

PRESS RELEASE

GlobalMET in India conference on 3rd December 2011.

GlobalMET has been holding a conference in Mumbai each year since 2001. Also GlobalMET conferences have been held in Delhi, Chennai and Kolkatta, but this year decision was made to hold it outside Mumbai, more specifically at the Tolani Maritime Institute who so graciously offered its premises to hold the conference. TMI is a member of GlobalMET and it was fitting that it be held in this wonderful pristine environment. It also gave an opportunity to those who were visiting TMI for the first time to see India's largest maritime pre-sea institution at its functional best. The conference attracted 170 participant registrations. It was characterized by high levels of participation and quality presentations addressing the needs of Y-Generation seafarers and of MET overall. Particularly pleasing was the input by young seafarers and cadets about to go to sea.

With the 2010 amendments, new courses are being introduced, existing courses revised and some refresher courses brought in. Teaching methods have undergone a change. The IMO Secretary General said in one of his speeches, "The Manila amendments represent a first vital step in recognizing the role of new technology and distance learning methods, in the training of the modern day seafarers."

Who is the modern day seafarer? What are his learning receptors? Will the old "tried and trusted" methods of teaching work for the younger generation as it did for the older one? The theme chosen for the conference "Training to meet the needs of the Y- generation" tried to answer these questions, certainly very apt for the current time when the curriculum is undergoing a revision so should the teaching methods.

As on previous occasions, the conference was organised by the India Chapter of GlobalMET, primarily by the Mumbai chapter. Many Industry personnel, representatives from ship owning companies, maritime trainers and Officials from Mercantile Marine department and Directorate General of Shipping were kind enough to participate in the conference.

After the Saraswathi Vandhana and lighting of the lamps, Capt Kersi Deboo extended a warm welcome all the guests and dignitaries who came from various parts of the country and aboard. Dr. B. K. Saxena, Principal of Tolani Maritime Institute also extended a warm welcome to all the guests and delegates and invited them to look around the TMI campus. Capt Rod Short addressed the gathering highlighting various activities of GlobalMET, interactions with other International Shipping Organisations especially IMO. Capt. Short explained in brief that there are a lot of responsibility with GlobalMET as the Manila Amendments to STCW has brought in many courses and training programme, which has to be taken up by maritime trainers. Capt. Rod Short thanked all the members of GlobalMET for the outstanding support in organising a conference of this magnitude.

Ms. Naomi Rewari, in her key note address elaborated on the 'Y- generation' and their special characteristics and peculiarity which must be considered while imparting the training to them. Cmde. Rajan Vir (ret'd), who was the guest of honour gave an address on various important aspects of Y generation and how maritime training should fit in. Cmde. Rajan also mentioned various activities of Indian Maritime Foundation and noticeably the memorial built in Pune city for merchant navy seafarers, who lost their lives at sea in action.

This was followed by the address of the Chief Guest Mr. Amitava Banerjee, Chief surveyor to Govt. of India and Chief examiner of engineer's examinations. In his inspiring address, he mentioned the need to change the training methods to accommodate the latest trend of present day and age. He also mentioned various challenges on the maritime trainers in incorporating latest changes and amendments coming into force, which the seafarer should be familiar with. He mentioned the impact of EEDI, EEOI, SEEMP in vessel operation and therefore the need for the sea staff to know about implication of these indices. He mentioned in his concluding remarks that GlobalMET has been backing up the Indian Administration and IMO with their contributions for improving maritime education & training.

The first session coordinated by Mr. Shantanu Paul, Dean of Engineering Studies from MTI. The session started with a brief talk by sailing 3rd Engineer and a Second Officer. Their expectation from maritime training was well acknowledged and accepted by the august gathering who was patiently listening to their views. They also shared some onboard experiences, which could have easily addressed by means of good and effective training. "One should know exactly what customer expects and one should be able to deliver it" that was the concluding remark came from the sailing personnel which happened to be food for thought to all maritime trainers.

Prof. Tapash Ganguli, the dean of National Institute of Construction Management and research, Pune, explained various methods of training and assessments which are used in management studies and could be included in maritime training field as well. After an interacting question answer session, the lunch was served.

Mr. Francis Akkara, Sr. General Manager and head of Engineering Studies of Anglo-Eastern Maritime Training Centre coordinated the second session. Mr. Pooran Chugani, CEO of Board of Examinations for seafarers trust talked about various points for trainers to pay attention to, especially when they deal with the Millennial generation. In his much researched paper, he listed out many points for trainers to incorporate when they are training the new cadets, who are into multi tasking and wants to do tomorrows thing today.

Capt M C Yadav, Director of Fosma Maritime Education and Training, who is also the in charge of implementing the STCW plan for India, gave an extensive talk on how India is gearing to implement the amendments to the STCW Convention. The road map is laid out, but the task is huge - he mentioned in his address.

Mr. Steven Gosling and Ms. Faye Turner from Nautical Institute brought out various steps the Nautical Institute is taking towards continuous professional development. In their presentation, they mentioned that in this age old industry, the mariners have been expected to know what to do to maintain their competences, advance their knowledge and seize the career opportunities of their choice. Mr. Steven explained the route and method to reach the direction for a suitable maritime career with a vision to get there. He concluded with a small advise to the youngsters that they must progress towards maintaining a personal development record book to track their career progression and competence development.

The last session was very interesting with Capt. Kapil Dev Bahl, an accredited OCIMF and SIRE inspector anchoring the discussion forum. The young cadets and officers brought out their intentions and future career expectations. Surprisingly, 80 % of their college mates would like to sail only for 8 to 10 years and come back ashore for further career options. In the concluding remark, Capt Bahl and Rod Short took the cue form the discussion and requested the trainers to change their mind set while imparting maritime training. It is time to think out of box and incorporate more shore related job options during the core education being carried out in the campus. It was suggested that, for a future GlobalMET in India Conference, the situation be reversed and the panel be comprised of eight G-Generation (G for geriatric!) MET providers responding to questions from members of the Y-Generation!

The Vote of Thanks was expressed by Capt Banerjee from Tolani Maritime Institute thanking all delegate, speakers and patrons, who worked behind the scene to make the conference a grand success.

Statement of Outcomes

The conference concluded with agreement on the following statement of outcomes read out by Rod Short, to link with the statement of outcomes agreed in Manila two weeks before:

We, the participants in the GlobalMET in India 2011 Conference Training to Meet the Needs of the Y-Generation, organised by the GlobalMET India Chapter and hosted by the Tolani Maritime Institute, Pune, on 3 December are pleased to express our support for GlobalMET's efforts to assist the development of MET overall and, in particular, express strong support for:

- submission to IMO of a proposal for an industry representative group of experts to review implementation of the Manila Amendments and the implications for the effectiveness of MET in meeting the operational needs of ships over the foreseeable future, and to make recommendations;
- submission to the Asian Development Bank of a concept document whereby a project to raise the status of the Asian seafarer through enhanced MET could be initiated;
- the Nautical Institute, World Wide Fund for Nature, GlobalMET poster project – the SEA Project – to raise seafarer environmental awareness.