



# Newsletter

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# TRAIN, TRAIN, RETRAIN, RETAIN!

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## ExecSec's Comments



Rod Short

At the end of 2010 there are many thoughts: STCW and the Manila Amendments, the 'tanker for the future' as seen by DNV, Vale's 30+ Chinamax carriers, recently visited academies ...

It was a privilege to be involved in expressing GlobalMET's 'voice' during the Manila Diplomatic Conference in June which approved the Manila Amendments. With one of the agreed provisions being that there won't be another major review of STCW for 10 years, one's thoughts turn to what the new ship in 2020 is likely to be like and the competences required to operate such a ship. Without doubt the ship will be 'greener' and the development of marine technology will continue.

A ship launched in 2020 is likely to be highly automated, with many wireless sensors distributed throughout the ship, transmitting to monitors on board and in the offices ashore. What one asks will be role of the crew on such a ship and the competences needed?

Irrespective of how much automation there is, the vehicle will still be a ship, transporting goods and people by sea. One thing we can be very sure of, the sea will still be the sea, able to severely stress ship and crew in rough weather. Also, traffic is likely to be heavier at choke points such as the Malacca and Singapore straits, though there could be more control from ashore through VTS. A lot of the onboard tasks will involve monitoring onboard systems. And paperwork? What competencies will the MET providers be required to deliver and assess? Shouldn't we now, with the luxury of plenty of time to tease out the issues, be initiating a 'think tank' of interested parties to identify the issues and propose development? As resolved at three of the conferences involving GlobalMET in November, we should!

Strong political pressures will force the industry to 'clean up its act'. Technology will have a major role. DNV's 'tanker of the future' (below) is very interesting. The three principle goals - improved environmental impact, use of technology and financial viability - have led to the concept of a VLCC with a V-shaped hull cross-section, dual-fuel (including LNG), with no need for ballasting. There is also the challenging Wartsila "Shipping Scenarios 2030".

Much bigger ships are coming over the horizon. Vale's order for 30+ 400,000 tonne dwt bulkers and Maersk's likely order of several 18,000 teu container ships are indications of what the training of seafarers will need to address in 2020. What will be required to operate such ships efficiently, safely, cleanly and securely? What will life on board be like? How to live and work on a fully laden ship, westbound against the weather around Cape Horn, on a 40+ day voyage from Brazil to China, having already had a 40+ day ballast voyage from China to Brazil and being confined on board at the loading port?

Aptitude for such a life of exile, constrained to living on a moving vehicle for long periods with a small group of fellow crew members, will be essential. As will attitude. And how is the time on board to be spent constructively? Surely, over the next decade, the communications available to people at sea will improve so that all on board will be able to communicate with families, study online and also use online material to relax. At present there is much need to improve such communications. Surely we will see that improvement by 2020.

Recent visits to major academies have left no doubt about recent progress in India. After the 11<sup>th</sup> Asia Pacific Manning & Training Conference and GlobalMET AGM in Manila, I was privileged to visit five academies within two hours driving of Mumbai. The five academies - Anglo-Eastern Maritime Academy, Great Eastern Maritime Institute, Samundra Maritime Institute, Tolani Maritime Institute and Yak Training Institute and Diving Academy - large modern academies with fine facilities and a wide range of modern training equipment - clearly demonstrated the MET support now being given to Indian seafarers. In addition to short course work, Yak is providing full compression diving training and, at the time of the visit, was providing skilled local personnel to assist with the salvage of the container ship that sank following a collision in Mumbai Harbour.

Following the visits and conferences in Mumbai, Delhi and Chennai (please refer to the article in this newsletter), more time was spent at the very well equipped Singapore Maritime Academy, after which the recent developments at the Australian Maritime College showed clearly the strengthening role of research - the new wave tank and cavitation tunnel being examples of the fine new facilities available. The merger of AMC with the University of Tasmania indicates that research will play an even greater role into the future.

Turning now to GlobalMET and it's role as a 'voice' for MET. Members can expect to receive a survey questionnaire in the near future, asking for input on how GlobalMET can be improved. GlobalMET intends to have two delegates at the IMO STW 42 meeting in the last week of January, at which there will be a statement on progress with the trial review and revision of the model course in response to the Manila Amendments, as well as on the new GlobalMET Deck Cadet Structured Shipboard Training Programme Work and Activity books, together with the tanker supplements. Members will also receive details of the GlobalMET Maritime Logistics International Forum to be held on 12-13 April during Singapore Maritime Week. This will be the first major venture by GlobalMET into the larger maritime logistics area and GlobalMET is very appreciative of the major support for this event provided in Singapore.

It is a pleasure to close expressing appreciation for the increased support received in 2010, to look forward to even more support in the new year and to wish all involved in the delivery of MET the very best for 2011.

*Rod Short*



## GlobalMET in India conference on 20<sup>th</sup> November 2010, Mumbai – a report

The auditorium at the SCI Maritime Training Institute in Powai again provided a very good venue, this time for the 11<sup>th</sup> GlobalMET in India Conference “Year of the Seafarer – Charting a New Course”. As on previous occasions, the organisation was done by the India Chapter of GlobalMET, however, for the first time, the conference was held in collaboration with the Nautical Institute. Capt James Robinson, FNI, President of the Nautical Institute, travelled from Ireland to participate and to deliver a presentation.

Following the welcome on behalf of the India Chapter by Capt Kersi Deboo, the Opening and Keynote Address by Capt Rod Short described the Manila Amendments to STCW and ranged over the implications. The need to start ensuring the training is amended to meet convention requirements was stressed, as certificates issued from 1 January 2012 to new entrants are to certify that training is in accordance with the revised convention.

This was followed by the address by the Guest of Honour, Dr Sujata Naik-Tolani, Vice-Chairperson, Tolani Maritime Institute. Dr Tolani raised significant points which set the stage for discussion throughout the rest of the day; eg

- trebling of the number of Indian seafarers by 2015;
- significant improvement in quality must accompany increase in quantity;
- more marketing in the schools of seafaring as a career;
- clearer identification of career options ashore after seafaring;
- recruiting and retaining faculty likely to be a growing challenge;
- research into maritime education and training needs strengthening;
- there are serious seafarer social issues to be addressed;
- occupational health and safety should be second nature to the seafarer.

In his address as Chief Guest, Dr S B Agnihotri, Director General of Shipping, described the developments in recruitment and training of seafarers and proposed expansion of recruitment



(From left): Dr. S. B. Agnihotri inaugurating the conference by lighting the lamp, Capt. K N Deboo and Mr. Francis Akkara stand next to him

## GlobalMET in India conference on 20<sup>th</sup> November 2010, Mumbai – a report



Dr. (Mrs) Sujata Naik-Tolani addressing the delegates at the GlobalMET conference on 20<sup>th</sup> November 2010

in the Philippines as 'a wake-up call' for India. He stressed there should be growth in both the officer and rating sectors and that more attention should be given to each seafarer being an 'ambassador for India'. Dr Agnihotri described the steps already being taken to ensure that maritime education and training in India accords with the amended STCW Convention.

During the following session, which was chaired by Mr A Banerjee, Chief Surveyor, Directorate General of Shipping and coordinated by Capt S. Sawant, Training Superintendent, Wallem's Maritime Training Centre, Capt Robinson spoke about the Nautical Institute and its next five-year strategic plan, Mr Martin Hernqvist, Managing Director of the Swedish Club Academy spoke about Maritime Resource Management training and Capt J S Loney, General Manager, Torm Shipping, spoke about the ILO's Maritime Labour Convention and its implementation on board and some audit findings.

The holding of the 4<sup>th</sup> Honouring Living Legends Ceremony recognised the services to maritime education and training of Capt. Vincent C D'Paiva and Mr. S. Mukhopadhyay by the presentation of Lifetime Achievement Awards. This highly appropriate recognition of long service and dedication has become a very significant part of the GlobalMET in India Conferences. Master of Ceremonies was Capt. M. C. Yadav.

The first afternoon session was chaired by Mr J K Dhar, Director of the Mumbai Campus of the Indian Maritime University and coordinated by Capt T Panda of Bernard Schulte Ship Management. Dr Vatsal Singh, on behalf of the India West Branch of the Nautical Institute, spoke about new methods and approaches to building positive attitudes among seafarers towards learning. Dr Singh was followed by Mr Atul Nigam, Chief Executive of Dynamind, who described recent developments in e-teaching and his software, which customises learning methods for each student, based on strengths and weaknesses.

Capt M C Yadav used his slot in the final session, which was coordinated by Mr H Chandwani of Don Bosco Maritime Academy, to provide a detailed explanation of how India will implement the amendments to the STCW Convention. This was followed by Capt S Sule, Superintendent (Training), Anglo-Eastern Maritime Training Centre, who spoke on the challenge of going paperless, with reference to ECDIS implementation on board.



(From left): Dr. (Mrs) Sujata Naik-Tolani, Mr. Amitava Banerjee, Lifetime achievement award winner of 2010 Capt. Vincent C D'Paiva & Mr. S. Mukhopadhyay, Dr. S. B. Agnihotri, Capt. Rod Short and Capt. James Robinson

## GlobalMET in India conference on 20<sup>th</sup> November 2010, Mumbai – a report

During the closing session conducted by Capt Rod Short, the following statement of outcomes was unanimously agreed as the statement of outcomes for the conference:

The participants in the GlobalMET in India Annual Conference, "Year of the Seafarer: Charting a New Course", held at the SCI Maritime Training Institute on 20 November 2010:

RECALLING the IMO Diplomatic Conference in Manila in June 2010 and the agreed Manila Amendments to the STCW Convention;

NOTING the major significance of the changes required by the amendments and the relatively brief periods for implementation;

URGE all parties in the Indian shipping community:

- to support and assist the implementation of the changes; and
- to take a more collective approach to address the full range of maritime education and training and associated human element issues and ensure these matters are given the priority and action essential to their successful and timely introduction

The Vote of Thanks was expressed by Capt Y Sharma, Head of the International Maritime Training Centre, in a unique manner depicting photographs shot by him during the day of the speakers, sponsors and delegates at the conference.

As with previous GlobalMET in India conferences, the 11<sup>th</sup> was marked by high levels of participation demonstrating deep knowledge of the many issues impacting maritime education and training. Serious concern about a number of entrenched issues, such the lack of training berths (which India has raised in the IMO forum on several occasions), about the need for improved teaching and assessment and the growing difficulties in recruiting and retaining faculty, were discussed at length.



Delegates at the conference



## Seminar in New Delhi



The Nautical Institute, the Company of Master Mariners of India, Face of Shipping and GlobalMET collaborated on the organisation and hosting of the one-day seminar held at PHD House in New Delhi on 25 November. The theme "Seafaring in the Coming Decade" attracted very good speakers and a large number of participants, which, given the location so far from the sea, evidenced the widespread interest in India in seafaring as a profession, as well as the growing number of academies in Northern India.

Following the lighting of the lamp ceremony, the seminar opened with the Welcoming Address by Capt I Solanki, Chairman of The Nautical Institute (N&E). Following the Key Note Address by Capt J P Menezes, Deputy Master, CMMI India, Chief Guest Capt James Robinson, President of The Nautical Institute spoke about the global activities of the Institute and current developments.

The morning session, chaired by Capt I Kharbanda, was comprised of the following three speakers:

- Mr George Hoyt, founder of NewsLink and Face of Shipping
- Capt Rod Short, Executive Secretary of GlobalMET
- Ms Aakriti, a serving seafarer.

The afternoon session, chaired by Capt M P Bhasin, was comprised of the following three speakers:

- Ms Naomi Rewari, Director, Applied Research International
- Capt Kuba Szymanski, Secretary General, InterManager
- Capt James Robinson, President, The Nautical Institute

The Vote of Thanks was given by Capt P K Mittal, Secretary, The Nautical Institute (N&E).

The presentations and discussions left no doubt about the strong interest in India in seafaring as a profession and of the support of effective maritime education and training. It was recognised that, while India is well positioned to provide an even greater flow of highly competent seafarers for the global industry over the coming decade, more resources must be applied to achieving effective recruitment, training and retention of Indian seafarers.

With this in mind, participants unanimously endorsed the statement of outcomes agreed at the "Year of the Seafarer - Charting a New Course" conference in Mumbai five days earlier, urging support for the implementation of the Manila Amendments to the STCW Convention and for a more collective approach to the full range of MET and associated HR issues to ensure appropriate and timely action to address concerns.



## Seminar in Chennai

The Nautical Institute again collaborated with GlobalMET on the organisation and hosting of the half-day seminar held at the Beverly Hotel in Chennai on 27 November. The theme "Leadership Training for Seafarers" also attracted very good speakers and a 'full house' of participants, despite it being a Sunday morning. This very good attendance was in no small part due to the hard work of the organisers, ably led as with past GlobalMET activities in Chennai, by the Convenor Capt Vivekanand, Pro Vice Chancellor of Vels University.

The first session was comprised of the following speakers:

- Capt Rod Short, Executive Secretary of GlobalMET
- Capt James Robinson, President, The Nautical Institute
- Capt Kuba Szymanski, Secretary General, InterManager

The second session was comprised of the following speakers:

- Commodore S Shekar, Regional Director, Maritime Foundation
- Capt Satya Mitra Bagga, Instructor, Maersk Training Centre, Chennai
- Capt K Vivekanand, Pro Vice Chancellor, Vels University

Capt James Robinson then honoured Capt Glen Aroza, former Master of M T Tosa, with the granting of Associate Fellowship of The Nautical Institute, in recognition of the professionalism displayed by Capt Aroza during his arrest and imprisonment following allegations that his ship had collided with and caused the sinking of a Taiwanese fishing vessel with the loss of two lives. Following inability to prove that there was a collision and also the inability to apply Taiwanese law to a Panama registered ship that was outside Taiwanese waters at the time of the alleged collision, Capt Aroza was released after some 12 months in jail.

As with the New Delhi seminar, this half-day seminar in Chennai concluded with unanimous endorsement of the statement of outcomes from the conference held in Mumbai on 20 November.

Review of the conference and two seminars left no doubt as to the value of such gatherings and discussions in key centres in India. GlobalMET is very grateful for all the support received. The high levels of participation, quality of presentations and lively debates are to be encouraged. As a result, GlobalMET will seek collaboration from The Nautical Institute, the Company of Master Mariners in India, InterManager, NewsLink and Face of Shipping, as well as key local interests, in organising a similar series during the last quarter of 2011.



NI President James Robinson presents certificate to Capt Glen Aroza



Capt Kuba Szymanski, SecGen of InterManager, speaks

## India Maritime Human Resources Summit

GlobalMET, together with the Nautical Institute and InterManager, also played a significant role in the India Maritime Human Resources Summit, organised by Gateway Knowledge Forum in collaboration with the Indian Maritime University and held at the Taj Coromandel Hotel, Chennai on 27 November.

The one-day conference was opened by Chief Guest, the Honourable Union Minister of Shipping Thiru G K Vasan, who referred to seafarers as 'unsung heroes', lauded the efforts of the Indian Maritime University and called for more women at sea and a more gender friendly environment on board.

Minister Vasan's address was followed by presentations by Mr A Mishra, Chairman of the Chennai Port Trust and Dr P Vijayan, Indian Maritime University Vice Chancellor. GlobalMET member institutions were represented by Capt S Bhardwaj, Vice Chancellor of AMET University, Capt K Vivekanand, Pro Vice Chancellor of Vels University and Capt K N Deboo, Director and Principal, Anglo-Eastern Maritime Training Centre, as well as GlobalMET ExecSec Rod Short. Capt James Robinson, President of the Nautical Institute and Capt Kuba, Secretary General of InterManager also spoke.

There were four sessions:

1. Go to Sea Campaign;
2. Maritime Education in India and Abroad;
3. Quality of Education and
4. Building Human Resources for the Maritime Sector.

This well attended conference identified and teased out many of the issues associated with the supply of Indian seafarers. It also emphasised that, although there are many areas of concern, recent years have seen considerable progress in ensuring the provision of quality seafarers for both the increasing number of Indian flag ships as well as for the global fleet. It was good to see GlobalMET, The Nautical Institute and InterManager, enjoy such a high profile.

The India Maritime Human Resources Summit concluded by endorsing the statement of outcomes agreed at the GlobalMET "Year of the Seafarer - Charting a New Course" conference in Mumbai a week earlier, urging support for the implementation of the Manila Amendments to the STCW Convention and for a more collective approach to the full range of MET and associated HR issues to ensure appropriate and timely action to address concerns.



Discussion panel comprised of L to R Vice Chancellor Bhardwaj, AMET University, Mr Das Sarma, Teledata Marine Solutions, Capt Kersi Deboo, Anglo-Eastern Maritime Training, Capt James Robinson, Nautical Institute, Capt K Vivekanand, Pro Vice Chancellor, Vels University, Rod Short, GlobalMET.

## Recently Appointed to Directorship of GlobalMET Limited

Name : **DAVID FREDRICK**  
Address : Malaysian Maritime Academy (ALAM)  
Window Delivery 2051  
Masjid Tanah Post Office  
78300 Masjid Tanah  
Melaka, Malaysia

Telephone : +606 387 6304/388 2201  
Fax : +606 387 9216/387 6700  
Email : dfredric@alam.edu.my

### PERSONAL INFORMATION

Date of Birth : 30 December 1962  
Place of Birth : Selangor, Malaysia  
Sex : Male  
Marital Status : Married

### EMPLOYMENT BRIEF

A Chief Marine Engineer by profession with 10 years sailing experience and has been in a shipowner/operator company (MISC Berhad) for the last 18 years in various positions viz Superintendent, Fleet Manager and Senior Manager, Business Process Improvement and Capability Building in Fleet Management. Last post held was as General Manager of Human Resource Management (Sea) managing a pool of over 3000 seafarers. Headed the Emergency Response Team for crisis management and also the Company Security Officer (CSO) whilst in service with MISC Berhad.

He is currently holding the post of Chief Executive Officer of Malaysian Maritime Academy (ALAM) effective from 1 October 2010.

### EDUCATION

Cambridge Higher School Certificate (HSC)  
Setapak High School, Kuala Lumpur

Certificate in Business Management (2006)  
University of Melbourne – PERMATA

### PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

First Class Certificate of Competency as a Marine Engineer Officer  
Singapore Polytechnic

Advanced Diploma in Power Plant Management  
Singapore Maritime Academy

### INTERESTS

Photography, Golf and Reading



David Fredrick



## ECDIS Information



The Manila Amendments to the STCW Convention bring a substantial addition to Part A of the Code providing for compulsory ECDIS training.

In Part B, under 'Goals of an ECDIS training programme' (STCW/CONF.2/DC/3 ANNEX 2 Page 37), it is provided that the trainee should be able to

1. *operate the ECDIS equipment, use the navigational functions of ECDIS, select and assess all relevant information and take proper action in the case of a malfunction;*
2. *state the potential errors of displayed data and the usual errors of interpretation; and*
3. *explain why ECDIS should not be relied upon as the sole reliable aid to navigation.*

On the following page of the annex, under 'Risks of over reliance on EDCIS', it states that

*Emphasis should be placed on the need to keep a proper look-out and to perform periodical checking especially of the ship's position, by ECDIS-independent methods.*

Given the rapidity of the adoption of electronic navigation, of which ECDIS is a core component, the site <http://www.e-navigation.com/home/> could prove very useful to MET providers.

## Vale Article

### A Mega Order for Mega Ships

The rollout of the world's largest dry bulk carriers by Brazilian mining giant Vale in 2011 will slash the cost of shipping commodities and choke off a recovery in the freight market for years.

China's ravenous appetite for iron ore and coal - the two main commodities shipped in the dry bulk market by volume - has transformed the maritime industry, with mining and shipping firms building bigger and bigger vessels to meet its demand.

Vale, the world's biggest iron ore producer, is scheduled to take delivery of the first of more than 30 400,000-tonne iron ore carriers in the first half of 2011. The ships, to be delivered through 2013, will surpass the largest bulk carrier now in operation, the 365,000-tonne MS Berge Stahl.

The arrival of these so-called Chinamax carriers will not only cut costs for Vale but will also lower freight rates for the entire industry, as the new vessels swell an already oversupplied market.

'This will be the biggest factor affecting the market for at least a couple of years, with the big increase in supplies driving down the market,' said Rahul Sharan, senior analyst at Drewry Shipping Consultants.

The Baltic Exchange's Dry Index, a composite of global trade routes for dry commodities, has fallen nearly 30 per cent this year to 2,173 points due to ample tonnage and the expected flood of new vessels next year.

Vale's gigantic ships, which will be longer than the 324-metre-high Eiffel Tower, are expected to exacerbate the oversupply problem and could push the benchmark index below 2,000 points next year, analysts said.

That translates into less money for shipowners, many of whom oppose Vale's new carriers.

## Vale Article

'We don't need (Vale's) ships,' said Torben Skaanild, chief executive of BIMCO, the world's largest shipowners' group.

'We have quite a huge inflow of capesizes of 150,000 to 180,000 tonnes coming to the market. If you start building 400,000 tonne ships, it is going to take them out of the market.' A Vale spokeswoman declined to comment on industry criticism surrounding its Chinamax vessels.

Credit Suisse estimated that Vale's ships could displace as many as 168 capesize vessels, representing around 15 per cent of the existing fleet, forcing them into shorter routes from long-haul voyages.

'Given the size of these vessels and lower cash breakeven costs than current spot rates, we believe the likely deployment of these ships on the Brazil- China route could leave the capesizes with no spot cargo demand,' said the bank's shipping analysts in a monthly research report.

Average earnings for capesize vessels, typically used to ship iron ore and coal, could tumble between 20 and 35 per cent next year to under US\$25,000 a day, analysts said. Earnings for smaller dry bulk ships, which carry everything from grain to cement, are also expected to decline.

The chairman of China COSCO, the world's largest dry bulk firm, told Reuters last month it strongly opposed Vale's mega vessels and predicted the industry's oversupply problem would prevent a recovery until 2013 at the earliest.

The global dry bulk fleet is expected to expand by 11 per cent next year to 594 million deadweight tonnes, outpacing demand growth of 8 per cent, according to Macquarie Securities.

'It looks like supply and demand could be back in balance by 2012, but much of this will depend on whether the current low- rate environment discourages new orders,' said Janet Lewis, shipping analyst with Macquarie.

The freight industry was battered by the economic downturn two years ago and has struggled to recover, with the dry bulk market still down more than 80 per cent from its peak in May 2008.

The volatility in the spot market prompted Vale to build its own fleet of mega ships, which will allow the company to better compete with Australian rivals BHP Billiton and Rio Tinto.

— Reuters Singapore December 2010





### Watchkeeper: A Tanker for the Future?

With impeccable timing, bearing in mind the debates that were taking place at Cancun in Mexico, DNV chose last week to launch its latest "concept" ship. Like its "Quantum" containership concept, this was an attempt to design a ship that would answer a number of the problems that beset owners today as they try and work out what the commercial and regulatory future might bring. The "Triality" concept is a VLCC, but one that attempts to tackle the serious problems of both harmful emissions and that of ballast water.

The name – "Triality" – sums up the three main goals of the design – environmental superiority compared to a conventional tanker, feasible solutions based on existing technology and financial viability, when compared to conventional VLCCs operating on heavy fuel. It is the end product of a dedicated, multi-disciplined team which has been working on the concept for some months. Whether it will ever find its way into cold steel, or attract shipyards or owners, it offers a challenging and very interesting view of what form future tankers might take.

DNV has for some time suggested that LNG will be increasingly regarded as a viable alternative to heavy oil fuel, and the concept ship incorporates this view, with the ship carrying two large pressure vessels forward of the island. The capacity of these tanks will give the tanker a 25,000 mile range. A twin engine/twin screw machinery arrangement is chosen, with dual-fuel slow speed engines specified, providing a 15.5 knot laden service speed.

Because of the propulsion system, the Triality concept ship offers a number of important environmental benefits when compared to a conventionally powered vessel; 34% less CO<sub>2</sub> emitted, 82% less NOX and 94% less SOX. But it also provides for the collection and condensing of Volatile Organic Compounds, which are otherwise vented into the atmosphere, when in a laden condition, preventing up to 500 tons of VOC emissions in a single voyage.

But there will be huge interest in the concept's designed ability to eliminate completely the need for water ballast to be carried and thus treated, or pumped. With a large VLCC carrying around some 100,000 tons of ballast in a light condition, there are huge savings available here.

It is the design of the hull, which DNV believes will make this possible. The ship is wider and longer than current vessels and of a Vee-shaped cross section. This shape will be sufficient to submerge the propellers and to ensure the bow is deep enough to avoid slamming. Moreover the internal design provides for cargo tank arrangements which are five tanks wide with four longitudinal internal bulkheads, and arrangements that will provide for the ship to be loaded and discharged without heeling the vessel.

The classification society, currently presenting the design to ship owners and shipbuilders, will freely make the design available to anyone who wishes to develop it. We may be a long way from a completed vessel, but there are some exciting ideas here, for a ship that may have a capital cost of perhaps 10-15% but offers a substantially reduced life-cycle cost, and a huge environmental bonus as well.

Articles written by the Watchkeeper and other outside contributors do not necessarily reflect the views or policy of BIMCO.

[https://www.bimco.org/Members/News/2010/2010/12/15\\_Watchkeeper\\_Week\\_50.asp](https://www.bimco.org/Members/News/2010/2010/12/15_Watchkeeper_Week_50.asp)

20 December 2010



## Ensuring Quality Article

Numbers are important, but will rarely provide the whole story. This is why the BIMCO/ISF Manpower Update needs to be considered carefully by any responsible shipping person thinking about manpower strategies in anything other than the short term.

A quick glance at the key points of the Update might provide some reassurance for those who had rather assumed the situation would have been a whole lot worse. After all, for the past five years there has been something of a general belief that the supply of manpower would be struggling to keep pace with the rapidly increasing size of the world fleet. But then, the economic downturn that emerged like a global whirlwind in 2008, threw everyone's calculations into the melting pot. The double-digit shortage in the officer ranks has been converted by this financial brake into something rather more manageable.

But there are certain key words that the wise shipping person will focus upon as he or she analyses this useful and important survey of the global workforce. Possibly the most significant word of all is "quality", because it is this desirable feature that must be aimed at by everyone concerned with maritime manpower. The numbers emerging from maritime colleges may be satisfactory in every way, but it is the quality of the officer corps, from Masters and Chief Engineers to cadets and ratings, that makes the real difference.

Because, while numbers may fulfil a ship's legal manning requirements and qualifications give some reassurance, the demand for competence, experience, skill and seamanship goes far beyond the counting of heads. Ships are getting more technically demanding, and while there is a lot of helpful technology aboard them, the human element becomes ever more crucial. Liabilities become ever more onerous, and it is risks that may flow freely from ship to shore management, in the case of an incident, that demands great shipside competence.

Readers should also turn their attention to the issues of recruitment and retention, paying special attention to the latter, because it does seem that there is some difficulty in retaining people who have been carefully recruited and often expensively trained. It might be easy to make assumptions about the better opportunities ashore these days, and the way in which a better paid senior officer can afford to "swallow the anchor" rather earlier than once might have been the case. But it is also necessary to keep a finger on the pulse of on-board morale, which has not been helped in recent years by overweening bureaucracy, less enjoyment, a squeeze on numbers aboard ship, and those other worrying issues of constraints on shore leave, poor treatment in many ports and the perceptions of increased criminalisation of responsible officers.

It is also necessary to read the report with an intelligent knowledge that there is a difference between the general and the particular. The overall numbers may speak to us of officer shortfalls that appear manageable, but those who are manning specialised tonnage, or operate in sectors where only the *crème de la crème* in seagoing personnel is deemed acceptable, there may be quite critical discrete shortfalls of the quality of seafarers who can come up to their demanding standards.

\* Articles written by the Watchkeeper and other outside contributors do not necessarily reflect the views or policy of BIMCO.

\* Date: 08.12.10



**GlobalMET** extends, to all members and friends, best wishes for 2011 to be a year of further improvement in maritime education and training, to ensure the provision of the human resources essential to the operation of an efficient, safe, secure and clean global shipping industry. If shipping stops ...?

**TRAIN, TRAIN, RETRAIN, RETAIN !**



**Global Maritime Education & Training Association  
GlobalMET Limited**

Australian Company Number 103 233 754

[www.globalmet.org](http://www.globalmet.org)

Chair:  
New Zealand Maritime School  
2 Commerce Street  
Private Bag 96028  
Auckland  
New Zealand

Executive Secretary:  
Rod Short  
P O Box 307 Waikanae  
Kapiti Coast 5250  
New Zealand  
[maritime.edu@paradise.net.nz](mailto:maritime.edu@paradise.net.nz)

**Secretariat**

P O Box 307 Waikanae  
Kapiti Coast 5250  
New Zealand  
Tel 64 4 905 6198 Fax 64 4 905 6190  
[maritime.edu@paradise.net.nz](mailto:maritime.edu@paradise.net.nz)

B III 3276 Vasant Kunj  
New Delhi India 110070  
Tel 91 11 26124221 Fax 91 11 26894188  
[shilpa@corecompetency.net](mailto:shilpa@corecompetency.net)  
[www.globalmet.org](http://www.globalmet.org)