business remains an important commercial underpinning of the marketplace, however, and as this issue went to press Seably had just concluded an agreement with major ship management group Synergy, adding another 18,000 new

seafarer users to take its total above 50,000.

"Continuous learning is at the heart of our culture at Synerg and our commitment to helping our people upskill and thrive in an ever-changing world," commented Martin Ackermann, Synergy's Chief Commercial Officer, "Seably's exciting new seafarer-centric digital training platform is the perfect vehicle for ongoing learning, training and development. The dynamics of the new digital platform usher in a new way of delivering maritime training and development, providing relevant, content that is easy to understand and digest. It also means that our seafarers will have access to an increased amount of personalised learning material that will enhance their safety and overall wellbeing." ●



Cyber Security Course - Seably Marketplace

Connectivity 'vital' for business continuity



*The Covid-19 pandemic has made the need for ship-to-shore connectivity even more obvious, says **Erwan Emilian**, CEO of IEC Telecom Global and board chairman of the Mobile Satellite Users Association. He talks to SMI about the latest developments in the sector.*

Locked down, separated from loved ones, working from home – who didn't want to be more connected during the Covid-19 pandemic? For those at sea, the issues have been magnified, of course. Add to that the acceleration of digitalisation across the industry, and the demands are clear.

"Mobile satellite communications are revolutionising the operations of maritime, aeronautical, enterprise businesses and governments worldwide," says Erwan Emilian. The Mobile Satellite Users Association, which he chairs, is dedicated to promoting satellite innovations worldwide, he says. "Our members have a single common issue: retain the users in their technological environment and make sure these users foresee the future of the satcom paradigm: higher throughput, lower latency, equipment standardisation, cloud-based solutions and services, AI online support, SD WAN cloud solutions, Satellite-as-a-Service, and full managed services. End users expect to experience in their remote office the equivalent throughput that they have at home: a fibre-like speed and power delivered by satellite. It is almost there!"

As he says, the need for connectivity across shipping and offshore operations has become more apparent during the pandemic. "The impact of travel restrictions, port closures and other Covid-19 operating requirements meant that the precise coordination of their work became more important than ever, particularly considering the need to decrease crew capacity to ensure social distancing."

Connectivity has served as a reliable

bridge between crews and ashore office, he says – enabling remote teams to keep updated and receive important instructions, and to receive timely training. It has also, of course provided a vital link between crew and their loved ones miles away.

Was there a rush for mobile satellite communication services as the pandemic took hold?

One quick response was that vessels already equipped with VSAT wanted to increase the monthly allowance, says Emilian.

"Satellite connectivity formed a vital link between the onboard crew members and their loved ones. Being at sea for months on end, these communications served to keep crew welfare and morale high. From a business perspective, vessels that were already equipped with VSAT remained operational and maintained business continuity, gaining a competitive edge, while vessels which hadn't embraced digitalisation before the pandemic occurred found themselves behind their competition," he says. "Understanding the importance of connectivity in such unprecedented times, there were satcom industry joint efforts to support vessel owners at the start of the pandemic. For instance, in April 2020 IEC Telecom, together with one of the major satcom operators, doubled the end-users' data allowance at no extra cost."

Emilian says that in recent years, and especially because of the pandemic, there has been a significant increase in demand for corporate apps, serving as the "backbone behind business continuity".

"The more vessel operations depend on the apps, the more important it is to make sure that digital operations



continue, regardless of the coverage type – 2G, 3G, LTE, VSAT or L-band.”

This is an area of expertise for IEC Telecom, which offers two ways to overcome the hurdles, he explains.

In network management, the OneGate solution was developed to provide seamless VSAT/L-band switch at least-cost routing. “In other words, we provide vessel owners with an automated system that takes care of connectivity and protects from disruptions, with the least possible damage to the owner’s wallet.”

Second, he considers optimised application. “Traditional desktop applications for videoconferencing and VoIP can operate over GSM and VSAT (FSS). Small and mid-sized vessels have neither the room, nor budget for FSS set-up. Large VSAT-equipped vessels also experience downtime, particularly in stormy weather, when all operations failover to the narrow L-band back-up channel. To overcome these challenges, in 2021 IEC Telecom presented a range of optimised applications supporting a portfolio of advanced digital services, including videoconferencing, remote maintenance, telemedicine and more, even in low-bandwidth environments,” he says.

It is often said that ships are becoming like an office at sea – what are the challenges of ensuring connectivity in all areas and at all times? Emilian says: “The availability of an onboard voice service has become as essential as having lifejackets or a first aid kit. And, as digitalisation spreads across the shipping industry, having access to email services is gaining equal importance in order to receive navigation updates, port notifications and operational instructions.”

The requirements for managing large volumes of critical data via reliable connectivity are increasing exponentially, he points out. “With all this reliance on data transfer and vessel monitoring, 24/7 connectivity is now expected. Systems with automated failure and robust backup are therefore essential.

“Digital systems need to be capable of operating seamlessly over GSM and satcom. Today we see far fewer ships operating just with a single line of communication. It’s now common practice to equip an onboard network with one or

two backup lines. VSAT packages now routinely include L-Band along with any Ka or Ku offer. Business continuity is essential, otherwise, efforts invested into digitalisation could be wasted.”

Cybersecurity is, unsurprisingly, a major focus, particularly following the entry into force last year of the IMO’s Resolution on Maritime Cyber Risk Management.

Emilian says: “With the introduction of the IMO resolution in January 2021, IEC Telecom has been working closely with fleet managers to develop an individual cybersecurity policy for each vessel. With more data onboard than ever, efficient cyber risk management includes measures such as the separation of corporate and crew networks, verifying the authenticity of data, and proper safety protocols for personal devices brought onboard a vessel. BYOD (Bring Your Own Device) cyber strategy is a continuous bargain between IT and users. The end goal is a fair, secured connectivity for both.”

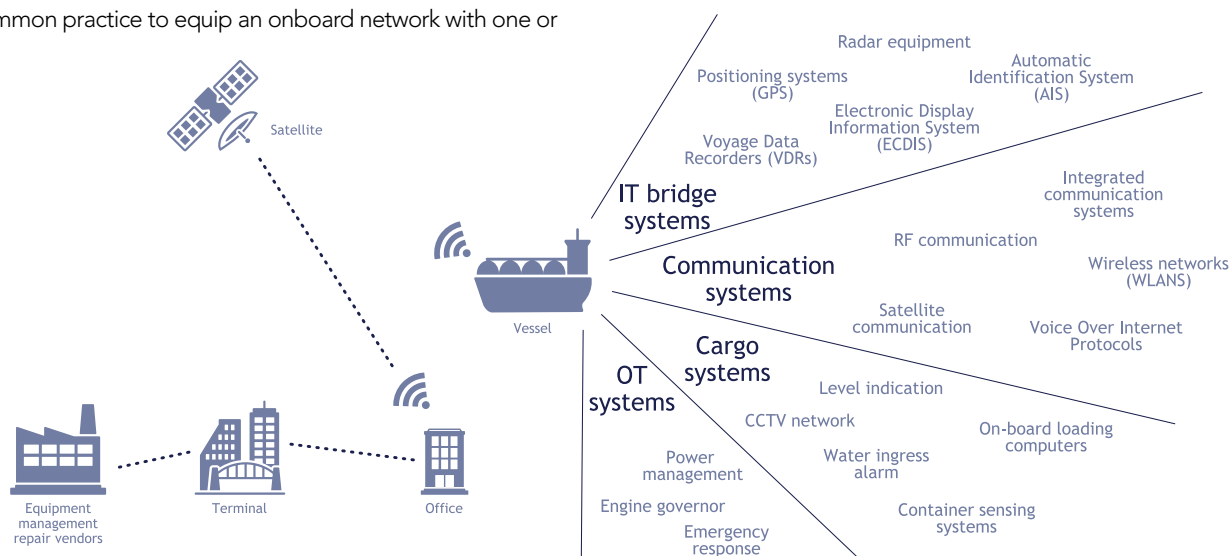
There has been a significant increase in interest in cybersecurity packages, he says, and IEC Telecom has developed an “extensive portfolio” of security solutions optimised for the maritime environment, including a multilayer cybersecurity package which safeguards onboard systems from all known viruses and detect new potential threats.

“IEC Telecom supports the business continuity of customer operations by enabling IT personnel to retrieve data following an interruption and keeps mission-critical and crew welfare networks segregated with multiple access levels. IEC Telecom also provides remote deployment of software update patches as well as replicates data between ship and shore.”

And finally – any predictions for the next ten years?

“The market will undergo a massive expansion due to the development of the orbital infrastructure. As of 2021, there were 11,000-plus satellites in orbit. Some experts forecast that, by 2030, there will be nearly ten times as many.”

This expansion will generate more capacity than possible demand for it, he says. “Oversupply will drive prices down and average revenue per user (ARPU) is expected to drop from \$466/Mbps/month in 2021 to \$166/Mbps/month in 2029.” ●



Advanced fire-fighting system aboard autonomous boxship





Survitec reports that its advanced fire-fighting system and safety equipment aboard Yara Birkeland – the world's first fully autonomous containership – has successfully completed its first annual service ahead of the 3200dwt ship's first laden voyage.

The zero-emission, fully electric Yara Birkeland was preparing to carry its first fertiliser cargo on the Herøya-Brevik route in early 2022.

The ground-breaking vessel, which deployed on its maiden manned voyage in November, operates a unique, automatic and remotely operated fire system designed and commissioned by survival technology leader Survitec.

Survitec's scope of supply included a Novenco XFlow water mist system for the vessel's eight separate battery rooms; an Inergen fire extinguishing system for the switchboard rooms, pumps rooms, control rooms and electrical spaces; and an NFF XFlow Deluge system for the cargo holds, open decks, superstructure and other compartments.

A wide range of standalone fire safety and life-saving equipment, including flares, radios, breathing apparatus, immersion suits and lifejackets, also passed the November inspection.

"The fire system aboard Yara Birkeland is ready for safe operations, with crews monitoring the system from a virtual bridge and machinery control room ashore," said Survitec Account Manager Andreas Dåsvatn.

Going on to comment on the different approach required to extinguish a fire aboard a crewless ship, Dåsvatn explained: "Typically, fire systems are built for manual operation, so we had to redesign the system for automatic activation based on the signals received from heat, flame and fire sensors located all around the vessel. The fire systems also had to send signals to seawater pumps, gas cylinders and valves, providing alerts to operators shoreside."

Mark Clegg, Managing Director, Survitec Fire Solutions, added that the entire system had to be rethought to facilitate independent activation from a virtual bridge and machinery control room on shore.

"This new approach meant we had to redesign the Novenco system for 60 minutes of operation rather than 30 minutes specified for conventional vessels. Moreover, since the vessel's cargo holds are designed according to IMO MSC Circ.608 requirements (which normally

requires a manual fire-fighting approach), the NFF XFlow Deluge nozzles had to be redesigned and sited for crewless operation," he said.

Extra fire safety features built into the ship included additional segregated fire zones and system redundancy. Drain valves have also been integrated into the system to allow for automatic opening and closing to prevent free-surface flooding.

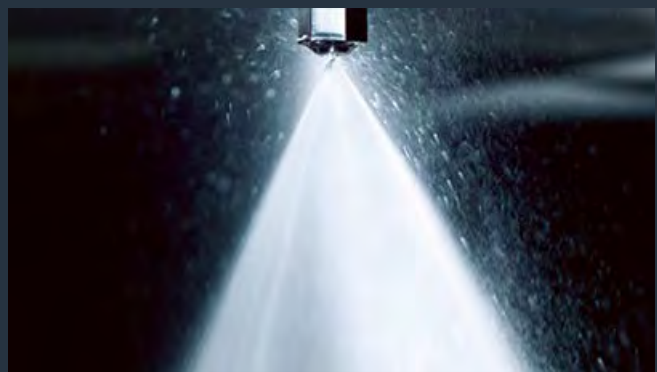
The success of the fire system aboard Yara Birkeland has placed Survitec at the vanguard of fire safety technology for a new generation of autonomous vessels.

A similar fire-fighting system is currently being designed for a pair of 67m fully autonomous ferries under construction at a yard in India.

Dåsvatn said: "This is just the beginning. As the industry starts to see these autonomous, alternatively fuelled vessels operating successfully and safely, demand will speed up. We predict more autonomous vessel projects over coming years. But in terms of ship safety, we're already ahead of the curve."

Survitec describes itself as a global leader in survival and safety solutions to the marine, defence, aviation and energy markets with over 3,000 employees worldwide covering eight manufacturing facilities, 15 offshore support centres and over 70 owned service centres. It is further supported by a network of over 500 3rd party service centres and distributors.

The company has received Z-17 (Procedural Requirements for Service Suppliers) approval from seven major classification societies, and also has ISO 9001 certification, the international standard for quality management systems. It prides itself on a 160-year+ history, during which Survitec says it has remained at the forefront of innovation, design and application engineering, making it a trusted name when it comes to critical safety and survival solutions. ●



Warming to the nuclear option?

Nuclear power could play an important role in achieving the shipping industry's long-term decarbonisation goal. However, outdated public perceptions of nuclear energy have to be overcome if its benefits are to be realised.

Nuclear power for marine propulsion is a proven technology with an impressive safety record. Navies have been reaping the benefits of atomic power since the early 1960s, and nuclear reactors have also been employed to effect in Russian icebreakers for nearly 65 years. The endurance factor, eliminating the need for constant refuelling, is a supreme benefit of such installations, and especially so in the defence sector. Zero emission performance did not constitute one of the original drivers for harnessing nuclear fission in marine propulsion, but it provides a compelling case today for the application of nuclear energy to merchant vessels.

Readers may recall the US, German and Japanese atomic commercial ships of the past, respectively the Savannah (1962), Otto Hahn (1968) and Mutsu (1974), launched primarily as demonstrators of a science that promised years of continuous service without refuelling. The only existing nuclear-powered merchant vessel, the 260-metre Russian ice-breaking LASH carrier Sevmorput, was built in 1988, and continues to operate along the Northern Sea Route (NSR).

Russia's nuclear icebreaker fleet, under the aegis of Rosatomflot, plays

a crucial role in ensuring transportation on the NSR, the country's Arctic Sea conduit for energy and metal exports and an increasingly-utilised connection for international shipping between the Atlantic and Pacific basins. New investment in nuclear-powered icebreakers currently involves the Project 22220 Arktika-class (60MW) series from Baltic Shipyard in St Petersburg, and the Project 10510 Leader-class (110MW) behemoth Russia, laid down in 2020 at the Zvezda Shipbuilding Complex near Vladivostok. Reactor power is delivered through turbo generators and electric propulsion motors acting on twin or triple shaftlines.

In the drive towards a zero-carbon future for commercial shipping, no single solution has yet emerged with the potential to supersede hydrocarbon-fuelled, reciprocating engine-based power. While a number, possibly a multiplicity, of technologies and alternative fuels may be endorsed to effect the energy transition in combination, every option commands a cost premium, and/or entails logistical challenges and, in a number of cases, inherent hazards. The nuclear solution has to be considered in the round, and from a long-term perspective. In fact,

a short-term mindset is anathema to a nuclear strategy.

Issues relating to front-loaded capital cost, ship design and trading freedom understandably cause many within the maritime community to baulk at making the energy transition by way of nuclear power. However, against the backcloth of national and international carbon-neutral goals, and attendant, proliferating maritime environmental regulation, powering concepts based on nuclear fission are attracting increased attention as a potential, future option for merchant shipping.

It is argued that, although the up-front capital loading is high, operating expenses in terms of fuel will be moderate and predictable, and not subject to the volatility of the oil and gas markets, due to the long refuelling intervals. The technology is far, far more power dense than fossil fuels and alternatives that are currently propounded, such as ammonia, methanol and hydrogen. Detractors make much of the issues of plant decommissioning and storage of used nuclear fuel, but these are financially accounted for from the outset and appear to be much less of an issue with new-generation systems.



Recent years' developmental work by various organisations has acknowledged and addressed fundamental concerns as to financial viability, system safety, and asset maintenance. While the regulatory framework needs rigorous upgrading, and while trading limitations exist because of the opposition in some countries to nuclear power in all its manifestations, the toughest mountain to climb is that of perception and public acceptability. Anxieties have conventionally related to the behaviour of the reactor during accidents and in the event of the ship sinking.

A number of projects and studies involving leading names in the marine industries have been conducted over the past 10 years or so, all indicating technical feasibility and prospective economic benefit. A three-year endeavour by a research consortium that included Lloyd's Register and BMT, for instance, explored the development of a Suezmax tanker incorporating a 70MW small modular reactor (SMR) plant. Babcock International's marine division also completed a study to investigate the commercial case for developing a nuclear-powered LNG carrier.

Although there are many reactor types, pressurised water reactor (PWR) technology accounts for almost all marine applications, and has demonstrated a high level of reliability over the decades. In recent years, other nuclear-based technologies have progressed, and molten salt reactor (MSR) systems are currently in focus for civilian marine propulsion.

PWR reactors are cooled and moderated by light water, and use enriched uranium. Pressurised light water passes through the reactor in the primary loop, which is then fed to a steam generator where the secondary light water is heated at a lower pressure and the resultant steam is used to drive the turbo generators. Pressurised containment requires comparatively large and extensive infrastructure around the plant.

MSRs differ substantially from other thermal reactor types since the fuel (uranium or plutonium) is dissolved into molten salts (fluoride or chloride). Although the operating temperatures can be among the highest of all reactors, there is little or no pressurisation required, eliminating the risk of pressurised reaction chamber explosive breaches. Compact versions of MSRs are also in development, offering a promising technology and with goals of commercialisation within the next 10 years or so. As well as employing a low-pressure fluid line, affording increased safety, the system reduces both the capital cost and weight of the plant, and lends itself to volume production.

Recent initiatives have included the cooperation agreement signed in June 2021 between the Korea Atomic Energy Research Institute (KAERI) and Samsung Heavy Industries for joint research in the field of MSR technology for commercial ships and also floating power plants. Besides the carbon-free operation ensured by such installations, the Korean partners point to the extremely long fuelling cycle offered (20 years-plus) as a major benefit. Moreover, the safety factor is enhanced by the fact that, in the event of a

malfunction or abnormal signal in the reactor, the molten salt in the system solidifies, so preventing serious accidents. MSRs can also be used for 'green' hydrogen production.

UK-based Core Power is working with partners on the development of MSR-based plant, likened to an atomic battery pack, for large-ship electric propulsion. The technology also lends itself to the generation of 'green' electric power and industrial heat for production of synthetic electro-fuels such as 'green' ammonia for smaller vessels. Exceptional fuel efficiency is claimed as a key benefit, along with a reactor capacity and lifetime to power a ship over her lifespan without refuelling.

"The implications of the MSR solution for transport and industry could be transformational, as we seek to build scale-appropriate technology and broad acceptance of modern and durable liquid-fuelled atomic power to shape the future of how we deal with climate change," contended Core Power CEO Mikael Boe.

Discussion of manning and training issues associated with future nuclear powered merchant ships has been overshadowed by the focus on the actual technologies. Vendors of such systems could be the linchpin, given business strategies that envisage the provision of complete, package-type contracts encompassing maintenance, monitoring and operation. Interaction with the reactor itself, located in a compartment separate from the other propulsion systems and auxiliaries, may not involve the crew.

Where the application effectively entails an all-electric ship, onboard engineering teams would primarily focus on the turbines, electric distribution systems, electric motors and batteries. Crew selection, training and retention will nonetheless be critical.

But without political, corporate and societal will, prospects of investment in nuclear-powered mercantile ships are limited. A nuclear build must be approached from the standpoint of total, through-life costs, and with the assurance that the vessel can conduct her trade, or maintain a dedicated route, unfettered by national objections or controls ●



Unique atomic merchant ship, Russia's ice-classed Sevmorput

Norwegian autonomy

The Third International Ship Autonomy and Sustainability Summit has confirmed it will take place at Nor-Shipping 2022 on 5 April. The day-long summit will be held in Nor-Shipping's Hall E, in Lillestrøm, on the Conference stage and is a ticket only event.

The event, organised in collaboration with Norwegian Forum for Autonomous Ships (NFAS) and EU's Directorate General for Transport (DG MOVE), gathers thought leaders, authorities, owners and other key industry stakeholders to share developments in an area felt to hold much promise for shipping, especially regarding environmental performance and efficiency.

Magda Kopczynska, Director of DG MOVE Waterborne and one of the keynote speakers, comments: "Ship autonomy is surrounded by much uncertainty, but it continues towards maturity. EU is supporting these developments through several research projects, but we are also committed to provide realistic and up-to-date information about possibilities and obstacles to the wider user community." ●



Connecticut's own

Gary Vogel, Chief Executive Officer of Eagle Bulk Shipping Inc., has been named as the Connecticut Maritime Association (CMA) Commodore for 2022, an award given each year to a person in the international maritime industry



who has contributed to the growth and development of the industry. Mr Vogel follows a long succession of influential maritime industry leaders as Commodore. This year's Award will be presented on Thursday, March 31, 2022 at the Gala Dinner marking the conclusion of the annual CMA conference and expo, at the Hilton Hotel in Stamford, Connecticut, USA. "Having started my career in Connecticut, the CMA has been a constant, and has always been a source of fellowship and information exchange with professionals across the industry," commented Mr Vogel. "As a former employee of both Torben Jensen and Ole Skaarup, I am extremely honoured and humbled to be chosen as this year's honouree and join them, as well as many other former recipients, who I hold in the highest regard." ●

Singapore reprise

Singapore Maritime Week (SMW) is set to return from 4 – 8 April 2022 for another edition of conferences, exhibitions and networking, in-person at the Marina Bay Sands Expo and Convention Centre and online on the dedicated SMW virtual platform where there will livestreams, video-on-demand and business matching. Participants will have access to exclusive content delivered by distinguished speakers on diverse maritime issues such as global supply chains, marine technology, sustainable shipping, maritime services, talent and more. A brand new MarineTech Exhibition will provide visitors with hands-on demonstrations, face-to-face interaction with marine technology start-ups and companies, and talks by technology developers on the latest maritime R&D. SMW 2022 will also see the return of signature events, such as the Singapore Maritime

Lecture and the Maritime Manpower Forum. ●



Arctic SAR exercise

Bureau Veritas reports that it recently participated in the world's first international Search and Rescue (SAR) exercise in a remote polar zone. BV tested and certified maritime safety equipment onboard the polar exploration vessel *Le Commandant Charcot*, during a trial voyage to the North Pole organised by leading cruise ship operator Ponant. The SAR exercise was performed to identify and address the challenges, constraints and opportunities involved in Arctic Massive Rescue Operations (AMRO) in remote polar areas, in order to support safe navigation in polar waters. The exercise brought together teams from Russia, Greenland, Iceland, Canada, US and Norway. For BV, the exercise was an ideal opportunity to test all rescue and safety equipment, particularly the 'Ice Cube', camp kit, group survival kit, floating polar shelters, and survival suits, all of which met or exceeded required safety standards. ●



Indian release

Maritime welfare charity Sailors' Society is set to provide emergency care to thousands of seafarers and their families, thanks to grants from The Seafarers' Charity and The TK Foundation. The grants will support Sailors' Society's Crisis Response Network, a free service supporting seafarers and their families following a traumatic incident such as abandonment, piracy, an accident or natural disaster. The global service, operated by 37 trained crisis responders, has been running for six years and handles two cases on average every week. It offers front-line trauma care, providing for basic physical and psychological needs, recovery and rehabilitation – and ultimately helping survivors to reintegrate into their communities and back into their jobs. A recent case involved five Indian crew (pictured) who were wrongfully imprisoned in Iran for six months. The Crisis Response Network supported them throughout, eventually securing their release and repatriation. ●

Japan adventure

The Mission to Seafarers has launched a new adventure race challenge event in Japan, taking place in early 2023. All sponsors and participants of this exciting race will support the Mission's Emerging Port Strategy 2022-26, a five-year plan to develop existing operations in Asia specifically, but also globally. Adventure Race Japan will take place on the Izu Peninsula, Japan, regarded as a place of outstanding natural beauty and a designated UNESCO Global Geopark. The event will see teams of three take on endurance challenges including trail races, team building challenges, and a water-based element. Teams will be asked to raise a minimum of US\$5,000 per team, although some may aspire to raise more. More information on Adventure Race Japan can be found on the Mission's website. ●



Board Leadership & Governance – The Webinar

Tuesday 29th March at 10 am GMT

What makes a good company board of directors and what processes and practices should be in place to ensure correct decisions can be made at the right time? Global maritime leaders will debate these and other crucial issues.

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Objects of desire

» Floating penthouse

If you've ever considered the idea of living, working and travelling the world whenever you feel like it, then Netherlands company SRF Shipbuilding may have just the answer. Make your dreams come true with custom-made houseboats from CRUISING HOME, specialising in sustainable and unique steel-built houseboats. There are different ranges and as you can see, it isn't just 'any' houseboat. It's more akin to a travelling penthouse providing the utmost in comfort and luxury along with excellent sailing properties. Ideal for long stays onboard and permanent residence, this vessel is so uniquely designed by Olivier F. van Meer Naval Architects.

CRUISE HOME Explorer Range

Region: €650,000 (excl. Vat.)
Srfholland.nl



» 007 Edition timepiece

Something for 007 fans, this OMEGA Seamaster Diver 300m 007 Edition Titanium Automatic is identical to that worn by the spy himself in 'No Time To Die'. Presented on a lightweight Grade 2 titanium mesh bracelet with 300m water resistance, it also has a brown tropical aluminium bezel ring and dial and scratch resistant sapphire crystal glass. The case back is engraved with a series of numbers following the format for military-issue watches and this one features the number 62; the year of the very first James Bond film Dr. No and bearing the highest standards of precision, chronometric performance and magnetic resistance.

OMEGA Seamaster Diver 300m 007 Edition Titanium Automatic Men's Watch

£7,880.00
omegawatches.com/

» Chrystal-cut denim

With denim being the most versatile and widely worn item of clothing, it's understandable that prices range from a few dollars into the many hundreds. But consider spending into the thousands and you might be somewhere close to buying some of the most expensive jeans on the planet. Escada's Couture Swarovski Crystal Jeans starting at around \$7,500 dollars, are tailormades fit for a Queen, or a King of course. In fact, they even hold the Guinness World Record, due to customizable options such as 14-carat gold or silver rivets, diamond buttons and of course, Swarovski crystals.

Escada's Couture Swarovski Crystal Jeans

US\$7,500 - \$10,000 upwards
escada.com





» Immersive meetings

The Meeting Owl Pro is a premium 360-degree camera, mic, and speaker combined into one easy-to-use device offering a new point of view for remote meetings. It creates the experience of in-person participation and integrates with conferencing platforms you may already use. The idea is that teams can have an immersive experience wherever they are, thanks to the 360-degree views and audio, plus an automatic zoom that responds to who's speaking at the time. It also features a 1080p camera and tri-speaker. It's ideal for large rooms as well, with an 18-foot radius audio pickup and smart mics which equalize speaking volume. This is a great piece of technology to really enhance remote working as we know it.

Meeting Owl Pro

£999.00

uk-shop.owllabs.com/

» Slopes ready

For the experienced skier who needs to be prepared en piste, the Black Diamond JetForce Tour 26L is a must-have. Featuring a streamlined avalanche airbag for day touring and backcountry skiing, it also uses an innovative electric E1 airbag unique inflation system, which means with this backpack there's no need to carry compressed air cylinders. Complete with everything required for a touring pack it has plenty of room for skins, food, extra layers, water and an AVI gear compartment, for faff free access to a shovel and probe. The system can be charged with a micro-USB or by two AA batteries, enabling it to charge within one hour. Weight: 2.63kg.

Jetforce Tour 26l Avalanche Airbag Pack

£900.00

blackdiamondequipment.com



» Bespoke pool table

Conceived in 2014 this is a most imposing bespoke pool table currently hand built to order by The Games Room Company. This piece comes with unparalleled attention to detail and an underlying philosophy which holds that such legacy pieces should last over a century with no signs of deterioration to top that. This

follows the principal design feature of all Waldersmith pool tables and even includes the discreet inclusion of removable table tennis tops, stored on concealed shelves that slide when needed. A formidable design, the Olympian comes in any colour or natural wood, with flush fitted inlays which line the lower edges, with boundaries of brass, nickel or bronze. Open the 'soft close' drawers to reveal the balls and table tennis set. With a definite feel of monumental grandeur, the table is finished in a mix of brushed steel and high gloss black lacquer to add to its commanding presence.

The Olympian

gamesroomcompany.com

£30-£45k



Grand Egyptian Museum

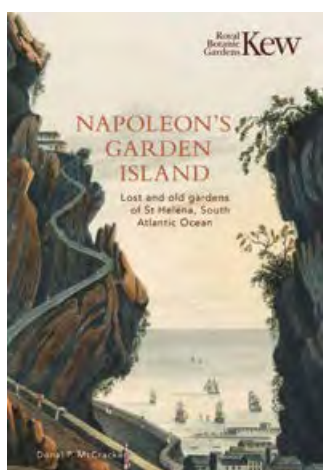
Kafr Nassar, Al Giza Desert, Giza Governorate, Egypt

grandegyptianmuseum.org

While the pandemic may have forced many museums around the world to close, a large number have been redeveloped and built during these strangest of times. To witness such, visit the Grand Egyptian Museum (GEM), nearing completion and due to open this November, just twenty years after the first foundation was laid. The cost of the museum, designed by Dublin-based architects Heneghan Peng, is thought to be more than \$1bn. At nearly 500,000 square metres, the museum is the size of a major airport terminal and is located near the pyramids of Giza. It will house 100,000 Egyptian artefacts from prehistory to the Greco-Roman period. Among the largest objects is a 45m-long wooden 'solar boat', excavated in 1954 at the Great Pyramid of Khufu. The biggest draw could be the collection of 5,000 relics from the tomb of Tutankhamun, transferred from the Egyptian Museum in Cairo and displayed in its entirety for the first time at the GEM.



Editorial credit: Gabriela Beres / Shutterstock.com



NAPOLEON'S GARDEN ISLAND

Lost and Old Gardens of St Helena, South Atlantic Ocean

Donal P McCracken

St Helena is a tiny island in the middle of the wild South Atlantic Ocean, rich in garden heritage and exotic and endemic flora. The island was once the stopover for vast East India Company fleets, carrying cargos of spices and plants from China, Malaysia and India. In the age of sail, only a small number of plants survived such voyages, so they were placed to rest on the island, before their last voyage. Maintained by enslaved labour and Chinese gardeners, once such place is the Emperor Napoleon's Garden at Plantation House. This amazing book is illustrated throughout, with stunning drawings, maps, and manuscripts and looks at St Helena's future and its past, taking the reader on a botanical exploration of the island's native and introduced flora and placing it in context today. Featuring 45 colour photographs and 30 b/w illustrations.

Donauinselfest

24-26 June 2022

Visitingvienna.com



People are estimated to spend three times more on attending events this year due to pent-up frustrations and a need to 'go out and party.' If this resonates with you, why not go the whole-hog and experience the largest festival in the world called the Donauinselfest. Believe it or not, the event is free. Located in Vienna, which has long been home to the likes of musical geniuses including Mozart, the place now hosts the festival on an artificial Donauinsel island in the middle of the Danube River. In 2016 it attracted 3.1 million people. It is totally outdoors and takes place annually, hosting over 200 acts across 11 stages. The island also serves as a recreational park, where you can hike, swim, cycle, trampoline, climb, eat, drink and be merry!

French Chateau Style

Prestel

Publication: 15 March 2022

The doors of centuries old French chateaux are thrown open to in this sumptuous, cross-country graphic tour. Readers will gain entry to a stunning array of stylish private homes | beautiful historic buildings, each one representing different approaches to décor and preservation. When she discovered that nearly half of France's 44,000 heritage sites were chateaux in various states of repair, Catherine Scotto embarked on a journey to find out who, exactly, lived in these medieval fortresses and more importantly, what they were like on the inside. From Normandy and Provence and everywhere in-between, the owners of the chateaux, represent the epitome of French culture and taste.

Publication date 15 March 2022.



Brace

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Copenhagen

restaurantbrace.dk



Situated in the heart of Copenhagen, the unique eatery called Brace, is named after the English word meaning 'something that is used to support or connect things, or to make something stronger'. This Michelin star restaurant has its roots in Italian cuisine, with menus created using the best seasonal, local, organic and wild ingredients, most of which come from small Nordic suppliers with, it is believed, similar such values. The ethos of the team is to focus on dedication, simplicity and respect who are dedicated to the restaurant's unique concept, in which it believes that local farmers produce their food with love, respect and passion and where fascinating quality is discovered.

Land Rover Defender 110 D250 S

To be a defender you have to stand tall in most situations – and the motoring world is no different.

By Rob Auchterlonie



Consequently, the Land Rover Defender is big. Not huge and ungainly, but big in a reassuringly tough sort of way.

In much the same way as its legendary predecessor, in fact, but now it's literally world's apart from that more agricultural ancestor.

It'll still perform the tasks for which the name Defender still evokes unbridled confidence when the going gets tough on steep slopes and muddy fields, but it will also find a ready market in more urban surroundings for those who like their transport to have a more luxurious feel. The latest Chelsea tractor, if you like.

It's taken them a long time to replace the iconic 4x4 Defender, and probably a lot of questioning whether they could or should, but be thankful they have.

Instead of wearing the utilitarian badge, the new Defender proudly shows off the latest in technology and luxury – but it can still roll its sleeves up and get down and dirty if needed.

There's a level of refinement in use that could only be dreamed about years ago. Gone is the thudding suspension, distinct lack of comfort and overall basic level of everything.

The 3.0 litre diesel under the bonnet here seems remarkably subdued in use, yet still hints at the levels of grunt available when needed.

Open road motoring is now actually a joy to undertake, such is the level of refinement now on offer.

The accent is most definitely on a far higher degree of comfort for the occupants, whatever situation they find themselves in. Even for the one using the occasional third seat in the front, which most of the time, folded down, serves as a huge armrest.

There's a generous supply of cup-holders, power outlets and air vents around the cabin. Overall refinement is good and the front seats have plenty of adjustment, so you can easily find the most comfortable position, driver and passengers alike.

S trim here gives you extra kit such as automatic headlights, and there are also clever touches to help you with towing - the on-board cameras assist when lining-up a trailer, while the air suspension can raise and lower to make hitching-up easier.

The ClearSight system is another handy addition and comes with Mirror or Ground functions. The rear-view mirror can be used normally, but is also able to display a rear-facing camera feed when the rear screen is too dirty to see out of. The only drawback with using the camera is your view aft can be restricted to the roof rails of the vehicle behind!

Defender comes with air suspension, twin speed transmission, locking centre and active rear locking diffs and Land Rover's latest Terrain Response tech.

There are three diesel engines on offer: the D200, D250 and D300 with 197bhp, 247bhp and 296bhp - all versions of a 3.0-litre, six-cylinder in-line unit with mild-hybrid tech.

There's a definite nod to the previous model in terms of its overall look, and the proportions are Defender-like, but everything's bigger and chunkier.

Inside you'll find exposed screw heads and a refined rawness to the cabin that hints of the past - but all wrapped in a very much more user friendly package.

What else does it come with? A fairly hefty price tag, but also a level of 21st century coolness. ●



Land Rover Defender 110

Price: £52,985 (£66,015 as tested)

Engine: 3.0 litre, six cylinder, diesel

Power: 245bhp

Torque: 420lb/ft

Transmission: automatic

To speed: 117mph

0-60mph: 7.9 seconds

Economy: 32.2mpg

CO2 emissions: 230 g/km



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