

From the Editor's Desk



Throughout the history of mankind there have been murderers and tyrants; and while it may see momentarily that they have the upper hand, they have always fallen. – Mahatma Gandhi

Common people find life, full of ups and downs. Our greatest glory is not in ever failing but for rising much higher every time we fail. Exceptionally making optimised utilisation of the precious time in hand, achieving consistency of efficiency in our minds and practice, to produce better results. – Dr. Chandran Peechulli

There is a sad fact that many, many seafarers are simply unhappy in their jobs. While research indicates that the dangers to health and liberty posed by pirates and no control over sub-standard vessels, as they hijack and criminalise, are major causes for concern, often the biggest problem is just that working at sea isn't fun anymore, as the responsibility, the paperwork, and the pressures are simply too great. There is a big grey cloud hanging over the industry, and it is a major risk to organisational performance. Very quickly this can create a vicious circle: worries and concerns, lead to stress - throw in a little fatigue and you quickly notice a rapid drop off in performance which translates to worries and concerns...In these difficult times, the minimum manning levels may be met, but all too often there are a growing number of, "virtual absentees". Due to the concerns and worries, there are people physically present but emotionally absent from their post. These are the "ghosts in the machine", the barely functioning living dead, and they are an important [but unspoken] issue for many companies. Indeed if companies don't motivate and make people feel part of the solutions (and reward them appropriately) then employers could be left with just the ghostly memory of a workforce. The shipping industry has over years systematically denigrated, criminalised and marginalised the people who actually work on ships. For these reasons we've seen the quality of personnel drop dramatically and we simply can't recruit in the numbers, or of the quality we need...oh and accidents and losses have risen dramatically. If we are to mitigate this risk effectively, everyone on the ship and within the company (employers, managers, colleagues and individuals) needs to be proactive in promoting and sustaining staff morale and wellbeing. This may be hard in difficult times but we ignore the risk at our peril. While we may be able to attract new people to sea, it is going to be increasingly difficult to keep them if we do not get our house in order. Indeed, recruitment and retention are two sides of the same coin, you cannot divorce them. Where there are problems with retention, then allied with the challenges of sustained attraction, then there are clearly problems ahead. So what can we do? Well look around your ship and think carefully: do we have any ghosts in our machine? Who are the people who seem vacant and vaguely disinterested...then ask what we can do to bring the ghosts back to life.

The human body responds to stress with a powerful fight-or-flight reaction. Hormones surge through the body, causing the heart to pump faster and sending extra supplies of energy into the bloodstream. For much of human history, this emergency response system was useful: It enabled people to survive immediate physical threats like an attack from a wild animal. But today, the stress in most people's lives comes from the more psychological and seemingly endless pressures of modern life. Daily challenges like a long commute or a difficult boss can turn on the stress hormones-and because these conditions don't go away, the hormones don't shut off. Instead of helping you survive, this kind of stress response can actually make you sick. Chronic stress can harm the body in several ways. The stress hormone cortisol, for instance, has been linked to an increase in fat around organs, known as visceral fat. The accumulation of visceral fat is dangerous since these fat cells actively secrete hormones that can disrupt the functioning of the liver, pancreas and brain, causing problems such as insulin resistance, inflammation, and metabolic syndrome. Chronic exposure to other stress hormones can also weaken the immune system and even change the structure of chromosomes. Recent research suggests that chronic stress takes a toll on the brain, too. Studies on mice show that stress-related hormones alter physical structures in the brain in ways that could affect memory, learning, and mood. Some of these changes involve dendrites, tiny branch-like structures on nerve cells that send and receive signals. Several studies have shown that stress hormones can shrink dendrites and as a result, information doesn't get relayed across nerve cells. When the cell damage occurs in a part of the brain called the hippo-campus, it can impact memory and learning. If stress makes you feel anxious, damage to dendrites might be part of the cause. A 2011 study found that rats whose dendrites had eroded due to stress had higher levels of anxiety. More research is needed to determine the exact effect of stress hormones on people's brains, but one study of adults with post-traumatic stress disorder suggests that the stress hormone cortisol may actually shrink the size of the hippocampus. Researchers are still trying to determine if this is because of the hormone's toxic effect on neurons or if there is a genetic component-or if both are involved. Another part of the brain that seems to be affected by stress is the amygdala-the part of the brain that regulates fear and other emotions. Researchers believe that together, these two effects may cause an increase in anxiety. They think that as amygdala grows in size, you may experience more anxiety and fear. (The amygdala is known to become bigger and more active in people who are depressed.) But because the hippocampus cells involved in memory are shrinking and not transmitting information effectively, you can't connect the feelings of fear to memories of real events. You're left with a lot of generalized anxiety.

Spend time with loved ones, cultivate healthy friendships. Research shows that a good social support network has definite mental health benefits. It can keep you from feeling lonely, isolated, or inadequate and if you feel good about yourself, you can deal with stress better. Friends and loved ones can be a good source of advice and suggest new ways of handling problems. But they can also be an excellent distraction from what's bothering you. If your network of friends is small, think about volunteering, joining an outdoor activities group, or trying an online meet-up group to make new friends. Try relaxation techniques. Meditation, yoga, and tai chi can help slow your breathing and heart rate and focus your mind inward, away from whatever is causing you stress. Exercise regularly. Whether it's walking outside with a friend or taking an exercise class at the gym, getting active can help you relax and help turn off your body's stress response. Get plenty of sleep. When you're well rested, you can approach stressful situations more calmly.

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responses and the fatigue behaviour of hull structures in cold temperatures including associated fatigue responses. The fatigue-response assessment is determined for different winter conditions and ice thicknesses on typical routes for winter trade. Ships complying with the requirements of the procedure will be eligible to be assigned the notation ShipRight FDA ICE.

Boost for scrubbers: A new report boosts a growing industry perception that abatement technology - scrubbers - will be increasingly attractive. "Outlook for Marine Bunkers and Fuel Oil to 2030", by Robin Meech and FGE, says that implementing the IMO sulphur limit proposals by 2020 would be "virtually impossible", requiring the refining industry to invest in more than 4 million b/d of extra secondary processing capacity, above that already scheduled.

The report concludes that under pressure from the impending marine emissions legislation, the mix of fuels used in the shipping industry will proliferate, that on-board scrubbing will become viable, initially for vessels operating in ECA areas, but subsequently for all newbuilds.

The report contains around 105 pages with over 50 tables/charts and provides a comprehensive update of the current legislation, how the shipping and refining industries are likely to respond as well as the implications in terms of bunker demand, price differentials and investments.

IMarEST library finds new home: An important collection of marine engineering and history books has found

a new home at Lloyd's Register in Fenchurch Street, London. The Institute of Marine Engineering, Science and Technology (IMarEST) is on the move to smaller premises without the space to house its huge collection. Lloyd's Register has ensured that the huge collection has a secure future and remains available to researchers.

"Like our own collection, the IMarEST library is one the great resources still available for current and historic information concerning maritime history, marine engineering, naval architecture, offshore engineering and ocean technology. It was absolutely vital that this collection be preserved to continue to provide the public with a rich sense of one of our traditional industries," said Richard Sadler, chief executive officer, Lloyd's Register.

The collection will be combined with Lloyd's Register's own historic archive and library which was founded in 1852. Nestled in the heart of the City of London, the organisation's information centre provides access to its historic archive, plus a full collection of the Lloyd's Register of Ships, dating back to 1764, and associated publications and material.

"This is a great opportunity to combine our collections, each complementing the other, and to build upon the good work undertaken by the information staff of both IMarEST and Lloyd's Register," information centre manager Barbara Jones said. "There is a significant amount of work involved in maintaining an active archive and library, so we are ensuring that further resources are made available to assure a successful amalgamation of our two collections."

W o r l d I n f o D e s k

Shipowners' restructures London office:

The Shipowners' Club, which specialises in P&I insurance cover for small and specialist vessels worldwide, says it has restructured the key departmental functions at its London branch. In a move intended to be part of an on-going drive to increase both customer focus and operational efficiency, the claims and underwriting teams will now be organised according to three distinct areas of responsibility, called syndicates. Within each syndicate underwriters and claims handlers will work alongside each other, bringing a greater degree of synergy to the club's service delivery to members, a club statement says.

One syndicate will handle European business; another will manage the "rest of the world" accounts, which fall within the London branch's realm of responsibility and a third syndicate will focus on the offshore sector. The latter is an area already prominent in the club's portfolio and within which Shipowners' plans to develop its service offering further.

In announcing the changes Shipowners' CEO, Charles Hume, said, "We believe that the Club's new operational approach will provide Members and their brokers with a rounded overall service, more attuned to their needs and will help to develop customers' relations with a broader range of the Club's staff, putting a larger degree of their skills at the Members' disposal."

Enclosed spaces training launch: A new training programme aimed at preventing deaths and injury in enclosed spaces was launched on HQS Wellington by Captain Terry Jewell, Master of the Honourable Company of Master Mariners on 22 July. Videotel Marine International and Mines Rescue Marine new training series, "Entry into Enclosed Spaces"

delivers a hard hitting message to both ship board and shore based personnel that will ensure that when working in enclosed spaces the correct equipment is used and good safety procedures become second nature.

"There is no excuse for the unacceptable casualties we have seen recently," says Stephen Bond, deputy chairman, Videotel. "Again and again we hear of seafarers coming to grief in enclosed spaces. These incidents could have been avoided by an understanding of the dangers of entering enclosed spaces and the critical importance of following proper procedures. We are convinced that the Entry into Enclosed Spaces Training Series will help save lives."

The package consists of six programmes covering awareness; preparation and procedures; equipment; enclosed spaces entry; emergency procedures and rescue; and the correct use of breathing apparatus. It is available in a range of formats - interactive CD-ROM, through Videotel on Demand (VOD) and VHS/DVD with supporting booklets.

LEGAL :

Does Caveat Emptor Apply When It Comes to Purchasing the "Love Boat"?

In the case of Quail Cruises Ship Management Ltd. v. Agencia de Viagens CVC Tur Limitada, 23 Fla. L. Weekly Fed. C92a (11th Cir. July 8, 2011), Quail Cruises Ship Management Ltd. ("Quail") appeals from the district court's order dismissing its amended complaint for lack of subject matter jurisdiction. The Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals vacated the district court's order and remand for further proceedings.