Performance, Outcomes and Results
The MET Network with NGO Observer Status at IMO

*Global*MET
NEWSLETTER

To promote, develop
and support in the
spirit of cooperation,
the common interests
of its members in all
matters concerning
the development and
quality of maritime
education and training.

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Inside this Issue

Articles written on behalf of GlobalMET and by
other outside contributors do not necessarily
reflect the views or policies of GlobalMET

Editorial

The GlobalMET Newsletter seems to come together each month without many difficulties. Articles are collected from the authors and sent to the Secretariat who develop the draft. We then make minor adjustments, the Newsletter is produced and distributed. It all goes very smoothly. The only disappointment is the lack of input from our many readers, especially by those involved in MET, despite appeals for input. Please let us know what you think.

I would like to comment on a current topic. An attachment to Gen Memo 03/16 dealt with complacency and has attracted comment from two readers; one to the effect that 'in the untrained it (complacency) can conjure up the vision of people deliberately setting out to violate rules and when indeed violating, that it was for malicious reasons, which is rare' and the other to the effect that complacency has been bypassed in the theory of safety management. Let's deal with the two points.

Complacency is a noun and is defined as 'showing smug or uncritical satisfaction with oneself or one's achievements'. In common sayings such as 'no one in the shipping industry can be complacent' or 'you can't afford to be complacent about security', it is used an adjective. Some of the synonyms are smug, self-satisfied, pleased with oneself, self congratulatory, self admiring.

An example of a complacent person is the sole deck watchkeeper not keeping a proper lookout, the ship is far from the coast and there is nothing about. The watchkeeper knows the rule. A proper lookout is required: 'Every vessel shall at all times maintain a proper look-out by sight and hearing as well as by all available means appropriate to the prevailing circumstances and conditions so as to make a full appraisal of the situation and of the risk of collision.' 'Every vessel shall at all times' – there is no exception! It would be surprising if the watchkeeper did this maliciously. Rather, he or she is neglecting their duty because of complacency.

The watchkeeper had to keep a proper lookout but didn't. Complacency led the watchkeeper to lose situational awareness. In the event of an accident it would have been found that human error existed. Every system has rules that govern how that system should function and be operated. The rules were broken.

The risk of getting into circular arguments with categories such as 'complacency' or 'loss of situational awareness' is there. Don't let yourself get sucked into circular arguments (as John Flach warned over two decades ago – in Sidney Dekker "The Field Guide to Understanding Human Error" page 119):

- Why did you lose situational awareness?
- Because you were complacent.
- How did you know you were complacent?
- Because you lost situational awareness.

We can lose ourselves in such arguments. The point is that there is a job to do that is critical to the safety of the ship. For whatever reason it wasn't and the watchkeeper is responsible. There could of course have been other factors – slack discipline, an inexperienced watchkeeper – whatever, but he or she must bear the basic responsibility.

Modern thinking (as expressed by Sidney Dekker) is that to prove complacency you first have to show what an optimal sensitivity, attention or commitment would be relative to an optimum benchmark and that must be defined. Even when using optimal strategies, people will still miss things. Such a person can hardly be labeled complacent.

In analyzing close calls we must identify the behaviors that led to the close call, but these efforts will be ineffective if the antecedents that drove the behavior are not also identified. Once this is done, systemic counter measures and/or new procedures can be developed. There can however be many antecedents – culture, training, discipline for example.

The situation is complex. While it does, in many cases, explain their actions, it should be understood that these concepts do not relieve system operators from responsibility for their actions.

As was mentioned in the attachment to Gen Memo 03/16, we must 'not underestimate the issue. Complacency exists on board all vessel types and with all crews. It is endemic and contagious and will not go away of its own accord. Its symptoms are injuries, groundings, collisions and mooring accidents and it need treatment. Therefore, we must encourage an approach where each task is approached with the same caution as if it were the first time it was being undertaken'.

Let us hear your thoughts on complacency leading to failure to maintain a proper lookout, particularly on the modern bridge with so many electronic aids to assist the lookout.

Please be reminded that we are now planning Board meeting 25/16, to be held in Hong Kong in early April. At this meeting the Chairmanship will pass from Capt Tim Wilson to Capt Pradeep Chawla and I will retire as Executive Secretary. It is anticipated that other Directors will remain unchanged. We will welcome your concerns or general comment. Please let us know in plenty of time.

By *Rod Short*
Executive Secretary

The Problem with Maritime Shipping Today!

1997	Registered Fleet	As % of world fleet	vessels lost	As % of flag fleet	2011	Registered Fleet	As % of world fleet	vessels lost	As % of flag fleet
PANAMA	6188	7.24	8	0.129	PANAMA	8127	7.792	22	0.271
USA	5260	6.15	11	3.230	INDONESIA	6332	6.071	5	0.079
RUSSIA	4814	5.63	1	0.021	JAPAN	5619	5.387	10	0.178
CYPRUS	1650	1.93	6	0.364	CHINA, PR	4148	3.977	3	0.072
GREECE	1641	1.92	2	0.122	LIBERIA	3030	2.905	1	0.033
MALTA	1378	1.61	2	0.145	KOREA, SOUTH	2916	2.796	3	0.103
ST VINCENT	1343	1.57	7	0.521	MALTA	1815	1.740	5	0.275
BAHAMAS	1221	1.43	3	0.246	VIETNAM	1525	1.462	2	0.131
TURKEY	1146	1.34	7	0.611	BAHAMAS	1409	1.351	1	0.071
INDIA	941	1.10	3	0.319	CYPRUS	1022	0.980	1	0.098
THAILAND	576	0.67	5	0.868	CAMBODIA	591	0.567	7	1.184
ANTIGUA & BAR.	516	0.60	4	0.775	BELIZE	446	0.428	2	0.448
HK CHINA	375	0.44	1	0.267	JORDAN	23	0.022	1	4.348
World total fleet	85,494				World total fleet	104,305			

Source: Original

Figure 1 - Total world registered fleet as recorded losses, 1997 and 2011. *Source: Interim Report: A Review of 15 Years of Shipping Accidents*

They say the first step in fixing a problem is to first admit that there is one, figure 1 and figure 2 refers. Please compare 1997 and 2011 percentages of vessels lost to see that a problem exists. So far, very few in the maritime industry seem willing to come forward publicly and admit that there is problem in the industry as a whole.
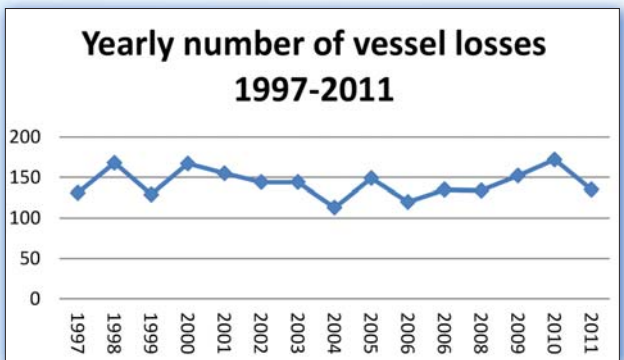
Source: Original

Figure 2 - Yearly number of vessel losses 1997 - 2011

Just the same, in this issue of the newsletter, I would like to try and highlight several maritime issues of concern pointed out to me by several Captains in the hopes of raising the level of maritime debate on the merits of the issues; juxtaposed of course against the mandate of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) for safety, security, energy efficiency and cleanliness of the oceans. This in light of all the recent catastrophes involving shipping over the past few years; the current industry scenario doesn't appear to be working.

In the closing paragraphs of the last newsletter issue Editorial, I mentioned that I had spoken with several Master Mariners on what they believed is going on in the maritime industry from maritime education, training, seafarer competency and well-being to shipping companies and charterers. Many declined to go on the record to discuss the issues, but none-the-less were more than candid about the issues unofficially. I asked the following central question:

When a cadet graduates and gets his or her Certificate of Competency (COC), is it expected that they can perform the job or not! This central question sparked much conversation, debate and differences of opinion on the matter and other topics.

Right away, many of the Captains were eager to point out that the cadets just aren't getting enough sea time. For example, in their day, they had to do two to three years of sailing before they could even think of "punching their COC ticket". The cadets just aren't getting enough practical sea time experience. The Captains, as cadets, were only getting about $100-300 dollars a month while sailing for those couple of years. There seemed to be a number of Captains with this view. The fleet has, however, grown since those days Captain, Figure 3 refers.
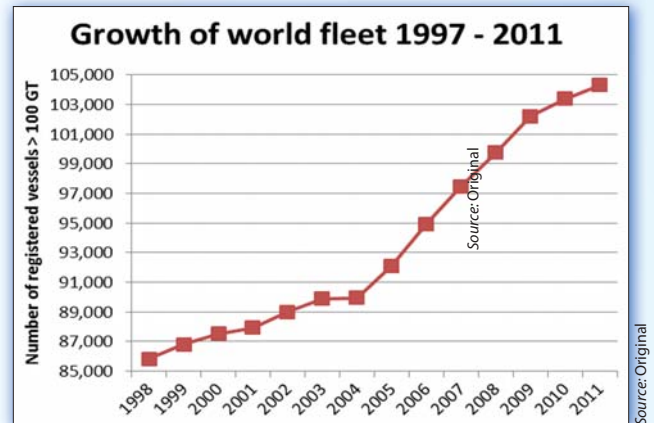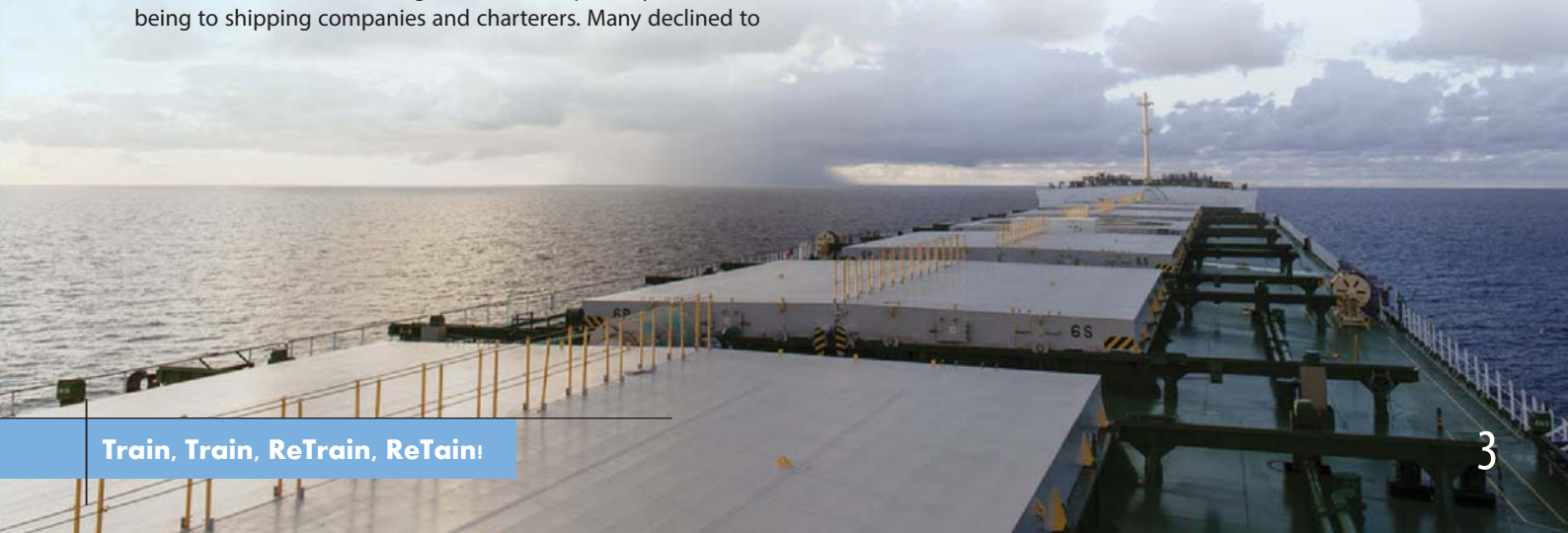
Source: Original

Figure 3 - Growth of the Fleet 1997 - 2011

Interestingly, there also appears to be a significant number of Captains who say that's just not true. The other Captains' response, "...you mean our 2 - 3 years wasn't quality sea time?" This group of Captains believes that one year of "quality sea time" should be sufficient for a cadet to be competent enough to do the job. The emphasis here was on "quality sea time"; there's obviously a difference of opinion on what exactly quality sea time means. This group also admits that manpower, technology and IMO convention issues have both helped and negatively compounded the issues in general. It's hard to say on this point, a couple years of detention rates doesn't definitively show an improvement in results one way or another, Figure 3 refers.
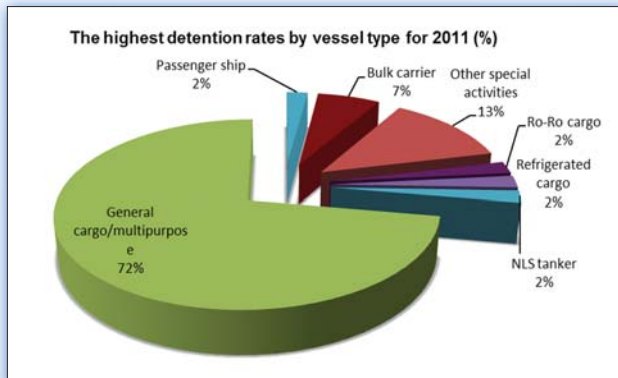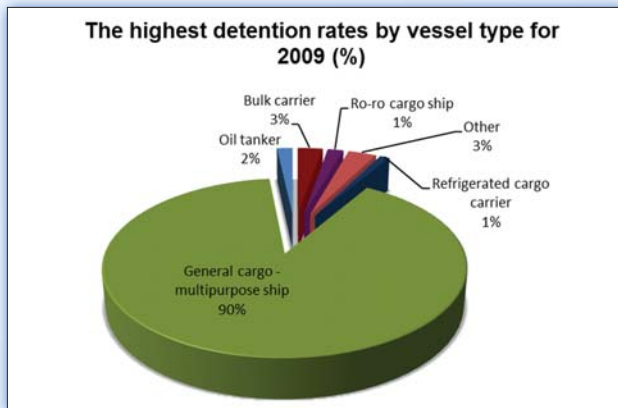
The highest detention rates by vessel type for 2009 (%)

Bulk carrier 3%
Ro-ro cargo ship 1%
Oil tanker 2%
Other 3%
Refrigerated cargo carrier 1%
General cargo - multipurpose ship 90%

Source: Original

The highest detention rates by vessel type for 2011 (%)

Passenger ship 2%
Bulk carrier 7%
Other special activities 13%
Ro-Ro cargo 2%
Refrigerated cargo 2%
General cargo/multipurpose 72%
NLS tanker 2%

Source: Original

Figure 3 - The highest detention rates by vessel 2009 and 2011.

To be truthful, generally, when cadets go to sea for their year of sea time, they are often used to help make up for manpower shortages at the probable expense of a quality training program. The responsible officers themselves a consequence of manpower shortages, increased paperwork, stress and workload – leaving training lacking the so called needed quality sea time. Furthermore, senior officers will tell you they used to be able to spend 90% or more of their time on deck or in the engine room, but now find themselves chained to a desk or their cabin dealing with paperwork and office matters – e.g., answering emails and such. They feel that if they don't answer the emails quickly enough, company reps will have their head.

As for the IMO, the very system that is supposed to help ensure safety, security, energy efficiency and cleaner oceans doesn't seem to have any enforcement powers, one Captain even called the regime a toothless Tiger; and thus countries have varying standards of compliance to IMO regulations and mandates. It also doesn't help that a number of applications of the conventions and rules may not be practical. The example given by one Captain was the required sounding of 1 minute fog signals with gong in Hong Kong Harbor while anchored in heavy fog – which happens enough. They complain where is the manpower for this? This is ridiculous! How to take the IMO seriously when one thinks of situations like this? Maybe it's the IMO creating all these regulations that has caused "the problem"? Another example was the shrinking sea space in and around ports with bigger and bigger ships – it's ridiculous to think anyone takes all these regulations seriously. How to comply?

A Captain in this group exclaimed, "I'm tired of the sea time argument". We need quality sea time is all? Has the number of accidents increased or decreased, Figure 2 and 4 refers.
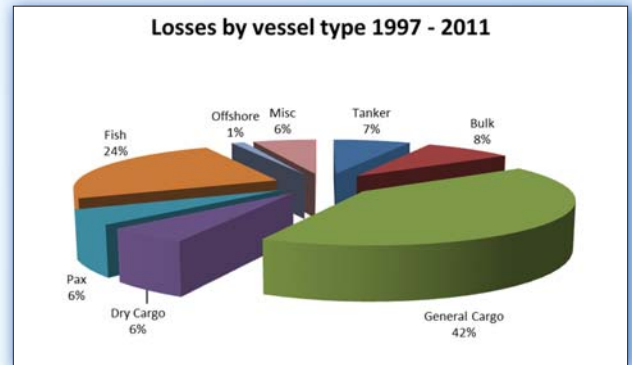

Losses by vessel type 1997 - 2011

Offshore 1%
Misc 6%
Tanker 7%
Bulk 8%
Fish 24%
Pax 6%
Dry Cargo 6%
General Cargo 42%

Source: Original

Figure 4 - Losses by vessel type 1997 - 2011

Even so, some Captains argue that there would probably have been more accidents given the complexity of shipping today so things are working because the number of accidents hasn't really gotten worse. He also points out that cadets must deal with the increasing complexity of shipping, more regulations to contend with, books to read, etc. Enough already, cadets just need quality sea time!

This group of Captains also says that you can't win, in some companies there's no problem because the companies are proactive, in still yet others – everyone can tell they have problems, but no one says anything out of fear. Fear is never a good thing!

In conclusion, every piece has to have a conclusion – as does this one. Just the same, I'm not quite sure what to conclude from all the noise; a sense of apathy, complacency, lack of responsibility and accountability on the part of industry, seafarers, cadets and educators alike. No one gets a free ride on this one-though we'd like to think so; it's not me! Many mariners interviewed don't really seem too concerned or believe there are "real problems" – "it's all talk and nothing else" they say. How much are they paying you they ask? Instinctively as adults we know we cannot teach our children that life's all about the money, yet that's exactly what we do in the maritime and shipping industry. Is there any wonder why cadets and young officers have problems at sea?

Things like mentoring, nurturing, standards of conduct, leading by example and high moral values for cadets aren't really a priority and like our children, the cadets know this – especially when they see us modeling other behavior. What to make of it all? Is this the final lesson to the next generation of seafarers. If it is, then we as a maritime industry can expect the catastrophes to continue at scale as Human Performance Improvements really aren't a priority. Might as well get it over with and go down with the ship! Until next time, thanks for reading.

Reference

"Interim Report: A Review of 15 Years of Shipping Accidents." Web. 30 Jan. 2016.

By **Iman Fiqrie Bin Muhammad** (LCDR, USN ret)
Lecturer, Malaysian Maritime Academy

IMO's 'III' Scheme Kicks in from January 2016

AND SO DO NEW AMENDMENTS TO:

"THE CONVENTION ON THE INTERNATIONAL REGULATIONS FOR PREVENTING COLLISIONS AT SEA, 1972, AS AMENDED"

IMO Resolution A.1085(28) was adopted on 4th December 2013 and adds a full new Part 'F' to the above convention on preventing collisions, comprising of 3 new Rules numbered 39, 40 and 41. It reads as follows:

PART F

Verification of compliance with the provisions of the Convention

Rule 39

Definitions

(a) *Audit* means a systematic, independent and documented process for obtaining audit evidence and evaluating it objectively to determine the extent to which audit criteria are fulfilled.

(b) *Audit Scheme* means the IMO Member State Audit Scheme established by the Organization and taking into account the guidelines developed by the Organization*.

(c) *Code for Implementation* means the IMO Instruments Implementation Code (III Code) adopted by the Organization by resolution A.1070(28).

(d) *Audit Standard* means the Code for Implementation.

Rule 40

Application

Contracting Parties shall use the provisions of the Code for Implementation in the execution of their obligations and responsibilities contained in the present Convention.

Rule 41

Verification of compliance

(a) Every Contracting Party shall be subject to periodic audits by the Organization in accordance with the audit standard to verify compliance with and implementation of the present Convention.

(b) The Secretary-General of the Organization shall have responsibility for administering the Audit Scheme, based on the guidelines developed by the Organization*.

(c) Every Contracting Party shall have responsibility for facilitating the conduct of the audit and implementation of a programme of actions to address the findings, based on the guidelines developed by the Organization*.

(d) Audit of all Contracting Parties shall be:

    (i) based on an overall schedule developed by the Secretary-General of the Organization, taking into account the guidelines developed by the Organization*; and

    (ii) conducted at periodic intervals, taking into account the guidelines developed by the Organization*.

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* Refer to the Framework and Procedures for the IMO Member State Audit Scheme, adopted by the Organization by resolution A.1067(28).

As far as the Rules in existing Parts 'A' to 'E' are concerned, or the Annexes I to IV which are at the end, there is no change and the addition of this new Part 'F' does not have any effect on them. Their application shall continue as before; it should, this is important for all navigators and operators to keep in mind.

Part 'F', is to give effect to the 'IMO Instruments Implementation Code (III Code)' adopted by Resolution A.1070(28) on 4th December 2013, 'III Code' in short. The framework and procedures of the 'III Code' are expanded in IMO Resolution A.1067(28) also adopted on 4th December 2013, and is referred to at the end of Rule 41, quoted above. The term 'IMO Instruments' covers all Conventions, Codes, Resolutions, Circulars and any other guidance adopted by and promulgated by IMO.

Member states of IMO have a responsibility to establish and maintain an adequate and effective system to exercise control over ships flying their flag with respect to international conventions. A voluntary audit scheme was initiated by IMO in 2006 wherein member states volunteered to be audited on the effective implementation of their obligations and responsibilities under the instruments to which they are party. Analysis of feedback to this voluntary scheme showed that it had a positive impact in the effective implementation of the provisions of the mandatory IMO instruments. These covered areas of maritime safety, security and protection of the marine environment. The voluntary audit scheme was to assist Member Governments to improve their capabilities and overall performance in complying with the IMO instruments to which they were a party.

'III Code' is a continuation of the above and is the audit standard that makes the audit scheme mandatory, but as a start the scheme shall cover 6 major or important conventions (or IMO Instruments), namely:

1) Safety of life at sea (SOLAS);
2) Prevention of pollution from ships (MARPOL);
3) Standards of training, certification and watchkeeping for seafarers (STCW);
4) Load lines;
5) Tonnage measurement of ships; and
6) Regulations for Preventing Collisions at sea (IRPCS).

Each of these conventions have been amended to allow the application of the 'III Code', Part 'F' is the amendment to the convention listed as number 6 above. The 3 new Rules 39, 40 and 41 constituting Part 'F' are self-explanatory and link this Convention to the 'III Code' and need no further explanation.

With the 'III Code' IMO shall directly audit the level of compliance by maritime administrations. In natural progression it can thus be expected that IMO member state audits of companies and ships should also become stricter; and seafarers may also be audited for their competency with and levels of compliance with the IMO instruments requirements.

The system audits in the shipping industry started with the advent of the ISM Code and later also by the ISO family of management systems. There have been arguments for and against the very management systems set up as well as the

number of audits and inspections forced upon the seafarers or companies, both sides being correct in many respects. However, audits have added to the burden of both seafarers and shore staff, many having mastered the art of showing compliance on paper – which is the key to the way audits are performed.

IUMI statistics show an overall and gradual decrease in hull losses, though a slight increase in frequency is reported in the latter part of 2015. So the ISM Code is said to have worked. Similarly tanker and oil pollution incidents have reduced substantially, the debate that it is because of the ISM Code or due to oil major inspections through the SIRE, CDI or the OCIMF's TMSA mechanisms, continues.

On the other hand, analysing the P&I Club loss statistics and claims for collisions, stranding's (or groundings), cargo losses and personal injuries to seafarers, does not seem to show any substantial reduction. IMO reports indicate that across the last 3 decades going back from 2012 show, a steady 30% loss due to navigational incidents.

Will another system of audits actually help the seafarer at the ground level? A recent report by MAIB stated that an OOW left the navigational watch to attend to some work in the cargo control room; result – a collision with a fishing vessel. A tired deck rating assisted by a fresh cadet misses tying the gangway lines and a person boarding at an inner anchorage in calm weather sets foot on the lower platform, holds the rope, loses balance and falls, survives due to sheer good luck. Risk management, even after all the efforts, does not appear to reach the last line of defence again and again as proved by the many MARS reports.

Let us hope the III Scheme will push safety management systems down to the base working levels and make working at sea actually safer for all.

By **Capt. Yashwant Chhabra**, FNI/FCMMI
Senior Manager, Training & Development, MSI Ship Management Pte Ltd Singapore

Ballast Water Management

Highlight

by **Iman Fiqrie**

According to IMO Press Release 02 15/01/2016, accessed 26/01/2016:

On November 2015, many countries ratified the Convention on BWM; bringing the total to 47 of the required 30 countries for entry into force. Unfortunately, the press release continues, the required percentage of tonnage fell just shy at 34.56%. The press release tried to reiterate that it's only a matter of time now before the Convention goes into effect and countries might do well to now, if not already, prepare themselves for this eventuality in the way of equipment and procedures; and to stay ahead of the issues rather than find themselves behind.

Small Tanks in the Engine Room

They may be referred to as small but are very important.

1. **Scavenge Drain Tank:** Ensure that the drain pipe line from the main engine under the piston space to the scavenge drain tank is clear (not blocked), especially when operating in cold areas.

2. **Fuel Oil Drain Tank:** Check physically the pipe lines leading to this tank and keep them clear. In case the fuel oil auto backwash filter line is also connected to this tank, more thorough checking is required about the ingress quantity and, subsequently, how to deal with the contents; eg to transfer back to the fuel oil settling tank in suitable quantities (do not empty it totally into the settling tank). This aspect to be monitored regularly.

3. **Lub Oil Drain Tank:** Keep the line from the catchment tray to this tank clear. Port State Control inspectors are happy to see such trays and channels (below the lub oil storage tanks) kept clean.

4. **Sludge Tank:** Check the quantum of increase in this tank every day to determine any purifier malfunction. This is a very important tank and heating coils in this tank must be in sound condition. Evaporate, incinerate or give to shore reception facility, but avoid mixing with the bunkers. If it does become unavoidable, consume oil from this tank (in which you transferred the sludge) at the earliest to prevent deterioration.

5. **Bilge Tank:** Mind the capacity and check the pipelines entering this tank. No dirty oil or drained oil must go into it. Open the tank manhole door and sponge off the surface. In dry dock, clean the tank and check the striking plate. Operate 15ppm Oil Water Separator as needed and don't clean its pump filter with a chemical (cleaning with steam is good). Find out from the agent, how much maximum content is allowed in the port. There are some ports where not more than 25% is allowed.

6. **Incinerator Waste Oil Tank:** Keep heating coils clean to improve evaporation. Keep the tank high temperature alarm tested and active.

7. **Soot Tank:** This is for collecting the washings of the exhaust gas boiler. Do not misuse it for any other purpose.

Keep the records of these small but very important tanks in the Engine Control Room computer and see to them on daily basis. There can be indications of malfunctions.

By **Mahendra Singh**
Chief Engineer

The Payment Pebble and Payment Pebble Handset

Technical Highlight

by **Iman Fiqrie**

We're all witnessed to the fact that technology is happening at a faster pace than ever before, while we want to make those purchases online – security is an important concern! The Payment Pebble may be one via mobile solution to this problem. What is it?

"The Payment Pebble is a compact, mobile device that simply plugs into the audio jack of your compatible smartphone or tablet and once set up, allows you to immediately start transacting."

There is also the Payment Pebble Handset.

The world's most advanced, simplest, cost effective, feature rich, and beautiful mobile point of sale platform

This product was invented in Africa and based on a need, as they say – necessity is the mother of invention!

Anglo Eastern Ship Management and MarinePALS Launch a Complete Learning Platform for Maritime Cadets at IMO

MarinePALS and Anglo Eastern Ship Management have teamed together to develop PALS (Proficiency and Learning System). The system was formally launched in London during Human Element, Training and Watchkeeping (HTW 3) sub-committee meeting at International Maritime Organization (IMO) on 02nd Feb 2016.

PALS is a web-based portal with an off-line version available on a tablet. The system provides the learning content for each of the tasks mentioned in GlobalMET and ISF deck cadet record book.

STCW A-II/1 provides the framework of the competencies that each watchkeeping deck officer needs to be competent in. PALS provides the learning material addressing the framework as per STCW 78 as amended in 2010, Section A-II/1.

PALS is a single consolidated platform for sharing of the information and progress between cadets, administrator, company Training Officer, mentor and external Assessors/ Flag states.

The key features of the platform are:

- **Consolidated material:** Learning content from various sources consolidated at one place for ready reference.

- **Multi-media content:** Effective use of multi-media content like videos, animations, diagrams and sketches to make learning interesting.

- **Self-paced learning:** Cadets can learn anytime and anywhere and at their own pace.

- **Tutorials and assessments:** Extensive library of tutorials and assessments for every task.

- **Sync with server:** Easy one step synchronization of records with shore server when in wi-fi range.

- **SCORM compliance:** The platform has the ability to support any content that is scorm compliant.

Additional information (editor's note)

Anglo-Eastern Ship Management is a leading, independent provider of ship management services to ship owners around the world. The company manages more than 700 ships and employs more than 27000 seafarers including 2000 cadets.

MarinePALS is a software company based in Delhi specializing in maritime training products.

The tablet device synchronizes the progress of the cadet whenever Wi-Fi or internet is available.

The company training officer can receive and provide feedback to the cadet within the same platform.

The flag state or others can also access the progress of the cadet and audit the company training.

Social Dynamics, Technology and Increased Isolation

Most incidents at sea are due to human error. One of the drivers of human error can be underlying emotional issues. Poor mental health of a crew member can have consequences for the vessel and the crew. This may be an increased likelihood of incidents occurring on board, or could be something more mundane such as having to spend time dealing with an individual's problems.

Isolation and technology

In today's digital age isolation should, you think, be a thing of the past. A seafarer can connect to his family and friends back home across a multitude of electronic devices at more or less any time they choose. Why is it then that, despite technological improvements allowing greater connectivity to loved ones left behind, research shows that seafarers now have the second highest suicide rate of any occupation?

Separation from family, friends and other crew may cause a seafarer to feel isolated and this can lead to mental health issues.

However, isolation from family is not the only form of isolation that seafarers encounter. They may feel isolated and friendless on board. This in turn may mean that they are less able to cope with any problems they might encounter either from home or at work.

One of the drivers of this on board isolation may in fact be the technology that should make things easier. Having easy access to family and friends back home can cause problems in some cases. It does not allow seafarers to have the 'clean break' from domestic issues that they might have had in the past. Sometimes issues at home will cause seafarers anxiety and this can be exacerbated by the easy access that technology brings.

In most cases easy access to home is a great plus for seafarers, but it can on occasion actually become detrimental to seafarers welfare.

Another unintended aspect of modern technology is that the internet and the various social media platforms may actually make on board life less social.

In the past once they had finished their watch seafarers would interact with each other in the bar or lounge, having general conversation or sit together around the television and watch the latest movie. Perhaps an officer organised a weekly/monthly entertainment evening, darts, cards or a quiz. Maybe even a BBQ or a table tennis tournament.

All of this helped crew get to know each other, forge friendships and encourage effective teamwork. The sense of isolation was less and there was probably someone you could confide in if experiencing problems.

Modern technology has produced a situation where it is easy for seafarers to retreat to their cabins and plug in, which reduces social interaction.

Technological advancement, whilst improving ships operations, has also placed greater pressures on seafarers to carry out their tasks quickly and efficiently and in some cases has meant that fewer crew members are required to sail on board particular vessels. Certainly there is less and less time in port for already limited shore leave opportunities.

Vessels these days also tend to have a multinational crew, creating different cultural and social challenges, with language in particular.

So when faced with a small crew who it is not easy to speak to, working different shift patterns, possibly also eating at different times of the day, it is no wonder that crew members are retreating to their cabins to watch the latest DVD, video call their friends and family and/or play on their games console alone.

The World Health Organisation states that "Health is a complete state of physical, mental and social well-being, and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity." Therefore it is clearly important to recognise that direct face to face interaction on board, on a social basis, directly affects a seafarer's health and well-being. In order to decrease the number of cases of mental health issues, there needs to be contact with family and friends back home; but crucially, this should not come at the expense of social interaction with fellow crew members. There needs to be a balance, and the statistics evidencing an increased suicide rate amongst seafarers and an apparent decline in social interaction on board, should not be considered a mere coincidence.

It is in the general interests of the company, vessel, and crew to ensure a decent level of social interaction on-board. So occasionally banish the Xbox and get out the ping pong table, dart board, playing cards and board games. These will forge relationships on board and help the crew to be happy. A happy crew works more effectively, more efficiently and are more likely to be able to help individuals deal with any issues they may have.

Source: *The North of England P&I Association Limited 2016*

Invigilator: An Unappreciated and Diminishing Role

Love what you do and do what you love
– Ray Bradbury

Introducing the invigilator

Have you ever encountered a situation on an airplane that the person sitting beside you introduces themselves as an invigilator? Maybe an artist, engineer, researcher, surveyor, doctor, manager, teacher or so many other professions; at ALAM we are often times called to invigilate, can we therefore introduce ourselves as invigilators?

Invaluable secrets of the invigilation trade

In the context of maritime education, I believe watchkeepers are the best invigilators. They must be able to maintain an active invigilation at all times. The term invigilate actually means to keep watch, mostly over students during an examination to be more precise. Experience as a watchkeeper teaches them "invaluable secrets of the invigilation trade"; the nuances and things one can't just get in a classroom or invigilation hall. For example, the experience as watchkeepers under pressure with lots of responsibility has given them character, confidence and the ability to command attention in any given situation; to watch over, be watchful and devoted as a watchkeeper.

The natural invigilator

Watchkeepers must also interact with authorities and be able to handle queries from all sectors, e.g., other watchstanders, officers, ships, etc. They maintain a proper watch to ensure safe passage. The ability to prioritize is another key element imbued amongst watchkeepers. They must also be able to multi-task, which should be useful in an invigilation hall keeping watch over many students. Watchkeepers are trained to handle emergencies, being exposed to the principles of the Bridge Resource Management (BRM) makes them natural invigilators!

Some qualities and behaviors of an invigilator

What then, are some specific criteria to be an invigilator? It is not as if we're selecting some qualities for a prestigious award like best employee, speaker or teacher. Invigilators often get little recognition or credit for their work! Since the year 2007, the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) confers awards for exceptional bravery at sea on an annual basis, as well as the **International Maritime Prize**. With all these awards, do we really need the best invigilator award? Maybe this would help ensure and maintain standards of conduct as well as quality results of students, and by extension reduce accidents and increase shipboard management standards?

As an invigilator, we should treat the students as clients – i.e., be nice to them, be diplomatic, courteous, helpful and generous. Invigilators must also be mindful and enforce the rules. After all, integrity, standards and devotion to duty are also important qualities for seafarers and also invigilators. In that role, invigilators also act as enforcers or policeman.

The culture and economics of invigilation

It is also common for people to develop emotional-attachments, maybe even to sympathize with students, especially those invigilators working in an organisation for quite a long time. This could be a problem as standards and quality may be compromised. Culture may also play an important role in invigilation. For example, Asians especially have a save-face kind of culture, they don't like to point the finger at people. Relationships matter more than the procedures. In the current desperate economic climate in shipping, many organisations have disappeared from the market, competition is stiff. We have yet to recover fully from the 2008 economic meltdown. In such desperate situations, it is best not to cause attention to yourself, rock the boat and alienate friends. Does this make one a bad invigilator?

The insults and risk that comes when invigilators do their job

"I will piss on your grave!" That was the last statement given by a student on the way out from the examination hall to the Chief Invigilator. He was chased out after being caught cheating on his exam. The risk of retaliation is real. Invigilation is not for the faint at heart. Culprits might want to settle the issue outside the legal boundary and there is nothing the organisation can do about it.

Excuses, excuses time for a robot invigilator

I actually sometimes fear for my safety. I therefore, sometimes do not want to perform the role of an invigilator. It is not fun. There are no incentives for the risks taken, only fault-finding. There is nothing to learn in such an activity; at least from the invigilators point of view – or is there? What about the character and devotion spoken of earlier? These are not even measured as a part of one's key performance indicators (KPI). These are all some of the common reasons (excuses) given in order to avoid performing the task as an invigilator. Of course, there are many other excuses that one can craft to avoid the pain in handling his or her duty and responsibility. Maybe give the task to someone else or an Invigilation Robot. Hopefully, the time will come when we will be able to enjoy an auto-invigilation environment. No manual interventions required. By then, ships will also probably be fully automated and not need any humans on board as well.

The term invigilation isn't even in the STCW

A teacher on the other hand, as opposed to an invigilator, has many roles; designing programs, teaching subjects, coaching and mentoring are some examples. More often than not, a teacher will design, teach, assess and evaluate the programme as well. Some teachers may focus on research activities. These activities will make the teacher great. Invigilation is only a small part in the life of a teacher. Who really cares how many hours of invigilation one has done? The term is not even mentioned in the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (STCW) Code, 1978. Some elite teachers have never done any invigilation duties in their life of teaching. They are "so busy" that they manage to outsource this task to others!

Can you name one famous invigilator?

We have Bloom's taxonomy; it is a part of a good teacher's required vocabulary. So is Donald L Kirkpatrick's training evaluation model (reaction, learning, behavior and results). Good teachers must also understand many models, including e.g., coaching models. There is also the matter of formative and summative assessments. There are many books written about teaching. Somehow, invigilation has yet to make it into the "big league"! For example, can one name any famous invigilators?

The most dangerous kind of invigilator

A teacher who acts as a friend is the most dangerous candidate for being an invigilator. The bond is so strong that they will tend to skip the procedures in order to maintain good relationships. It is not my fault. I do not want to be an invigilator. It was imposed upon me. What does one expect? Since not many want to do the job, organisations have to force it onto their faculty members.

Invigilators must uphold the integrity of the assessment system

What maritime education and training desperately needs are assessors. The assessors will conduct all assessments based on the criteria stipulated in the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (STCW) Code, 1978. The focus would be on competency. Candidates are required to demonstrate their competency. Whereas, written assessments are skewed more towards the knowledge aspect only. Invigilators would thus be required to ensure the integrity of the assessment system.

And finally, the insignificant invigilator

Next time, when you meet someone on an airplane, tell her that you are an invigilator. Love it or hate it, an invigilator is indeed an insignificant role in the life of a maritime instructor.

By **Capt M H Hamzah**, Senior Lecturer, Advanced Nautical Studies Dept, Malaysian Maritime Academy

About World Maritime Day 2016

The World Maritime Day theme for 2016 is "Shipping: indispensable to the world".

The theme was chosen to focus on the critical link between shipping and global society and to raise awareness of the relevance of the role of IMO as the global regulatory body for international shipping. The importance of shipping to support and sustain today's global society gives IMO's work a significance that reaches far beyond the industry itself.

Today, around 90% of world trade is carried by the international shipping industry. Without shipping the import and export of goods on the scale necessary to sustain the modern world would not be possible.

Seaborne trade continues to expand, bringing benefits for consumers across the world through competitive freight costs.

There are more than 50,000 merchant ships trading internationally, transporting every kind of cargo.

The world fleet is registered in over 150 nations and manned by more than a million seafarers of virtually every nationality.

Over the past 50 years and more, IMO has developed and adopted a comprehensive framework of global regulations covering maritime safety, environmental protection, legal matters and other areas. Under this regulatory framework, shipping has become progressively safer, more efficient and more environment-friendly.

World Maritime Day celebrations

World Maritime Day will be celebrated at IMO Headquarters on 29 September 2016, but other events and activities focusing on the theme will be held throughout the year.

Parallel Event 2016

The World Maritime Day Parallel Event will be held in Turkey in November 2016.

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