



## Major accident at Jurong Shipyard, 90 workers injured



Singapore: Local news reports are emerging of a major accident at Sembcorp Marine's Jurong Shipyard where a jackup rig has tilted to one side earlier today.

Singapore's Ministry of Manpower has confirmed close to 90 workers have been sent to 4 hospitals - the majority had minor injuries with one worker in a critical condition and 22 seriously injured.

Early findings indicate that the jack-up mechanism of one of the legs on the jackup rig had failed.

## Grounded tanker salvaged by Great Offshore

**M. T. Pratibha Cauvery grounded near Chennai port is salvaged eliminating fears of oil spill and other hazards.**

Malaviya 21 - Owned by "Great Offshore Limited" and built by "Bharati Shipyard" successfully refloated M T Pratibha Cauvey from the Chennai beach. The tanker which ran aground had elicited much interest from the Union Shipping Ministry owing to the tragic death of six sailors after the grounding.

The tanker had run aground near Besant Nagar beach on October 31, under the impact of strong winds and swell created by cyclone Neelam. The same night

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the ship moved closer to the Marina beach. The six sailors died after the lifeboat they were escaping in capsized on the way to the shore. Operations to salvage the oil tanker had begun five days ago. The tanker is now cruising outside Chennai harbor awaiting instruction from Port Authorities. The salvage operation got completed after having been pulled into the sea by the high powered towing vessel.

"The salvage has been successfully completed. Most importantly, it has been completed without any oil spill from the ship," the Union Shipping Minister G. K. Vasana said, after inspecting the salvage operations today. The oil tanker is carrying around 300 tonnes of fuel and environmentalists were worried about any possible spill in the sea. While two tugs were available, Mr Vasana said the salvors preferred 120 ton bollard pull tug 'Malaviya 21' and successfully restored the ship. "Pratibha Cauvery will now be kept in the outer anchorage of the Chennai Port Trust. The tug will also stay nearby, as the anchors in the ship need to be repaired," he added.

Earlier, the Authorities said that rescuing the ship appeared to be a challenging task. "Fortunately, the area where the ship is aground didn't have rocks. Other experts weren't that confident. They said two ships grounded on the Chennai coast in 1966 and 1995 could not be pulled out and had to be dismantled. A senior DG Shipping official said the earlier attempts failed due to miscalculations. "Though we had suggested the use of two tug boats to pull out the vessel, the salvage team (a private firm) decided to initiate the operation using one tug, Malaviya Twenty One," he said.

Salvage expert from "Great Offshore Salvage Services", explained that this was a dynamic situation and a complex scenario. There were many contributing factors which had to be addressed by the salvage team. Tanker "Pratibha Cauvery" had run aground during the peak Spring Tide while cyclone "Neelam" was in full fury. Since then the tides had been falling and the vessel had been sinking in the soil (beach) due to her own weight plus the weight of additional ballast on board explained Capt. Sandeep Kalra, Executive Director of Great Offshore Salvage Services.

Expressing his happiness over the success of the operation, Capt Kalra informed that it was imperative to remove the ballast on board to reduce the ground reaction, which provided additional buoyancy. Hence, with the innovativeness of the salvage methodology combined with precision, the vessel has refloated. Malaviya Twenty One has most experienced team on board and enough power to pull Pratibha Cauvery out at the right time, he averred. Highest level of cooperation and teamwork was demonstrated in the combined efforts by salvors on board the tanker and on board our vessel Malaviya Twenty One.

## Ship Sinks Off South China, 4 Crew Missing

Four are missing after a ship sank on Sunday in waters near south China's Guangdong province.

The Qingyuan-registered ship experienced an engine room flood that caused it to sink near the city of Yangjiang around 11 p.m. locally.

The Nanhai Rescue Bureau of the Ministry of Transport dispatched a rescue ship about one hour after the sinking to

search for the ship's missing crewmembers.

Search and rescue efforts are currently ongoing. A helicopter was also dispatched to aid in the search.

## Our think-tanks are too Delhi-centric

**More think-tanks should be encouraged as independent entities in each State. - P.V. Sivakumar**



Being in one place, they generate a predictable babble about everything, rather than help with positive policy inputs.

It is curious to see the polarisation of views and comments, when we listen to policy prescriptions and debates in the media on national issues. There is also a certain level of predictability in the views aired by various speakers.

This polarisation is to be expected between the government and opposition, but the polarisation among think-tanks and specialists is rather strange.

It is difficult to decipher what they are divided on. So, the convergence of opinions is between governments and one group of commentators, and the opposition and another group of commentators.

What is required is a move towards convergence, with broad areas of concern and agreement among participants, rather than a widening of the wedge between 'for' and 'against'.

Globally, this role is played by think-tanks and they do it through research, and engaging policy makers and legislators, whether in the ruling party or the opposition. They find a common ground and provide a platform for impassioned debate.

Think-tanks in India have failed to provide the intellectual bridge between protagonists and antagonists. The failure again comes from the lack of focused research groups and research outputs, and the lack of independent think-tanks.

Another important factor is the concentration of think-tanks in Delhi. The concentration of political power in the capital city begets concentration of think-tanks in that city. This comes from access to policy and decision-makers, and information. This should lead to positive outcomes.

There is scope for constant interaction in various international and national forums, which should actually lead to

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## From the Editor's Desk



"Keep your thoughts positive because your thoughts become your words. Keep your words positive because your words become your behavior. Keep your behavior positive because your behavior becomes your habits. Keep your habits positive because your habits become your values. Keep your values positive because your values become your destiny. — Mahatma Gandhi

"Silence becomes cowardice when occasion demands speaking out the whole truth and acting accordingly." — Mahatma Gandhi

"We can live without religion and meditation, but we cannot survive without human affection." — Dalai Lama

"This is my simple religion. There is no need for temples; no need for complicated philosophy. Our own brain, our own heart is our temple; the philosophy is kindness." — Dalai Lama

"Love and charity for the whole human race, which is the test of true religiousness. One must feel the oneness of human- life. All the sects and creeds, so far as they are not exclusive, are helping men towards the real religion. — Swami Vivekananda

*Never before has it been so important to have independent, honest voices and sources of information. We are - as a society - inundated and overwhelmed with a flood of information from a wide array of sources, but these sources of information, by and large, serve the powerful interests and individuals that own them, with vested interests. The main sources of information, for both public and official consumption, include the mainstream media, alternative media, academia and think tanks.*

*Though, eLearning can never be a complete replacement for all maritime training. While considering 'training and competencies' in the maritime world. We need to know of two major components: Knowledge and Skills. We may also have, more importantly to consider components such as attitude, experience, etc. We need to agree that knowledge and skill are the two most vital and primary components that are considered the most important in the issue of the Certificate of Maritime competency, under various grades and branches namely Navigation and Engineering. Disgraceful that COC consideration not made for electrical officers, right from its origin. While certification for harbour crafts were made mandatory in the same two branches speaks of the incompetency of the mariners inducted in the office of the directorate general shipping but for blindly following U.K. methods and procedures having no policy of their own, though induction of ETO's made but for practical purposes electrical officers continue to be employed on main fleet and offshore vessels not keeping abreast to the technological advances. Besides, seafarers, have the mandatory courses/ refresher courses/re-validation courses/ simulation training /post qualifying courses etc. asked to be attended, killing their precious time ashore, earned by active sea-service out at sea, to be with their near and dear one's in one's own life, while they have to spend time on renewal of driving-licence, passport, CDC etc..*

*If e-learning can be implemented to the best possible level, considering seafarers welfare the viability, to the optimised level, the other part can be squeezed considerably in time spent by the seafarers, reasonably to benefit them to be with their dear ones to whom they have been separated while in their profession. This need, in the welfare of the active sea-going seafarers, working out on the deep seas with risks and sacrifices, benefitting their country of origin by foreign-exchange, brought by them into the country of origin, by their hard work with occupational hazards.*

*eLearning is primarily focused on knowledge acquisition. Knowledge, forms the basis for all skills and competencies. There is very little question about this, but just in case there is any at all, note the following from the STCW Manila Amendments, Chapter II, Section B-II/1, Paragraph 14:*

*"Scope of knowledge is implicit in the concept of competence. ... This includes relevant knowledge, theory, principles and cognitive skills which, to varying degrees, underpin all levels of competence. It also encompasses proficiency in what to do, how and when to do it, and why it should be done. Properly applied, this will help to ensure that a candidate can:*

- work competency in different ships and across a range of circumstances;
- anticipate, prepare for and deal with contingencies; and
- Adapting to new and changing requirements."
- "Must use 'TIME' creatively and forever realise that the 'TIME' is always a hope to do great things". - Martin Luther King.
- "An ounce of practice is worth more than tonnes of preaching". - Mahatma Gandhi

*Hence, the need for highly qualified mariners who are only interested to impart knowledge be placed in faculties of maritime colleges and institutions of higher learning and be handpicked from them into the office of the DGS (Directorate General Shipping) and not just the dis-interested lots, merely to fill on the basis of the COC's, as decided by the mariners within the DGS, who had easy walk-through in the formal UPSC without much publicity and competition, forgetting their past hard sea-life though short-lived for domestic reasons or for mis-fits in sea-life, as majority of them look for professional areas of their suitability and not on due merits, unlike other bureaucrats. There again with their wavery minds, look at the seafarers wages as high salary unwontedly getting their minds disturbed get their mindsets diverted, merely thinking of the high-salary drawn by the seafarers ( which is for their risks and sacrifices ) and their ways to compensate themselves, is the result of their lacking in devotion and dedication to duty, as said in my previous issues. They do more harm than good to the seafarers envying them. So knowledge is critical and therefore worthy of our focus. Yet it is not the full story. APPLICATION OF KNOWLEDGE: is the real requirement for the REAL Competency, it is not just a C O C as sufficient. Hands-on training, experience, attitude, time, etc are all required in consolidation. So while eLearning (as we will see) improves knowledge acquisition in many ways, eg. participation and inter-actions, however, it cannot ever remove the need for hands-on training and experience, were the weight age is less recognised in marine engineering. I have come across many who could not clear their chief ticket but instead have a marvellous acumen of knowledge and zeal of energy to perform efficiently as second engineers, either there is something wrong with the examiner while assessing nor the individual's inability to appear for the said exams. Owing to his domestic problems living away from port cities where exam is conducted. Theory and practice should go together, for things to succeed with sustainability.*

*In pursuit of working strength, in the path of evidence: Having worked in Research and Development of a leading automobile industry in India and in a largest organisation of the government, in Research and Development, on national level selection for over a decade, I became involved in Standardisation of technical know-how data, preparing comparative analysis of product specifications, prior to joining shipping had also been selected to go overseas for a stint period of three years and returned. Joined Shipping in 1982 and upgraded to Chief Engineer by 1988. Sailed for almost two decades, sailed as Chief Engineer and subsequently promoted as Superintendent-Engineer on making significant contributions and been responsible for the implementation of 'ISM' for six cargo vessels, remained as the Designated person ashore reporting to the Managing Director. Because of my early research-background, I became certain (Confident) for the implementation of necessary changes towards quality and product/service value. Higher studies to U.K. for a stint period of three long years has built-in confidence in me as to where we stand when sharing with the multi-Cultural Mix. In due consideration of the advent of modern computers and modern communication systems, added, followed by appearing as a Technical Expert in a Marine Case in Singapore High Court. Our strength is limit the limitations in all spheres of our life, which is to eLearning as well. We now have a lot of evidence as to eLearning's effectiveness. E.g. The best evidence I am aware of is a report published in 2010 by the U.S. Department of Education (US DOE). The report (the full text of which can be found here) is entitled "Evaluation of Evidence-Based Practices in Online Learning, A Meta-Analysis and Review of Online Learning Studies". The strength of this report comes from the fact that it is a meta-analysis. This means that it is not, in itself, one study or one opinion of the effectiveness of eLearning. Instead, a meta-analysis looks at a large number of independent studies and research projects which all try to answer the same question - does eLearning work? It then draws a conclusion based on the strength of the widest possible breadth of investigations. This is very powerful because any biases or study flaws are quickly filtered out of the collective response. The need for an open mind, to accept the facts and implement the best.*

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convergence. But unfortunately that does not happen. This is perhaps because of the polarisation of views, leading to divisive camps, and convergence of views within the divides.

The Global Go To Think Tanks Report 2011 by the University of Pennsylvania brings out a ranking of think tanks globally. From India, only the Centre for Civil Society (CSS) is in the top 50 global think tanks (non-US).

The Institutes that figure in the Top 30 think tanks in Asia are Indian Council for Research and International Economic Relations, CSS, Centre for Policy Research, The Energy Research Institute and Institute of Defence Studies and Analyses.

The other Institutes that figure in various specialisations are: Institute of Economic Growth, Ashoka Trust for Research in Ecology and the Environment, and Development Alternatives. This shows the paucity of think tanks in India for its size and complexity, and is also indicative of the concentration in Delhi.

### ROLE OF THINK TANKS

In other countries, think tanks have legitimate role to play in legislating and policymaking. Influential thinkers and researchers from these think tanks can, for instance, be invited by the US Congress in Congressional hearings to give their considered opinions.

The legislatures commission studies on specific policy issues, or can seek 'independent' opinions. These think tanks through their commissioned as well as sponsored research, provide policy inputs to decision making. These can be engaged by lobbyists as well. Think tanks may be known for adherence to a particular school of thought, but their reports are well received and respected.

They can also call for meetings and seminars to engage in opinion-making. Everybody at the end of the day is interested in influencing policy making, and these think tanks help reach a consensus. They do it in a sophisticated way, rather than through 'my opinion' vs 'your opinion', where analysis and evidence are given a go-by.

### DELHI CENTRICISM

The most contentious aspect is that most major think-tanks are in Delhi. It is to be expected that formulation of policies and laws is concentrated in Delhi, given the location of the Union Government.

But it is not necessary that the think-tanks have to be concentrated there. By virtue of being there, they feed on each other, and it is a story of action and reaction.

Today, given a policy, we know who will say what. The TV channels resemble each other. They depend on same set of specialists, and lack genuine research output or data and ground work.

There is such an euphoria around being in a 'happening' scenario that the analysts have to furnish quotes impromptu. So, someone from Delhi would comment on State government failure on management of the cyclone in Andhra Pradesh and move on to why FDI in retail can be a tsunami. The differentiation is lost and everybody looks alike - the policy makers, specialists, think-tanks, reporters, and general observers.

### DECONGEST THINK-TANKS

It may be worthwhile to encourage think-tanks around the country. Earlier, there were schools of economics in various States - such as Gokhale Institute of Politics and Economics in Pune, Madras Institute of Development Studies in Chennai, Centre for Development Studies in Thiruvananthapuram, Institute of Social and Economic Change in Bangalore. These institutes have helped in strengthening regional focus in research and studies.

They suffer from not being able to communicate their research findings and actively engaging in policy debates. Being away from Delhi and closer to the field, they have conducted field-based studies than relying on secondary data.

They also tend to focus more on policy implementation and not just planning and legislating.

The Economic and Political Weekly has been walking a lone path for decades, contributing to prolific generation of papers on public policy.

The Central government itself made an attempt once. It encouraged IIM Bangalore to establish its Centre for Public Policy a decade back with support from UNDP. It has evolved as an alternate think-tank on public policy through research in select areas like health, urban governance and infrastructure. It is now about more than a decade old.

For a country of our size and given its democratic system, think tanks can play a larger and effective role. These should be encouraged at each State as independent entities. There is a paucity of independent policy professionals, unlike in the US and the UK.

Like all long-married couples, think-tanks in Delhi tend to resemble each other in ways and thoughts.

*(The author is Professor, Indian Institute of Management, Bangalore.)*

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## **IMO Maritime Safety Committee**

**outcome:** MSC 91 was held in London on 26-30 November 2012 under the chairmanship of Deputy Director-General of the Danish Maritime Authority Christian Breinholt.

### **Code on protection against noise on board ships**

The Committee adopted a mandatory code for the protection of seafarers against noise on board (the Noise Code). The Code lays down the permitted maximum noise limits on ships to protect seafarers against noise and contains detailed provisions on how to carry out the necessary measurements to ensure compliance with the noise levels. It was decided that the Code enters into force on 1 July 2014 since it will apply to ships for which a building contract is concluded on or after 1 July 2014, or the keel of which is laid on or after 1 January 2015, or which are delivered on or after 1 July 2018.

### **Enhanced passenger ship safety**

As a follow-up on the COSTA CONCORDIA accident in January 2012, the Maritime Safety Committee initiated a scrutiny of existing safety regulations and supplementary guidelines on safe operation of passenger ships in the spring of 2012. The result of this was a number of recommendations that the passenger ship companies were urged to incorporate into their safety procedures.

At the same time, a number of relevant long-term initiatives were identified so that they could be considered by the IMO upon the proposal of the member States.

Before this session, it was expected that it would be possible to present the casualty investigation report at this meeting just as the Maritime Safety Committee could, on the basis hereof, assess the need to launch new independent measures.

Though it became evident at the meeting that the casualty investigation had not yet been finalized, it was - considering the special circumstances of the accident - decided to establish a working group on passenger ship safety to assess and, if relevant, follow up on the information that had in the meantime become available about the accident.

Against this background, it was decided at the meeting to make the regulations on the mustering of passengers on board passenger ships stricter when these passengers are to be accommodated on board for more than 24 hours. According to the proposal, musters must thus take place before departure or shortly after the ship's departure from the port in which the passengers have embarked. Furthermore, it was agreed to tighten up the recommendations on musters so that shipping companies and masters are to strive for all passengers to take part in the musters planned.

Finally, it was agreed as a long-term measure that the guidelines on the planning of voyages should to a greater extent emphasize the need for a thorough evaluation of changes to the planned voyage if such changes were made during the voyage and were not made on the basis of navigational or weather-related conditions.

### **The ISM Code**

Denmark had, in close cooperation with the other EU member States, strived for an approval of a number of proposals for amendments to the ISM Code and its associated instruments. The overall aim was to stress the company's responsibility for

assessing whether the crew was sufficient for the ship's operation and to specify the company's responsibility for ensuring that the ISM-related tasks delegated out to sub-contractors meet the safety standards of the ISM Code.

The proposal that had been drawn up by the so-called Human Element Working Group was approved by the Maritime Safety Committee with a single amendment on the use of footnotes with a view to adoption at the next session of Committee to be held in June 2013.

### **Guidelines on safety when transferring persons at sea**

Occasioned by a tragic incident where a seafarer died when embarking a ship in the roads on a winter day, Denmark had submitted a proposal for the IMO, containing a number of Danish recommendations on safety when transferring persons at sea.

The Danish recommendations were well received and the Maritime Safety Committee decided to draw up IMO guidelines on safety when transferring persons at sea on the basis hereof. The Committee decided that the work should be carried out by the Sub-Committee on Standards of Training and Watchkeeping within the Human Element Working Group in the spring of 2013.

### **New ship standards and the use of risk analyses**

Goal-Based Standards (GBS) is an overall framework tool for the standards according to which ships are to be built. In the longer term, it is expected that the new tools will create the framework of future international regulations on the construction of ships and will help develop innovative ship designs without compromising safety.

At the meeting, it was sought to further develop a common definition of the so-called "safety level approach", which is a risk-based approach where an assessment of a number of risk factors is included, for example the risk of human errors when assessing the safety of a ship design.

In addition, further work was made on guidelines for the approval and promotion of new and innovative ship designs that could not be encompassed by current SOLAS regulations. Originally, the guidelines were submitted by Denmark in connection with the so-called SAFEDOR project.

This work was not finalized and therefore it is now continued in a correspondence group with a view to being finalized at the next session of the Maritime Safety Committee to be held in June 2013.

### **What Exactly is Mentioned in the Drug & Alcohol Policy of Ships?**

The Drug & Alcohol Policy for ships is a mandatory regulation, which is to be strictly followed by those working on ships. While some seafarers are often in doubt regarding the consumption of alcohol allowed on ships, for others it is just one of the several regulations of shipping.

According to shipping regulations, it's compulsory for seafarers to follow the "Drug & Alcohol Policy" of the shipping companies they work for. Consumption and possession of drugs and other abused substances is strictly prohibited on all ships, however, permission to consume alcohol on ships depends on the shipping company. Either ways there are strict restrictions on the amount and time of alcohol consumed on ships. It is the duty of the

captain to ensure that all crew members are aware of the regulations mentioned in the "Drug and Alcohol Policy" followed on the ship.



Mentioned below is a general overview of Drug & Alcohol policy used on ships:

- Officers, crew members, family members, or shore staff visiting the ship is not allowed to bring alcohol or drugs on board ships
- If required by the company policy, seafarers can be screened for alcohol and drug abuse during medical checkups prior to joining a ship
- Consumption of any kind of alcoholic beverages (including beer) during working hours, over time, or within 4 hours prior starting work or watch is strictly prohibited
- In case officers and crew members are returning from shore leave, they must observe a period of total abstinence from all kind of alcoholic beverages prior to their scheduled watch keeping duties
- Some company policies might allow "controlled" consumption of alcohol on ships. However, they would set and enforce limits on consumption of alcohol 4 hours prior to working hours
- Shipping companies make their drug and alcohol policy based on the guides provided by the International Chamber of Shipping (ICS) and Oil Companies International Marine Forum (OCIMF). International Maritime Organization (IMO) recommends a maximum of 0.08% blood alcohol level (BAC) during watch keeping duties as minimum safety standard on ships. However, the amount of BAC allowed differs from company to company, where some allow maximum of 0.04% (During off hours) whereas others prefer 0% BAC. Lately, most of the companies have totally banned possession and consumption of alcohol on board their ships
- Random alcohol and drugs testing of officers can also be done on board ships to ensure that there is no breach in the policy
- Nowadays, most of the shipping companies provide Alcohol test meters (Intoximeter) on board so that ship's captain or senior officers can check any crew member suspected

of having high level of alcohol in his system and is incapable of carrying out his duties

- Seafarers who fail to follow the "Drug and Alcohol Policy" of the company is bound to face disciplinary actions and even dismissal from employment
- In case alcohol is allowed on ships, purchase of the same is allowed only from the master's bond and bringing alcohol on board ships is strictly prohibited

It is the duty of the captain and senior officers of the ship to ensure that the rules and regulations of drug and alcohol policy is enforced and followed on ships.

As mentioned above, the policy would differ with each company, depending on the type of ship and nature of cargo. Safety of ships and cargoes, along with the well-being of the seafarers is the main motive of this policy and it is therefore necessary that all seamen take this regulation with utmost seriousness.

## **7 Ways to Make the Best of Your Shore**

**Leave:** Sailors do have their own perks while working at sea, and one of them is that they travel across the globe visiting various countries and ports. It is also one of the best ways to break the monotony on board ships.

Travelling, or shore leave as we call it, is a great stress reliever and also a sailors' prerogative. Although, now-a-days, there is limited time for shore leaves as the port turnarounds are much quicker, travelling ashore to an unknown place can be a bit worrisome, especially, to places where you can't speak the local language or it has restricted areas not suitable for outsiders.

As the barrier of communication takes a toll on the sailor and his or hers shore leave, un-fathomed spots of the city can be equally troubling. Besides, there are good chances of getting lost ashore, as there is a possibility of little or no help at places "where eagles dare". Such cases are then difficult to handle if all by oneself.

So what should the mariners do to have a great time ashore and not get stuck to the chores of the cities? How should he plan the shore leave? Although there is no specific answer to this as 'experience' can and possibly is, a great teacher, mentioned herein are few important tips to make the best of your shore leave time.

### **Study the City / Town**

Ports and cities have their own calendar for events and happenings. Check local websites or ask the locals if you can't access the net. These are great places to start for researching places of interest, great food joints or local general information. Ask the ship's local agents for town's around and about information.

### **Share notes**

Another smart way to deal with a leave is by sharing notes with fellow seafarers / shipmates who have had the shore leave experience. They can be great guides especially with tricky places which have spots 'to be avoided', or places which are 'happening' and totally safe.

### **Plan your leave**

A very important aspect of going ashore is that it has to be well scheduled according to the duty rosters or watch-keeping routine. Seafarers have the tendency to go that extra mile while ashore. It is not advisable to risk your career or make professional mistakes, by acting zombie or over-scheduling time off the ship. Plan the leave well and in advance, especially if

you need to adjust with other watch-keepers on board.

### **Carry proper documents**

Carrying proper identification documents such as shore leave passes, seamen book or copies of the same is always advisable as it can save time and effort in cases of mistrust of the identity. Carrying adequate money on person is ok, but many places do not accept foreign currencies.



Exchanging foreign or internationally accepted currencies for local ones makes more sense. Travelling with an international credit / debit card can prove handy, but be careful of hefty exchange rates with some cards.

### **Contact Information**

Getting useful contact numbers and information prior to leaving the ship can help find 'the way back'. There are places with names that are simply tongue twisting. So it is always a good idea to have the name written on a piece of paper or noted down in your phone if in case it is required. Also, note down important numbers such as of the ships' agent, the boat/ship's INMARSAT number or any other contact number available, the terminal gate-keeper's number and so on.

### **Be polite and friendly**

There are instances where the locals see the sailors as intruders / outsiders and shy away from talking to them. If you are one of those who give negative vibes as given by some with a brash nature, then you are in for some tough times ahead. These can be changed with a little correction of the attitudes. Be polite and friendly, when say, asking for directions. Sailors are not aliens and hence won't be treated as one as long as they don't act like one. Experts say being friendly to locals can go a long way for you to have a fun time.

### **Remove the language barrier**

When you need to communicate and you are stuck at the bus station, waiting for the right bus which goes past the harbor plain English won't help, especially, if you are in a place which has limited English speakers. If the words fail you, use the technology or maybe simply elementary drawing. Carrying around photographs on your mobile phone, printed pictures or doing some drawings can be of great help to easily ask for whatever is wanted. Try a few mobile apps for translations which can be really handy in crunch situations.

These are some of the most important ways to make the best of your shore leave.

### **Discussions: How to Deal with Difficult Seafarers on Ships?**

At some point or the other, we all have come across cranky, bitter and insanely pesky colleagues and subordinates onboard ships. More often than not, it is "unpleasant and discomforting" each time you have to deal with such difficult people. But the fact remains that, we time and again have to occupationally face them for our

remaining days onboard. Sometimes, the reason is not clear enough if someone decides to dislike you, whereas on other times, in spite of knowing the reason, you feel there is nothing much you can do about it. Either ways, you have to find a way to deal with such type of seafarers on board ship.

Horrid situations are built up at times, some even at the spur of the moment triggering off a professional sabotage. Dealing with such seafarers at sea with little or no psychological aid around can be worrisome. While you can't instigate them into liking you all of a sudden, you surely can work on your shortcomings and lessen the negativities at least to say, professionally.

Change is good, so is the change of atmosphere at work. Professional barricades at sea can lead to an unsafe work culture. According to the grapevine, one of the reasons behind such behavior is the imminence of other pessimistic co-workers at the work space, in this case, onboard the ships.

So, how does one go about controlling the aggravating situation onboard by getting indirectly involved in amending attitudes of such difficult people towards you?

### **Handle such seafarers carefully**

Tyrants seem to be everywhere, onboard ships too. Dealing with such unreliable autocrats, who seem to have a thing for back stabbing or are simply jealous of your work can be a bit complicated. These guys who have their knife on you can prove to be a thorn in the stem of your performance.

Such seafarers can be treated by understanding the real issues behind their actions towards you, maybe by talking to them directly or by getting others to talk about them. It is suggested that if you indicate to be willing to work together, things should be more or less sorted out. You should strictly stick to the basics and keep your attitude professional. Show them your good side by resolving their issues. Be watchful of what you share with them in general. And lastly be firm of your limitations using utmost discretion.

### **Set your limits and confront**

Setting limits with rudely behaving seafarers must be done if you notice something that they have said or done was bad. Confrontation is not the way out especially at sea, which can only make things worse. Facing the same difficult people often is another occupational jolt. So, if this problem continues to persist and you have tried communicating unsuccessfully, it is always better to approach the departmental heads and discuss the matter with them clearly. And yes, do involve the other party as well.

### **Breaking the Ice**

Another simple technique to deal with such unpleasant seafarers is to have a positive attitude in life.

'Forcing' a change of attitude in them towards you might not help, instead take the first step by interacting with them and by also involving them inexplicitly considering their opinions, advises /suggestions or conclusions. A possible way to break the ice can be by complementing them well.

### **Offer some help**

Humans in general are emotional. Seafarers do not have the psychological advantage over a lot of personal issues chiefly because they are away from their families and friends for a length of time. This fact could easily trigger a boiler. Offering help to such a tricky person demonstrating an eagerness to comprehend the person's frustration should be your best step.

At sea, time is valuable so keep in mind that you have to maintain this relationship for strictly professional reasons. Do not go overboard in trying to act pacifier.

### **Spend time with difficult people**

Getting to know your co-seafarer better is great. It is also noticed that having some fun time during get-togethers or by being socially present aboard make a lot of difference in improving the interpersonal relationships. Avoid alcohol onboard as far as possible. We all know the side-kicks of it and especially when trying to adapt with difficult people.

Getting mentally battered and letting it affect your work is definitely not the answer when dealing with such cohorts, especially when it comes to seeing the same faces over time. From having a healthy work environment at sea, along with being productive professionally, sound relationships go a long way together.

### **What are the Methods to Update Navigation Charts On Board Ships?**

Correcting and upgrading a navigation chart is a constant process. Once a chart is published, constantly changing navigational features and aids or other relevant information have to be promulgated in order to update the ships navigating in those areas.

Admiralty Notices to Mariners or Weekly Notices serve the purpose of correcting and updating charts, which are being supplied to the vessels electronically or in paper format.

Various Means to update and keep corrected the chart outfit system onboard are -

#### **Weekly Notices to Mariners**

Issued on a weekly basis by the Admiralty, these notices contain corrections to charts and various other publications such as Admiralty sailing directions and Admiralty list of lights and radio signals. They also include temporary and preliminary notices to correct charts. The year begins with notice no .1 being issued in first week of January and the numbering increases chronologically till last week of the year. They also notify about any new charts or new editions being published and their previous editions being cancelled.

The corrections are mentioned either in the form of coordinates with instructions or in the form of overlay chart tracings and blocks to be cut and pasted. New editions of Admiralty list of lights and fog signals, Admiralty Sailing directions and Admiralty List of Radio Stations are provided when available.

#### **Cumulative List of Notices to mariners**

These are published twice a year in January and July. The main purpose of them is to provide a list of current editions of all Admiralty Charts and the serial numbers of notices affecting them which have been issued in previous two years. The charts present onboard can be verified for any missing corrections by checking them against the Cumulative Lists.

#### **Annual Summary of Notices to Mariners**

All the temporary and preliminary notices for a previous year are being published collectively in Annual Summary of Notices to Mariners. They are quick and handy references available to determine which all temporary and permanent corrections are applicable to a chart. They also contain summary of corrections to sailing directions.

#### **Chart correction software and computer ( Chart Co)**

The paper copy of weekly notices to mariners is digitized using

software popularly named as Chart Co. Being online with a chart correction service provider, this organizes chart folios onboard in the form of a database and the corrections received being individually listed under respective charts. A navigating officer can then access the system using chart number to print and apply any specific or all applicable corrections for any chart present onboard. There is an offline database and software in use onboard ships where corrections are supplied in the form of weekly mail attachments. These are used to keep the chart correction database up to date exactly like the paper copy of Weekly Notices to Mariners.

Navarea Warnings: Navarea warnings are promulgated to ships operating in various areas. The world is divided into 16 NAV AREAS and these warnings are broadcasted by World Wide Navigational Warning Service. Through a network of Area Coordinators and National coordinators important international, coastal and local warnings and notices related to navigation are transmitted to ships which they receive using MF/HF radio frequencies and satellite networks.

Navtex Warnings: These are broadcasted by Telex Broadcasting stations established in various coastal areas. Mostly they broadcast navigational, meteorological and distress warnings. They play a vital source of providing early warning in coastal navigation. A receiver onboard named as a Navtex Receiver is used to receive Navigational warnings. E.g. In Dec. 2004 the Navtex stations were the first to broadcast urgency and distress warnings related to Tsunami to fishing and other merchant vessels operating in Indian ocean and adjacent coastal areas.

### **The Human Element on a Budget:**

I have written before about the SEA (Standardized Education and Assessment) process at the British Columbia Ferry Systems Corp. and its remarkable results in terms of safety training and culture. As tremendous the BC Ferries' initiatives are, not every vessel operator has the size or resources to create a wholesale transformation in culture in a relatively short time.

Fortunately, organizations of any size and resource availability can (and should) make great strides to improve how they train their employees. No budget is too small, and the benefits to the organization in terms of safety, performance, culture and business success will always outweigh the cost and effort expended. The costs involved will be in proportion to the size of your organization, and it can often even be done with the funds already devoted to training. I have seen such "transformations on a budget" many times in other industries over my time in educational technology. It can be done well, and done within the budget of any organization.

The purpose of this article is to talk about how we can improve in-house training outcomes and an organization's safety culture on a budget. There are lessons we can take both from within and outside the maritime industry, and there are new tools that can be used to economically transform your organization. It does not take a lot of financial resources, but it does take a genuine desire to improve, and buy-in from top management (which is generally not hard to achieve once it becomes clear that a large budget is not a necessity). The only sure way of failing is to not try.

In this first article, we will take the example of a small company that transformed their safety and training with very modest resources. In my next article, I'll look more closely at their approach and list the lessons I learned from their experience.

## The Overall Strategy

It is often the case that organizations do not engage in a process of safety and culture improvement because they are under the mistaken impression that there is no use. The costs are simply too high for an organization of their size or resources, and therefore there is no point in trying. It is certainly true that, all else being equal, a large budget can make a good plan faster to put in place and will help yield results more quickly than a small budget. However, with some planning, great results can also be achieved on a small budget. It may very well be the case that some re-allocations of the existing training budget (along with some planning) can yield greatly improved results. This is a scenario that is repeated with success in all industries.

In fact, if you think about companies which have strong safety and training cultures (you can't have one without the other), you'll see that their success was not achieved through large one-time efforts. It is achieved through a continuous process that is built into the daily operations of the company. The good news is that the cost, therefore, can be kept small and spread over the lifetime of your company.

The overall strategy for transforming your safety performance and culture on a budget is to start small and plan for continued incremental growth and improvement. Even though the timeline for your initiatives will be longer, there will be visible and concrete results in the near term, and these will quickly influence the training and safety culture within your organization. By doing a little planning, starting modestly, and then growing incrementally as time progresses, the cost and commitment are small, but the ultimate reward is huge. As I said above, the only sure route to failure is to delay making the changes you know need to be made. You can't fix everything all at once. But if you want to succeed, you need to start sometime. All it takes is a decision to begin. If not now, then when?

### Start Small, But Start Somewhere (With a Plan)

The hardest step in any journey is often the first one, because it may seem like a large step. But it does not have to be. Instead, start small - but start somewhere. You do not need to know all the details at the beginning. Just get the ball rolling and the details will fall into place as a result of the process you'll be undertaking.

The first step for small organizations is typically little more than the decision to begin the journey with a commitment to formulate a plan. At the beginning, even the plan can be modest because it will be refined and improved with time.

### An Example

When I was working in my first company, WebCT, we had a customer in the manufacturing sector. They were a small organization with approximately 100 employees. They had grown to that number over a period of about 10 years, and had come to the realization that even though they were still relatively small, they were employing the same training practices they had used when they had only 10 or 15 employees. They had more or less moved along by momentum, changing practices only when they were forced to by their customers, their union, or some other unavoidable requirement. It was not as though they were not making sure that training happened - they did. But they had no strategy around training, and so rather than continuously improve, they were on an unpredictable path which sometimes meant training improved, and other times meant it suffered. Most importantly, they really

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could not say for sure how successful their training was, because they never took the time to measure it. They were generally doing fine, but their days lost due to accidents were on the rise. So they finally decided they had better do something before the lack of attention to training finally caught up to them in an expensive or tragic way.

The company decided to take a fairly intelligent, yet modest, approach. They gave themselves three months to formulate an initial plan. They wanted the plan to address four goals:

- First, the plan and its initiatives needed be achievable within the currently available resources and budget. They did not have any additional resources they could throw at this.
- Second, they decided that the plan had to define how the plan itself was managed. This was meant to ensure the plan had a future, and not just a present. Therefore, the plan included guidelines for how often the plan would be reviewed, who would be in charge of the plan, who would participate in formulating and executing the plan, how the plan would be communicated, how success would be measured, and how the plan would be improved. Although this may sound like a lot of effort, in truth it was very little because none of these components of the plan were spelled out in any great detail - and they did not need to be. Some parts were little more than position statements requiring that these issues needed to be addressed, and requiring that they be addressed in a reasonable amount of time.
- Third, the plan needed to define and implement the infrastructure for long-term success. For them, the infrastructure for success meant choosing a learning management system (LMS) which could deliver their new training initiatives, reduce their training costs, provide training metrics and analytics so they could see how successful their training was, and grow with them as their needs grew. As I mentioned, they were customers of my last company, so they had chosen WebCT to use as their LMS (which is how I came to work with them). WebCT fit the bill because it was relatively inexpensive for an organization of their size (about \$250 per month), yet provided all the required metrics so they could measure success. Equally importantly, it would grow with them to support any amount of training or any company growth.
- Finally, the plan had to define one short-term meaningful project that improved training outcomes and/or reduced costs. They decided this initial project must be achievable in, at most, 6 months. The project did not have to be grand or expensive, just useful and visible. It was a way for them to put their plan and infrastructure to the test and to demonstrate their commitment to transforming training in the company. As I recall, they later decided that this first project would be to take their new hire training and make it available on-line using their new LMS. This was a modest project and the costs were fully recovered because they were able to reduce the time (and therefore the employee costs) for new-hire training. It also allowed them to start gathering metrics on training they had been doing for a long time - enabling them to get comfortable with the LMS and cut their teeth on the new approach using familiar material.

The most important aspect of all this was not in the details of their particular approach, but was in their decision to get going. Once they made that decision, they made the transition from a company which was relatively static in terms of its training

methods and outcomes, to one which started down the path of continuous improvement.

I was involved with that customer for several years and they really did change as a company. They revisited, refined and improved their plan every year. They also decided that they would accomplish one new training initiative every 12 months - which ended up being the cycle on which they would revisit and refine their plan. To that end, they implemented a program of continuous improvement - annually measuring their training performance and making changes to improve. In addition to measurably improving their training and reducing days lost due to accidents, they felt as though morale in the organization was better, and that even the union/management relationship improved as a result of their commitment to training and safety - even though the cost and effort was very modest.

### **Intelligent Choices**

Even though the details of how this company addressed training and safety may be secondary to the fact that it was done, it is still important to examine their approach in more detail because I believe it illustrates a number of intelligent choices. In the next article I will look more closely at the decisions they made in their plan and illustrate the lessons that I learned (and I hope we can all learn) from their experience.

### **The Human Element In the Real World- Part 2:**

In this article, I am going to list the first two lessons I learned from the experience of working with this company (and others) over the years while they made the transformation to an outstanding training organization. In subsequent articles I will cover additional lessons including plan ownership, employee involvement, visibility, infrastructure, and others.

### **Motivation**

It is important to note that this company's training program was not failing in any emergent way. Instead they came to the gradual realization that, like many organizations, they were doing just the bare minimum. Their days lost due to accidents were slowly on the rise and bad practices were becoming more common throughout the company. There also seemed to be an gradual erosion of company culture and employee attitude.

The owner of the company was being kept up at night by the belief that sooner or later their lack of attention to training was going to catch up with them in an expensive or tragic way. And although they did not have any additional budget to devote to training, he felt that with just a little effort and planning they could do much better within their current budget.

### **The Primary Lesson**

The overriding lesson was that any organization, on any budget, can become a top-rate training organization without any (or much) additional expense. In fact, the time and effort devoted to training for this company resulted in so many positive benefits in terms of culture, performance, union/management relationship and employee retention (not to mention safety) that the process was considered a huge net benefit.

### **What Did They Do?**

- The formulation of a "plan of attack" (to be completed within 3 months) for training in the company. The execution of the plan had to be achievable within their current training budget.
- Determine how the plan itself was managed; when it would be reviewed, who would own it, etc. The purpose was to ensure that the plan had a future by being continuously

reviewed and improved.

- Define the infrastructure required for long term success. For them, the infrastructure for success meant choosing a learning management system (LMS) which could deliver their new training initiatives.
- Finally, to launch their training initiative, they decided it was important that the initial plan define one short-term meaningful project that improved training outcomes and/or reduced costs. They decided this initial project must be achievable in, at most, 6 months. The goal was to test their new training infrastructure, test their plan, gain some experience, begin the process of employee engagement, and have one visible success to help develop some momentum. They chose to revamp their basic new hire training and use eLearning to deliver, manage and measure it (which is how I got involved).

### **The Elements of Success**

It turns out that the particular plan of action initiated by the company was a highly successful one. There are many lessons to take from their experience - one which I have now seen repeated many times - always with success. Let's look at some of the lessons that can be derived from their intelligent choices.

### **Get Started Now - Don't Wait for the Perfect Plan**

There is no greater impediment to success than the feeling that we should not do anything until we are able to do it perfectly. It is important to realize that there is simply no way to know all the answers before we begin. And even if we did, the company and the context that it operates in are not static. So although it makes sense to initially do whatever homework we can do, we need to accept that the rest of the answers will come over time. This has the following two valuable benefits:

1. It makes it much easier to get the plan off the ground. If we spend too much time trying to perfect the plan first, not only will we get much of it wrong anyhow, but there is the real danger that delays, disagreements and planning fatigue will end up making it so the plan is never launched.
2. By "prematurely optimizing" your plan we'll be making a lot of decisions based more on our intuition rather than actual experience. Many of these will ultimately be shown to be incorrect and therefore will need to be changed as we gain experience. It is inevitable and healthy to continually revisit and refine our plan - so we should not get tripped up trying to determine every last detail of what we are going to do. Perfection can only come with time.

Note that I am not advocating the idea that we should get started with little or no planning. All I am saying is that we should only be making decisions now which are actually required in the short term, and for which we have a good basis of knowledge to be making. Keep it simple.

### **But ... Make Sure That Continuous Improvement is Central**

Linked with the comment above about getting started with an admittedly imperfect plan (and I would argue that we have no choice in the matter but to do so), is the requirement to revisit and refine the plan at regular intervals. The plan can never be a static document. Instead, it is a living thing that is always updated to reflect new knowledge, new goals, and the new realities that affect the company.

First, as we have said above, we will (especially early on) be working with an imperfect plan. As we gain experience as to

what works and what does not, we need a mechanism to reflect that new knowledge in the plan. If we simply decide that we'll update the plan whenever appropriate, then it won't get done. This is one of the surest ways to kill an otherwise great training initiative.

Instead, it is important that from the very beginning the plan defines the interval at which the plan is reviewed, and who is to be involved in that review. If nothing else, this sets a meeting date and creates an expectation that experience and new learnings will be reflected in the plan. Most organizations use a one-year continuous improvement cycle - meaning that every year they review their training performance and make changes to the plan to improve it.

Another nice benefit of continuous improvement is that it requires a bit of an analysis/measurement of how things are going. This necessarily involves doing things like distributing questionnaires or getting feedback in other forms. In addition, the process of refining the plan should involve people from various parts of the company (more on that in the next article). This means that continuous improvement is a visible exercise which demonstrates to all employees the reality that training is important and that good performance is valued in the company.

If any of this sounds complicated, it is not. As above, the details can be worked out and refined over time. At the outset, the critical part is simply indicating in the initial plan that continuous improvement is central, and that it will be performed on specific dates. You can then assemble a small committee to learn a bit about what continuous improvement is and task them to write some initial guidelines (which will themselves be refined over time). Again - keep it simple.

### **The Human Element In the Real World- Part 3:**

In this third and final article on the subject, I am going to cover the remaining lessons derived from this company's transition to training excellence including plan ownership, employee involvement, visibility, and training infrastructure. These can serve as valuable guidance to any maritime organization looking to make the transition to a high quality, professional and continuously improved training organization.

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### **What Did They Do?**

A description of the process undertaken by this company to transform their training can be found in the first article of this series. However, as a quick recap the company laid out the following goals at the outset:

- The formulation of a "plan of attack" (to be completed within 3 months) for training in the company. The execution of the plan had to be achievable within their current training budget.
- Determine how the plan itself was managed, when it would be reviewed, who would own it, etc. The purpose was to ensure that the plan had a future by being continuously reviewed and improved.
- Define the infrastructure required for long term success. For them, the infrastructure for success meant choosing a learning management system (LMS) which could deliver their new training initiatives.
- Finally, to launch their training initiative, they decided it was

important that the initial plan define one short-term meaningful project that improved training outcomes and/or reduced costs. They decided this initial project must be achievable in, at most, 6 months. The goal was to test their new training infrastructure, test their plan, gain some experience, begin the process of employee engagement, and have one visible success to help develop some momentum.

### **The Elements of Success**

It turns out that the particular plan of action initiated by the company was a highly successful one. There are many lessons to take from their experience, two of which were covered in my previous article. Those were:

1. Create a plan, but don't wait for it to be perfect before getting started, and
2. Ensure that a process of continuous improvement is a central part of that plan.

The bottom line for those two lessons is that the simple act of getting started requires some inertia and effort. If we spend too much time trying to perfect the plan first, not only will we get much of it wrong anyhow, but there is the real danger that delays, disagreements and planning fatigue will end up making it so the plan is never launched. Instead, it is often more effective to create a simple plan initially, and ensure that the plan itself has a built-in mechanism requiring refinement and improvement over time as experience is gained and informed decisions can be made. Avoid the temptation to prematurely optimize your plan.

Remember - the most effective plans are those which have been refined on the basis of years of trial and experience. The least effective plans are those that never get off the ground. This company's decision to spend no more than three months on the initial plan design was critical to ensuring that progress would be made, and that some visible effect would be achieved in short order. It did get off the ground and it did receive attention and refinement over time.

Let's look at some of the other useful lessons from this company's experience.

### **Plan Ownership**

The plan itself, for this company, defined who the plan owner was. It did not name a person, but rather a position. While having an owner may seem simple and obvious, it is important as it avoids the situation that often occurs when there is a group of people who are responsible for maintaining the plan. If everyone is responsible, then no one is responsible. Ideally the plan falls to the person in charge of training and that person reports to their immediate superior whose job it is to ensure that progress is made and the plan is vetted and followed.

Interestingly, in the case of this company, the plan was actually owned by a reasonably junior person who looked after training management. Although this person did require a bit of support and guidance as to the training mission, the effect was actually very positive because of his energy and desire to make a difference. He took the role seriously and spent some time reading articles (not unlike this one) on training planning and management. In the end, the plan owner matured in training management sophistication and did an excellent job. So while it may be the case that ideally a highly qualified and experienced training manager would be placed in charge of the plan, this is not always necessary. Formulating and executing a training plan for a small organization is not rocket science, and anyone with some enthusiasm, intelligence, support, and the ability to do a

bit of reading can do it.

### **Have an Owner, But Involve Everyone**

For the plan to be successful, it must have input from everyone affected by the plan. That generally means everyone in the company. Obviously it would not be possible (or desirable) to have all employees attend meetings and collaborate on the writing of the plan - but each person in the company can contribute at the appropriate level and in an appropriate way. Some will be closely involved and others involved only at a distance.

For example, this company created a core team, chaired by the plan owner, to contribute ideas for the initial plan, and to meet regularly to facilitate continuous improvement. The core team included people from each major company function and level including administrative, managerial and operational. The plan owner was also careful to include both new and long-time employees, as well as enthusiasts and skeptics. This ensured that progress was never hampered by having to await an opinion or approval (other than final approval). All of the necessary information was around the table. It also ensured that all points of view were considered and that most concerns were heard and addressed during planning rather than afterward, during rollout.

The company also involved each and every employee by disseminating questionnaires to collect opinions and information and by circulating periodic updates on progress. In this way, each employee in the organization was aware of what was happening and had a hand in driving it. This visibility and participation created a sense of ownership and anticipation. By the time the plan was released and put into action, the entire company was aware of it and had a good understating of the goals, the process, and how to provide feedback.

### **Visibility**

The previous point of involving everyone (to an appropriate degree) achieved the side effect of making the project very visible in the company even before it was put into place. This is an important aspect of change management. Change affects how employees do their work. As such, any change can cause apprehension and can therefore be met with resistance. By ensuring that the project has a high degree of visibility even before it is rolled out, employees at the company were able to gain an understanding of (and provide suggestions on) what the effects would be on them. This, combined with an understanding of why the project was important made the change management process quite smooth in this case.

This is an important point that is difficult to over stress. Moving to blended or e-learning creates a lot of unknowns in the minds of employees and I have seen both smooth and difficult transitions. This company's implementation was among the smoothest I've ever seen and I believe this was largely due to the great visibility all employees had into the the project's importance, goals, process and implementation. Transparency and involvement are key not only for achieving buy-in, but also to ensure that we are not inadvertently making the lives of any of our employees more difficult as a result of some oversight.

### **Modest Beginnings**

Recall that the plan adopted by this company called for one initial training project to be completed within 6 months. In choosing this first project they made a wise decision to keep the project meaningful, yet modest and highly predictable (the project had very little risk in it). It is not always the case that meaningful projects are low risk. However, keeping the risk in the initial

project as low risk as possible avoids the possibility of an early and visible failure. Early failures are much harder to overcome than failures which occur after a small string of steady successes. Therefore, leave the high risk projects for later - keep to the easy stuff first.

In this case, the company choose to implement a learning management system or LMS (which was the reason for my involvement) and then create just one single course on the LMS - their new hire orientation course. This was low risk because the technology was easy to test ahead of time, and because they already had most of the material needed for new hire orientation. All that was required was that it be put on-line using the new LMS. Even though the project was modest and predictable, it:

- Provided some visible benefits to new employees in terms of flexible training before arriving for their first day of work
- It generated some useful training metrics which helped inform management where the course could be improved
- It allowed the company to get accustomed to and test their new training infrastructure (our LMS)
- It took them to a point where they now had implemented a scalable e-learning infrastructure (the LMS) and had gained experience implementing and delivering e-learning.

Taken together this was a significant accomplishment in only 9 months of planning and implementation. And because of the way they went about it, the employees were almost universally positive about the new training direction. Even the skeptics (and there were very few) appreciated the desire to take a much more professional and measured approach to training within the organization.

### Conclusion

This company made a significant transition from a more-or-less ad-hoc training approach to one which was highly professional, predictable, and very well structured. In addition, the use of technology provided metrics which allowed them to put a process of continuous improvement in place. This guaranteed that both the training plan and the training itself would continue to improve, year over year. All that was required was a will to make a change, a few good common-sense decisions, and enthusiasm from the management. Notice that "big budget" was not one of the requirements.

I'll close by quoting a line from my first article in this series. "... if you want to succeed, you need to start sometime. All it takes is a decision to begin. If not now, then when"?

**About The Author:** Murray Goldberg is the founder and President of Marine Learning Systems ([www.marinelms.com](http://www.marinelms.com)), the creator of MarineLMS - the learning management system designed specifically for maritime industry training.

**Skills key to future economic success, says Cable:** Getting the skills system right will be crucial to the Government's industrial strategy in the future, according to business secretary Vince Cable.

Speaking at the Confederation of British Industry's (CBI) annual conference today, Cable told delegates that "to have the skills we need in 2020 or 2030, we need to start acting now". He identified two key areas where action was most needed: post-18 vocational education, and research and development.

Cable called for "real ambition for the further education sector", and for UK businesses to build on their excellence in science

and "turning great ideas into great products". He placed particular focus on the engineering sector, where companies struggle to find appropriately skilled candidates for roles. He said action must be taken "to increase the numbers passing through every stage of the pipeline", with the aim of creating a "thriving ecosystem which attracts the most talented people to careers in engineering and science".

However, Cable added that employers would need to help to foot the bill to nurture this ecosystem. "If an adequate pipeline of British engineers is to be created, it cannot be down to government and future engineering graduates - through their fees - to do all the financial heavy lifting," he said. He is calling for employers to invest in sandwich schemes, paid internships and sponsor individuals.

Commenting on Cable's keynote speech, Katja Hall, the CBI's chief policy director, said: "Business will be pleased with the focus Vince Cable brought to meeting our economy's skills needs. He acknowledged the urgent need to get more young people studying science and maths, and that is of vital importance to businesses. More than 40% of firms in sectors like engineering are already struggling to recruit skilled people and this situation will only get worse if we don't take swift action."

This afternoon, a panel debate will look into what can be done with the schools system to ensure coming generations are prepared for working life. The CBI will launch its report *First Steps: A New Approach to our Schools*, which calls for more emphasis on the skills people need for work rather than exams and league tables.

CBI director-general John Cridland said: "Qualifications are important, but we also need people who have self-discipline and serve customers well. As well as academic rigour, we need schools to produce rounded and grounded young people who have the skills and behaviours that businesses want."

### A major step towards the New Environmental Era for Tanker Shipping:

London: The introduction of a new crude oil tanker concept that is fuelled by liquefied natural gas, has a hull shape that removes the need for ballast water and will almost eliminate local air pollution. This concept vessel also recovers hundreds of tons of cargo vapours on each voyage and represents a major step towards the new environmental era for the tanker shipping industry.

The new crude oil concept vessel, named *Triality*, has been developed through a DNV innovation project. As its name indicates, it fulfils three main goals: it is environmentally superior to a conventional crude oil tanker, its new solutions are feasible and based on well known technology, and it is financially attractive compared to conventional crude oil tankers operating on heavy fuel oil.

DNV CEO Henrik O. Madsen, who presented the new concept in its VLCC version in London today, says: "I am convinced that gas will become the dominant fuel for merchant ships. By 2020, the majority of owners will order ships that can operate on liquefied natural gas (LNG). As a leading class society, DNV has an important role to play in finding more environmentally friendly solutions for the shipping industry, and I'm proud of what has been achieved for the crude oil tanker segment through this innovation project that we are presenting today."

### Less harm to the environment

The *Triality* concept VLCC has been compared to a conventional

VLCC. Both ships have the same operational range and can operate in the ordinary spot market. Compared to the traditional VLCC, the Triality VLCC will:

- emit 34% less CO<sub>2</sub>
- eliminate entirely the need for ballast water
- eliminate entirely the venting of cargo vapours (VOCs)
- use 25% less energy

Less harm will also be caused to the health of people living close to busy shipping routes and ports as NO<sub>x</sub> emissions will be reduced by more than 80% while emissions of SO<sub>x</sub> and particulate matter will fall by as much as 95%.

The new concept tanker has two high pressure dual fuel slow speed main engines fuelled by LNG, with marine gas oil as pilot fuel. The next phase of the Triality concept development will review the use of dual fuel medium speed engines and pure gas engines.

Two IMO type C pressure tanks capable of holding 13 500 m<sup>3</sup> LNG - enough for 25 000 nautical miles of operation - are located on the deck in front of the superstructure. The generators are dual fuel (LNG and marine gas oil) while the auxiliary boilers producing steam for the cargo oil pumps operate on recovered cargo vapours (VOCs).

#### **No ballast water**

A traditional tanker in unloaded transit needs ballast water to obtain full propeller immersion and sufficient forward draft to avoid bottom slamming. The new V-shaped hull form and cargo tank arrangements completely eliminate the need for ballast water in the VLCC version. There will also be much less need for ballast water on other kinds of crude oil tankers, such as Suezmax, Aframax and smaller ships. The new hull shape results in a reduced wetted surface on a round trip and has a lower block coefficient and thus a more energy efficient hull.

A VLCC in unloaded transit will normally carry between 80 000 and 100 000 tons of sea water containing organisms that can cause damage when released into foreign ecosystems. In addition, a lot of fuel is needed just to transport this extra water. And finally, the initial coating and later maintenance of ballast tanks during operations are among a shipowner's main concerns.

The Triality VLCC can collect and liquefy more than 500 tons of cargo vapours during one single round trip. These liquefied petroleum gases will then be stored in deck tanks and up to half will be used as fuel for the boilers during cargo discharge, while the rest can be returned to the cargo tanks or delivered to shore during oil cargo discharge.

#### **Environmentally superior ship also profitable**

When it comes to the additional cost of building a vessel like Triality and the reduced cost of operating it, Henrik O. Madsen's conclusion is clear: "It is possible to develop an environmentally superior ship and be profitable at the same time. Our best estimate is an additional capital expenditure of 10-15% for a Triality VLCC newbuilding compared to a traditional VLCC. Even with this extra cost included, we estimate a reduced life cycle cost equal to 25% of the newbuilding cost for a traditional VLCC.

"Triality is a concept vessel and a ship builder will need to prepare a detailed design before the first Triality crude oil tanker can be constructed. The Triality concept is based on well known and proven components and systems, so in principle a Triality crude oil tanker introducing all or some of the innovative

elements in the concept can be designed today. I am convinced that the Triality concept will create great interest among ship builders and crude oil tanker operators, so that the first Triality crude oil tanker will leave a shipyard before the end of 2014," concludes DNV CEO Henrik O. Madsen.

### **2148 Points Tanker Ship Chief Officer Must Consider While Dealing with Port Terminal Representatives:**

Most of the times vessels call ports which are quite diverse in respect to their nationality and language. Undoubtedly, the deck officers are not always familiar with the ports they call or the culture of the place.

A healthy relationship between deck officer and port terminal representatives is the key to "hassle-free" cargo operations. Ship personnel must understand its importance in shipping procedures and take all necessary steps to ensure a good relationship with port personnel.

Chief Officer must keep a note of the following points in order to ensure a healthy relationship with shore people

**1. Guide to Port Entry** - Guide to Port Entry is a publication on board which provides details of various ports around the globe, including diverse information about the Geo - physical and commercial requirements of the Port. A chief officer must go through this guide properly before entering the port. However, a good and strong professional relationship between the ship's personnel especially Master and the Chief Officer with the terminal representatives is extremely beneficial.

**2. Ship - shore meetings** - Ship - shore meetings play a vital role in making the following operation successful and efficient. Their importance should never be neglected as they are legally binding and thus any misinterpretations or confusions later can lead to huge commercial losses on either side. Chief officer must take these meetings very seriously.

**3. Communication Channels** - It is of utmost importance to ascertain for a chief mate about the means of communication, both primary and emergency, between the ship and the shore. E.g. some terminals use VHF's whereas some provide shore radios.

**4. Emergency Stop Signal** - Stress should be placed on the emergency stop signal between the ship and shore; and before commencing the operation it is always advisable to confirm the same with the shore. Procedure for "Emergency Stop" should be thoroughly explained to both the parties.

**5. Know the grades and quantity of cargo** - A chief mate should always know the grades and quantity of the cargo available with the shore, along with the number of shore tanks and quantity from each tank along with its temperature and density. Density can be in 'Air' or 'Vacuum'.

Recent addition to SOLAS states specifically that while loading or unloading the receiver must be provided with a copy of MSDS. Without an appropriate copy of MSDS the receiver can refuse to accept the cargo.

**6. Keep a check on line displacement** - Few terminals carry out a line displacement to establish the quantities in their lines. Big Tankers have line content (the amount of cargo retained in bottom lines of tankers which pass through various tanks), which needs to be included for calculating the final quantity of cargo transferred.

**7. Discuss shore tanks capacity** - Shore tanks have limited

capacities and hence there may be changeover of shore tanks too. This needs to be discussed as some terminals in US and Europe have long stoppages during cargo transfer. An estimate of this enables the vessel to optimize use of fuel to produce inert gas and keep her tanks inert during entire the operation.

### **Real life incident**

A vessel was unloading jet fuel in Baltimore in the month of July. Due to shore delay, changing over of shore tanks took approximately 22 hour, during which vessel kept running her IG generators and Turbines .Had the terminal notified promptly, the vessel could have saved as much as 8 tons of diesel oil. Though there were no claims from charterers but these saving counts substantially in today's competitive market.

**8. Fix the rate/ pressure of cargo transfer** - The rate or pressure of cargo transfer is an essential ingredient of ship - shore safety meeting. The agreed rate or pressure, both maximum and minimum is to be agreed upon and never to be exceeded by both ship as well as shore. Most terminals have flow meters/pressure gauges which determine instantaneous rates and almost all loadicator programs (a program used to calculate various stability parameters of ship) installed onboard tankers nowadays can calculate instantaneous rate/pressure as well.

### **Read life incidences**

While loading Heavy Fuel Oil at Vopak Terminal, Singapore a vessel accidentally closed her tank valves. The terminal was loading the vessel using a booster pump which tripped due to an excessive back pressure of 5 kg. The maximum back pressure shore pump could withstand was 3.0 kg, same was mentioned in the ship/shore agreement too. The pump tripped and some parts were damaged. The delay to repair and reset the pump was claimed from the vessel, a fine was imposed too for not following ship/shore agreement and vessel was blacklisted.

Also, Reliance terminal in Sikka, Gujarat, India is provided with auto closing valves if the back pressure exceeds a set limit. To resume the operation the valve has to be resettled. This leads to delays on vessel's behalf and can cost dearly to owners and charterers as well.

Most of the terminal representatives are experienced professionals. However keeping a courteous and honest professional approach towards them is an added advantage for the ship staff when their co operation is much required.

### **More Important Points to Consider**

OBQ (On-board quantity) Surveys are carried out before a vessel is reported ready to load cargo. The surveyor has to determine that Cargo tanks are dry and clean and then issue a NIL ROB (Remaining on board certificate along with a Dry tank certificate. While carrying out the survey all cargo line valves should be in open position.

The DRY tank and NIL ROB certificate are very important to obtain for a vessel from commercial aspect. If not found dry then the chief mate should be aware of appropriate documentation or remarks.

E.g. Most of the surveyors in USA, UK and European ports refuse to sign a Clean Tank Certificate. They rather prefer to sign a Dry Tank Certificate.

Means to establish a dry tank include use of a dipping rod for checking any sediment at the bottom. Theoretically a tank should be dipped at three locations. If any residues are found,

whether liquid or non liquid, the amount of liquid residues can be established using the wedge formula calculation. The temperature of residue too must be measured. Ship's trim and list should be ascertained while making these calculations.

A mate should never try to minimize ROB during survey as it will consequently increase the Cargo quantity after loading. This may lead to a "Shortage of Cargo "claim at discharge port. Chief Officer should always observe the procedure for measuring ROB by the surveyor. The same can be logged down if necessary by the ship's staff.

In case of discrepancies between ship's figure and shore figure despite following all prescribed procedures, the vessel should initiate owners and charterers recommended measures to indemnify them against any unwanted claims.

### **Counter-piracy: Sea Marshalls to Set Up Cape Verde Base:**

To thwart escalating piracy in the Gulf of Guinea, Sea Marshalls gets license to use Cape Verde as base for ship security operations.

The Government of Cape Verde earlier granted a licence to Cape Verde Maritime Security Services (CVMSS) allowing it exclusive rights to vet Private Maritime Security Companies (PMSCs) who want to use the island as a base for embarking and disembarking armed security teams. Sea Marshalls is the first company to obtain its approval.

On behalf of the Cape Verde Government, CVMSS will undertake checks to ensure PMSCs comply with agreed minimum standards in accordance with both local and international laws and regulations. These standards will include training, support and insurance levels.??

SeaMarshals Chief Executive Thomas Jakobsson recently received the coveted first permit from the government of Cape Verde, issued by the Coast Guard. He said: "SeaMarshals has set the benchmark for private maritime security companies operating in this area. We have been able to use our many years of successfully operating off the East Coast of Africa, tackling Somali-led piracy and supplying first-class armed personnel.?"

He continued: "SeaMarshals has long been at the forefront of our industry in complying with new laws and regulations, as well as working closely with other agencies and governments as an advisor on security-related matters. We are pleased to now be working with the Cape Verde authorities to ensure safe and effective measures are taken in keeping the seas off West Africa safe for the maritime industry."

### **New Device Fires a Painless Warning Shot to Boaters:**

The US Coast Guard implements a new non-lethal signaling, warning device in Long Island Sound.

The Coast Guard is implementing the use of a non-lethal signaling and warning device to support the service's ports, waterways, and coastal security mission in Long Island Sound.

The LA51 signal and warning device is considered a safer alternative to the current warning devices used by Coast Guard personnel. It is a shorter range round, and the flash and noise produced by the device are more prominent than a splash in the water caused by the M16 tracer round. Additionally, the Department of Defense's joint non-lethal weapons program has determined through their testing that the LA51 has a low risk of significant injury.

The warning device is fired from a 12-gauge shotgun to produce a visible and audible signal. Training will be conducted in a

designated firing range offshore and it will be available throughout Long Island Sound.

"The new LA51 warning device is designed to warn boaters in a safe and effective manner if they do not respond to calls on the marine radio from the Coast Guard or comply with our instructions in case of a security violation," said Capt. Joseph Vojvodich, commander of Coast Guard Sector Long Island Sound. "Our crews have received extensive training on using the device safely and properly as one of several options for responding to potential maritime threats."

The Coast Guard has been using the LA51 as a warning signal during alien migrant interdiction operations and counter-drug operations. The LA51 warning device will now be used during security zone enforcement and the execution of its ports, waterways, and coastal security mission.

### **LNG Bunkering Trends: New Industry Report**

Vast majority believe there is a business case to be made for LNG as a marine fuel reveals 'LNG Bunkering Trends 2013 and Beyond'.

With the ECA regulations on fossil fuel emissions coming into effect in 2015, the world of shipping has turned to liquefied natural gas (LNG) as a greener, cleaner alternative to conventional diesel power. However most see the lack of LNG infrastructure as one of the most prominent barriers.

Oil & Gas IQ's special industry report, LNG Bunkering: Worldwide Trends 2013 and Beyond, based on a survey of ports, shipping operators and LNG providers, maps these current trends and challenges of LNG as a marine fuel worldwide.

Other insights into the upcoming transformation of the bunkering world provided from this detailed infographic include:

- Economic feasibility is seen as the second greatest challenge facing LNG Bunkering
- 42% of new build dry bulk carriers are expected to be LNG-fuelled in 2015
- Singapore, North West Europe and the Persian Gulf have the highest bunkering demand currently
- The Conventional - vs - Proposed LNG bunkering options of ports

This report was prepared in collaboration with the upcoming LNG Bunkering Summit, the first event to address the LNG bunkering infrastructure as it unfolds within Europe, taking place 28th - 30th January 2013 in Rotterdam.

– Courtesy: Marinelink.com

### **Maritime Safety Committee agrees new measures for passenger ship safety and protection of personnel from noise on-board ships: Maritime Safety Committee (MSC), 91st session, 26 to 30 November 2012**

IMO's Maritime Safety Committee (MSC), which met at the Organization's London Headquarters for its 91st session from 26 to 30 November 2012, agreed that rules to require passenger safety drills to take place prior to, or immediately upon, departure should be made mandatory, in the wake of the Costa Concordia incident.

The MSC also adopted a number of amendments to the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS), including a new mandatory requirement for new ships to be

constructed to reduce on-board noise and to protect personnel from noise; and considered a range of other issues, including piracy and armed robbery against ships and other items submitted by the IMO sub-committees.

### **Draft amendment on muster drills approved**

The MSC approved a draft amendment to SOLAS regulation III/19 to require musters of newly embarked passengers prior to or immediately upon departure, instead of "within 24 hours", as stated in the current regulations. The draft amendment will now be circulated with a view to adoption, at the next session, MSC 92, in June 2013.

The Committee also agreed a revised circular on recommended operational measures to be implemented on a voluntary basis, and updated its long-term action plan on passenger ship safety. (See Briefing 54/2012).

### **New mandatory requirements to reduce noise on board ships**

The MSC adopted a new SOLAS regulation II-1/3-12 to require new ships to be constructed to reduce on-board noise and to protect personnel from noise, in accordance with the revised Code on noise levels on board ships, also adopted, which sets out mandatory maximum noise level limits for machinery spaces, control rooms, workshops, accommodation and other spaces on board ships. The Code supersedes the previous non-mandatory Code, adopted in 1981 by resolution A.468(XII).

The Code on noise levels on board ships will come into effect when the new regulation enters into force, on 1 July 2014.

### **Other SOLAS amendments adopted**

The MSC also adopted the following SOLAS amendments, which are expected to enter into force on 1 July 2014:

- amendments to SOLAS regulation III/17-1 to require ships to have plans and procedures to recover persons from the water, as well as related Guidelines for development of plans and procedures for recovery of persons from the water. Also, a related MSC resolution on Implementation of SOLAS regulation III/17-1 to ships to which SOLAS chapter III does not apply;
- amendments to SOLAS regulation II-2/10 on fire fighting to require a minimum of duplicate two-way portable radiotelephone apparatus for each fire party for fire fighters' communication to be carried; amendments to regulation II-2/15 on instructions, on-board training and drills, to require an on-board means of recharging breathing apparatus cylinders used during drills, or a suitable number of spare cylinders; and amendments to regulation II-2/20 on protection of vehicle, special category and ro-ro spaces related to fixed fire-extinguishing systems; and
- amendments to the appendix to the annex to the SOLAS Convention replacing all forms of certificates and records of equipment, including its 1988 Protocol, and amendments to the forms of the Cargo Ship Safety Construction Certificate and Cargo Ship Safety Equipment Certificate of its 1978 Protocol.

### **SOLAS amendments to mandate enclosed-space entry and rescue drills approved**

The MSC approved, for adoption at MSC 92, draft amendments to SOLAS regulation III/19, on emergency training and drills, to mandate enclosed-space entry and rescue drills, which would require crew members with enclosed-space entry or rescue

responsibilities to participate in an enclosed-space entry and rescue drill at least once every two months.

The draft amendments are aimed at ensuring seafarers are familiar with the precautions they need to take prior to entering enclosed spaces and also with the most appropriate action they should take in the event of an accident.

### **Piracy and armed robbery against ships statistics reviewed**

The MSC reviewed the latest statistics on piracy and armed robbery against ships and noted the encouraging downward trend in piracy attacks in the western Indian Ocean. However, there were still many innocent seafarers held hostage in Somalia, some for more than two years. The increase in the number of incidents of piracy and armed robbery against ships in the Gulf of Guinea and the increasing level of violence of those attacks was also a major concern.

The MSC welcomed the news from the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) that it had developed ISO PAS 28007 for Private Maritime Security Companies.

### **Goal-based standards implementation work continued**

The MSC continued its work on goal-based standards, further developing draft guidelines for the approval of equivalents and alternatives as provided for in various IMO instruments. Work on the guidelines will continue in a correspondence group.

The development of interim guidelines for the safety level approach was also discussed, and a working group agreed a draft set of elements to be considered. The "Safety level" is defined as a measure of exposure to risk and the "Safety-level approach" is defined as the structured application of risk-based methodologies for the IMO rule-making process. Member States and interested organizations were invited to submit comments on the safety level approach elements to the next session.

### **IMO audit scheme Code and amendments approved**

The MSC approved the draft IMO Instruments Implementation Code (III Code), which sets the standard for the IMO audit scheme, and approved draft amendments to the following treaties to make the III Code and auditing mandatory: International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea, (SOLAS), 1974, as amended, and the Protocol of 1988 relating to the International Convention on Load Lines, 1966 (1988 Load Lines Protocol), as amended, for adoption by MSC 93. The MSC also adopted amendments to the Convention on the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea, 1972, as amended (COLREG 1972), the International Convention on Load Lines, 1966 (LL 1966) and the International Convention on Tonnage Measurement of Ships, 1969 (TONNAGE 1969), for subsequent adoption by the Assembly at its twenty-eighth session (following the procedures for adoption of amendments for the COLREG 1972, LL 1966 and Tonnage 1969 conventions).

Similar draft amendments to the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping (STCW), 1978, as amended and the Seafarers' Training, Certification and Watchkeeping (STCW) Code were referred to the Sub-Committee on Standards of Training and Watchkeeping for further review with a view to their approval at the next session of the MSC.

The aim is to adopt the treaty amendments in 2014, once the III Code has been formally adopted by the IMO Assembly, in 2013.

### **Code for Recognized Organizations (ROs) approved**

The MSC approved the draft Code for Recognized Organizations (ROs) and related draft amendments to SOLAS, 1974, and the Load Lines 1988 Protocol, to make it mandatory, for adoption, at a future session. The Code will provide a consolidated text containing criteria against which ROs (which may be authorized by flag States to carry out surveys and issue certificates on their behalf) are assessed and authorized/recognized, and give guidance for subsequent monitoring of ROs by Administrations.

### **Restructuring of sub-committees to be discussed at next session**

The MSC discussed proposals to restructure the nine sub-committees reporting to MSC and to the Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC), which had been endorsed in principle by the IMO Council in June (See Briefing 49/2012). The Committee had a detailed discussion on the Secretary-General's initiative, and agreed to request the Secretariat to prepare a detailed proposal for consideration by MEPC 65 and by MSC 92. The Committee also agreed to establish a dedicated working group at the next session to discuss the proposals in much greater detail.

### **Other issues**

In connection with other issues arising from the reports of IMO sub-committees and other bodies, the MSC:

- adopted amendments to update the Performance standard for protective coatings for dedicated seawater ballast tanks in all types of ships and double-side skin spaces of bulk carriers (resolution MSC.215(82)) and the Performance standard for protective coatings for cargo oil tanks of crude oil tankers (resolution MSC.288(87)), which are mandatory under SOLAS 74, as amended;
- adopted amendments to annex B to the 1988 Load Lines Protocol, as amended, related to Regulation 27(11) Initial condition of loading and Regulation 27(13) Condition of equilibrium;
- adopted amendments to update the International Code for Fire Safety Systems (FSS Code), as amended, including revised specifications for breathing apparatus and revised chapter 14 on fixed deck foam systems;
- adopted amendments to chapters 17, 18 and 19 of the International Code for the Construction and Equipment of Ships carrying Dangerous Chemicals in Bulk (IBC Code), which have been concurrently adopted by the Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC);
- approved a COMSAR circular on guidance on smartphone and other computer devices, which points out the potential safety concerns in relation to the use of applications for smartphones and other computer devices that relate to Search and Rescue (SAR);
- adopted a number of new and amended ships' routing measures;
- adopted a new mandatory ship reporting system "In the Barents Area (Barents SRS)";
- approved the Secretary-General's report on three countries whose independent evaluations have been completed since the previous MSC meeting and confirmed those Parties continued to give full and complete effect to the provisions of the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (STCW), 1978, as amended;

- approved revised Guidelines on the Medical Examination of Seafarers (STCW.7/Circ.19);
- approved a STCW.7 circular providing Guidance on Electronic Chart Display and Information System (ECDIS) Training;
- approved guidance to STCW parties, including revised circulars on Procedures regarding the consideration of information communicated in accordance with article IV and regulation I/7 of the STCW Convention (MSC.1/Circ.796/Rev.2; Guidance on the preparation, reporting and review of independent evaluations and steps taken to implement mandatory amendments required by regulations I/7 and I/8 of the STCW Convention (MSC.1/Circ.997/Rev.1); and Guidance on arrangements between parties to allow for recognition of certificates under regulation I/10 of the STCW Convention (MSC.1/Circ.950/Rev.1);
- approved amendments to the International Management Code for the Safe Operation of Ships and for Pollution Prevention (International Safety Management (ISM) Code), intended to improve its efficiency and user friendliness;
- approved a draft Assembly resolution on Revised Guidelines on implementation of the ISM Code by Administrations;
- approved a draft Assembly resolution on Revised Guidelines for the structure of an integrated system of Contingency planning for shipboard emergencies;
- approved draft amendments to the International Convention for Safe Containers (CSC), 1972, for subsequent adoption. The draft amendments incorporate amendments to the CSC Convention adopted in 1993 by resolution A.737(18), which have not yet entered into force;
- approved the MSC-MEPC circular on the Revised Guidelines for Formal Safety Assessment (FSA) for use in the IMO rule-making process (Revised FSA Guidelines), and the MSC-MEPC circular on Guidelines for the application of Human Element Analysing Process (HEAP) to the IMO rule making process (HEAP Guidelines);
- approved the revised MSC circular on Guide for cold water survival; and
- approved a revised MSC.1/Circ.1350 on Unified Interpretations of SOLAS regulation V/22.1.6 relating to navigation bridge visibility, to include a new paragraph covering the use of a remote camera system as means for achieving the view of the ship's side from the bridge wing.

## **INTERIM GUIDANCE TO PRIVATE MARITIME SECURITY COMPANIES PROVIDING PRIVATELY CONTRACTED ARMED SECURITY PERSONNEL ON BOARD SHIPS IN THE HIGH RISK AREA**

- 1 The Maritime Safety Committee, at its eighty-ninth session (11 to 20 May 2011), approved interim guidance to flag States and to shipowners, ship operators and shipmasters on the use of privately contracted armed security personnel on board ships in the High Risk Area.
- 2 Given the importance and urgent nature of the issue, and the need to further develop and promulgate detailed guidance and recommendations as soon as possible, the Committee approved and the Council authorized the convening of an intersessional meeting of the Maritime

- 3 Following the high-level debate on the issue of privately contracted armed security personnel on board ships that took place at its ninetieth session (16 to 25 May 2012), the Committee agreed to also develop guidance to private maritime security companies to complement existing guidance, and to further assist policy development at the national level and facilitate greater harmonization of policies at the international level related to the issue of private armed security on board ships.
- 4 The Interim guidance to private maritime security companies providing privately contracted armed security personnel on board ships in the High Risk Area is set out in the annex.
- 5 The attached interim guidance should be read in conjunction with the interim guidance set out in MSC.1/Circ.1405/Rev.2 on Revised interim guidance to shipowners, ship operators and shipmasters on the use of privately contracted armed security personnel on board ships in the High Risk Area; MSC.1/Circ.1406/Rev.2 on Revised interim recommendations for flag States regarding the use of privately contracted armed security personnel on board ships in the High Risk Area; and MSC.1/Circ.1408/Rev.1 on Revised interim recommendations for port and coastal States regarding the use of privately contracted armed security personnel on board ships in the High Risk Area; and the information provided in MSC-FAL.1/Circ.2 on Questionnaire on information on port and coastal State requirements related to privately contracted armed security personnel on board ships, as well as the other recommendations and guidance developed by the Organization for preventing and suppressing piracy and armed robbery against ships.
- 6 Member Governments are urged to bring this circular to the attention of all national agencies concerned with anti-piracy activities, including shipowners, ship operators, shipping companies, shipmasters and crews, and private security companies.
- 7 Member Governments are also urged to take any necessary action to ensure the implementation, as appropriate, of the interim guidance given in the annex.
- 8 Member Governments, international organizations and non-governmental organizations with consultative status are invited to bring to the attention of the Committee, at the earliest opportunity, the results of the experience gained from the use of the interim guidance so as to assist the Committee in deciding on any action to be taken.

### **ANNEX**

#### **1 Purpose**

- 1.1 In recent years there has been a significant increase in the number of ship operators choosing to employ privately contracted armed security personnel (PCASP) for protection against attacks by Somalia-based pirates in the High Risk Area (HRA) of the Western Indian Ocean and Gulf of Aden. According to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) (part II, section I, article 2) and customary international law, a coastal State has sovereignty in its territorial sea. This sovereignty within the territorial sea is exercised subject to the rules of innocent passage

as per UNCLOS (part II, section 3), and other rules of international law. However, no international guidance or standards exist at present for private maritime security companies (PMSC) providing such services. Such guidance would improve governance, reduce the potential for accidents, and promote competent, safe and lawful conduct at sea.

- 1.2 Article 92 of UNCLOS refers to the flag State's "exclusive jurisdiction on the high seas", and article 94 of UNCLOS to "duties of the flag State." It is recognized that the decision to allow PCASP on board ships is the prerogative of flag States and not all flag States may allow their use.
- 1.3 PMSC should acknowledge the possible existence of legal responsibilities with respect to the deployment of PCASP. This should include PMSC seeking the appropriate approval, as applicable and prior to embarking PCASP on board ships, from the competent authorities in:
  - 1 flag States;
  - 2 countries where the PMSC is registered; and
  - 3 countries in which operations are conducted or managed, including countries through which PCASP may transit.
- 1.4 The purpose of this guidance is to provide interim guidance to PMSC to enable:
  - 1 the appropriate content and nature of the documented procedures to be put in place, to allow shipowners to make an informed judgement on the selection of PMSC; and
  - 2 PMSC to provide assistance to shipowners in the prevention of acts of piracy and armed robbery against ships in the identified HRA, through the considered deployment of PCASP.
- 1.5 This interim guidance is not legally binding and is not in itself a set of certifiable standards. It does, however, provide minimum recommendations on the competencies and abilities a professional PMSC is expected to have.
- 1.6 This interim guidance to PMSC should be read in conjunction with MSC.1/Circ.1405/Rev.2 on Revised interim guidance to shipowners, ship operators and shipmasters on the use of privately contracted armed security personnel on board ships in the High Risk Area; MSC.1/Circ.1406/Rev.2 on Revised interim recommendations for flag States regarding the use of privately contracted armed security personnel on board ships in the High Risk Area; MSC.1/Circ.1408/Rev.1 on Revised interim recommendations for port and coastal States regarding the use of privately contracted armed security personnel on board ships in the High Risk Area; and the information provided in MSC-FAL.1/Circ.2 on Questionnaire on information on port and coastal State requirements related to privately contracted armed security personnel on board ships, as well as the other recommendations and guidance developed by the Organization for preventing and suppressing piracy and armed robbery against ships.

## **2 PMSC professional certification**

- 2.1 The Montreux Document on Pertinent International Legal Obligations and Good Practices for States related to Operations of Private Military and Security Companies during Armed Conflict and the International Code of Conduct for Private Security Service Providers are useful

reference points for PMSC, but are not directly relevant to the situation of piracy and armed robbery in the maritime domain and do not provide sufficient guidance for PMSC. The Montreux Document, which addresses States, restates rules of international law and provides a set of good practices for States, although it should be noted that international humanitarian law is applicable only during armed conflict. The ICoC, which addresses the private security industry, identifies a set of principles and processes for private security service providers related to support for the rule of law and respect for human rights, but is written in the context of self-regulation and only for land-based security companies, and is therefore not directly applicable to the peculiarities of deploying armed guards on board merchant ships to protect against acts of piracy and armed robbery at sea.

- 2.2 The prevailing situation off the coast of Somalia therefore necessitates separate and urgent consideration of requirements for the use of PCASP on board ships transiting the HRA.
- 2.3 This interim guidance is therefore intended to assist in the development of an international standard and certification process for PMSC to protect against acts of piracy and armed robbery at sea and to assist PMSC in demonstrating their competence and professionalism to shipowners in the interim.
- 2.4 PMSC should seek certification with relevant national and international private maritime security service standards when these are established.

## **3 PMSC company requirements**

- 3.1 PMSC should establish procedures to provide maritime security services to shipowners and ship operators and comply with all relevant legal requirements.

### **General**

- 3.2 PMSC should be able to provide documentary evidence to enable relevant interested parties to carry out due diligence. These should include documents relating to incorporation, management and financial standing. This may include, but is not limited to:
  - 1 company structure and place of registration;
  - 2 company ownership;
  - 3 financial position and bank references;
  - 4 extent of insurance cover (in particular covering third-party risks);
  - 5 senior management experience, general and specific to the task; and
  - 6 quality management indicators – e.g. ISO certification.

### **Applicable law**

- 3.3 PMSC should have awareness and understanding of applicable laws of flag, port and coastal States with respect to the transport, carriage, storage and use of firearms and security-related equipment and the use of force. In particular PMSC should have:
  - 1 understanding of applicable national laws with respect to the transport, carriage, storage and use of firearms and security-related equipment, noting that the approvals from the flag State should be obtained by the shipowners and ship operators and that the PCASP

- engaged carry the required firearms licence issued or endorsed by the flag State as prescribed; and
- 2 access to competent maritime legal advice on a 24/7 basis, recognizing the complexity of applicable laws concerning the carriage and use of firearms and security-related equipment on board merchant ships.

**Insurance cover**

3.4 PMSC should hold and maintain for the duration of the contract:

- 1 public and employers liability insurance cover to an appropriate level and as required by the shipowner; and
- 2 personal accident, medical expenses, hospitalization and repatriation insurance.

3.5 As firearms and other security-related equipment are to be part of the contracted plan, PMSC should insure their personnel to carry and use firearms on such voyages for accident, injury and damage arising from the use of firearms and liability for any claim that might arise from the carriage and/or negligent or intentional misuse of firearms.

3.6 PMSC should note references in MSC.1/Circ.1405/Rev.2 on the vital need for shipowners, charterers and underwriters to review all provisions in their charters and policies to ensure adequate attention is paid to the questions raised with respect to the impact that deployment of PCASP may have on the shipowner's property and liability insurance cover.

- 4 In the present guidance, all references to firearms include the associated ammunition, consumables, spare parts and maintenance equipment for use by PCASP, and all references to security-related equipment include protective and communication equipment for use by PCASP.MSC.1/Circ.1443

**Piracy awareness**

3.7 PMSC should have a sound understanding of:

- 1 the changeable piracy situation in the HRA;
- 2 the piracy threat in the region, military operations in the area, and the means to maintain current knowledge; and
- 3 the latest version of the Best Management Practices for Protection against Somalia Based Piracy (BMP) and, in particular, ship protection measures.

**Operational competence**

3.8 PMSC should have professional capability to carry out their role, which is the protection of persons on board and the ship against unlawful attack, using only that force which is strictly necessary and reasonable. In particular PMSC should be able to provide documentary evidence, which may include:

- 1 maritime (as opposed to land-based) experience;
- 2 documented and implemented company procedures and policies for PCASP operations including, but not limited to, communication, leadership, chain of authority, change in command (in the event, for example, of incapacity of the team leader), responsibilities in life saving;

- 3 a written policy on the procurement, transport, carriage, storage, embarkation and disembarkation and use of firearms in accordance with relevant legal requirements;
- 4 a clear policy on the rules for the use of force based on the consideration of several scenarios and providing a graduated response plan;
- 5 a documented, robust and auditable health safety security environment policy with regard to incident investigation;
- 6 a process for post incident actions to support State authority investigations/prosecution should a formal investigation be required; and
- 7 written testimonials/references from previous clients in the maritime industry.

**4 Management**

4.1 Selection, vetting and training of personnel for a PCASP team is crucial to successful and safe transits for the ship and crew. The following section provides recommendations to ensure that such personnel are competent to fulfil their assigned role when deployed on board a merchant ship and that PMSC perform due diligence in their management processes.

**Selection and vetting of PCASP**

4.2 PMSC should have verifiable, written internal policies and procedures for determining the suitability of persons to be deployed as PCASP. They should be able to provide MSC.1/Circ.1443 documentary evidence demonstrating the suitability and effectiveness of their personnel selection and management procedures including, but not limited to:

- 1 criminal background checks;
- 2 history of employment checks;
- 3 military and law enforcement background checks, where applicable;
- 4 record-keeping of medical, physical, and mental fitness of personnel (including regular drug and alcohol testing);
- 5 a verifiable system ensuring the continued suitability for employment of their personnel (ongoing vetting procedures);
- 6 record-keeping of relevant experience and specific certification in the use and carriage of any firearms and security-related equipment to be deployed including in the maritime environment.

**Training of the PCASP team**

4.3 PMSC should ensure that the PCASP it employs receive and can demonstrate having received adequate and appropriate individual and collective training. Records of such training should be maintained and demonstrate that PCASP have the necessary operational capabilities as per section 5 of this document. PMSC should therefore be able to provide documentary evidence of the following:

- 1 comprehensive, detailed and auditable records of training, both initial and refresher;
- 2 that the team leader has verifiable familiarity of the ship type and the particular route envisaged and in maritime security and protection;

- 3 that personnel are trained and qualified to documented company standards in the appropriate use of force which include the command and control relationship between the PCASP and the master of the ship;
- 4 that personnel are trained and competent with the specific firearms, ammunition and other related security equipment deployed on the ship;
- 5 that PCASP personnel are given medical training to a recognized national or international standard;
- 6 that personnel are given appropriate training and/or briefing specific to the ship type, where that ship will be operating and what legal/practical implications that might have for their deployment, and in the provisions of the International Ship and Port Facility Security (ISPS) Code, International Safety Management (ISM) Code and BMP.

#### **Documentation requirements**

4.4 PMSC should have in place systems for the provision of security identity documentation, travel documents, visas and all relevant licences.

#### **5 Deployment considerations**

5.1 This section addresses the specific aspects of PCASP deployment and the role of PMSC in ensuring efficient and successful deployments, including communications with the shipowner or operator. The particulars of PCASP deployment will vary depending on the ship type and the details of its voyage. However, in order to demonstrate a minimum level of competence, PMSC should be able to fulfil the recommendations detailed below to the greatest extent necessary.

5.2 In addition to the usual features of a contractual agreement, the contract between the shipping company and the PMSC should cover the agreements reached as a result of deployment considerations, as listed but not limited to those identified below:

5.3 Applicable national laws and regulations (e.g. flag State, port State and coastal State) on the transport, carriage, storage, embarkation, disembarkation, or use of PCSAP and firearms and security-related equipment will need to be considered and reflected in operational practice on a case-by-case basis.

#### **Best Management Practices**

5.4 Experience supported by data collected by naval forces shows that the application of the recommendations contained in the latest version of the BMP can make a significant difference in preventing a ship falling victim to piracy or armed robbery against ships. It is recommended that BMP be applied throughout the HRA and in the Internationally Recommended Transit Corridor (IRTC) and be considered as the first, minimum, preventative option. An armed team should only be seen as a supplement to full BMP implementation and in no way replaces the need for BMP to be implemented.

#### **PCASP team size, composition and equipment**

5.5 The size, composition and equipment of the PCASP team should be discussed and agreed between the shipowner/ship operator and contracting PMSC. PMSC should have policies and procedures to determine the size, composition and equipment of the PCASP team, taking into account, but not limited to:

- 1 an assessment of the ship's security needs including factors such as the estimated duration of the ship transit, the size and type of ship, its speed and freeboard, the owner's risk assessment, and the agreed duties of the team. The analysis should indicate the minimum number of persons that should form the security team, taking into account the need for continuity of protection in the event of injury and illness;
- 2 ensuring a clear hierarchy and an appropriate skill/experience mix within the PCASP team. The team leader should be competent in ship vulnerability and risk assessments, and be able to advise on ship protection measures. It is recommended that at least one team member be qualified as team medic;
- 3 ensuring that the PCASP is provided with suitable equipment, taking into account the voyage risk assessment and discussions between shipowner and PMSC;
- 4 ensuring the provision of appropriate firearms and capability to be employed in accordance with the applicable flag State requirements pertaining to the type, carriage and use of firearms by PCASP. The choice of firearms should be linked to the agreed need and the rules on the use of force as agreed between the shipowner, PMSC and master;
- 5 given the possibility of serious injury, ensuring the provision of enhanced medical equipment on board capable of managing gunshot wounds. Consideration should be given to the lack of availability of regional medical assistance; and
- 6 ensuring that PCASP are equipped with suitable recording equipment (e.g. video cameras/digital dictaphones) to record and preserve evidence in the event of use of force, as practicable.

#### **Command and control**

5.6 PMSC should have a policy and procedures governing the command and control of PCASP on board a ship, and ensure that the PCASP is fully aware of them. In particular the policy and procedures should contain:

- 1 a clear statement recognizing that at all times the master remains in command and is the overriding authority on board, and an agreed procedure in the event of the master being unavailable;
- 2 a clearly documented set of ship and voyage-specific governance procedures, inter alia, covering procedures for the conduct of exercises and real incidents;
- 3 a list of duties, expected conduct, behaviour and documentation of PCASP team actions on board; and
- 4 a transparent two-way information flow and recognizable coordination and cooperation between the shipowner, charterer, PCASP, PMSC and the ship's master, officers and crew throughout deployment.

5.7 Such a command and control policy and procedures could include, but are not limited to PMSC:

- 1 provision of regular updated intelligence-based threat assessments throughout the contracted period on board, and use of this information to suggest, for example, amendments to the proposed route;

- 2 monitoring of the daily activities of the onboard PCASP team;
- 3 having a 24-hour emergency response and contingency plan in place covering all foreseeable actions; and
- 4 head office provision of feedback on crew training and ship hardening requirements based on reports received from their onboard team.

#### **Category assigned to PCASP**

5.8 Shipowners/operators should refer to any applicable national requirements of the flag State in relation to the category assigned to PCASP on board their ships. PMSC should ensure they understand this in relation to their contracts and equally ensure PCASP understand the implications of the categorization.

#### **Management of firearms and ammunition from embarkation to disembarkation**

5.9 PMSC should ensure that the PCASP team manages firearms and ammunition responsibly at all times.

5.10 PMSC should be able to demonstrate that they have given full consideration to, and undertaken the following with due reference to MSC.1/Circ.1408/Rev.1:

- 1 documented compliance with the applicable flag, coastal and port State legislation governing the provision, transport, carriage, storage and use of firearms and ammunition and security equipment from embarkation to disembarkation including ports at which the ship may call whilst the PCASP team is on board. PCASP should be able to prove that the actual inventory carried corresponds with all documented declarations including compliance with any applicable export/import licences;
- 2 the provision of appropriate containers for firearms, ammunition and security equipment at the point of transfer to and from the ship, in full legal compliance with national jurisdiction and port State laws;
- 3 documented standards and procedures for a complete inventory of all firearms, ammunition and security equipment available upon arrival on board the ship (inventory should detail make, model, calibre, serial number and company end-user certificate and proof of purchase of all firearms and accessories; and details of ammunition natures and amount);
- 4 effective control procedures for separate and secure onboard stowage and deployment of firearms, ammunition and security equipment;
- 5 clearly defined and agreed areas on board where firearms may or may not be carried, together with agreed protocols about the state of weapon readiness (for example unloaded and magazine off, magazine on and weapon "made safe" states) and what conditions would initiate a change in that state;
- 6 detailed and exercised orders governing the conditions under which firearms may be loaded and made ready for use should be explicit in the PCASP contract to ensure the highest level of safety and to optimize operational efficiency in the event of an incident requiring use of firearms on board the ship;

- 7 the provision of safe areas ("loading bays") for the loading/unloading of weapons;
- 8 a detailed policy for the accounting for of all ammunition at the time of embarkation and disembarkation from each transit, which should include a reconciliation of the inventory of both firearms and ammunition on embarkation and disembarkation;
- 9 a detailed policy and procedures for the zeroing of weapons to the individuals that will carry and possibly be required to use them throughout the transit of the HRA; and
- 10 a detailed policy and procedures for the routine maintenance of PCASP firearms and a programme for the formal inspection and servicing of weapons by a qualified armourer at least annually

#### **Shipboard familiarization**

5.11 PMSC should request assurances from the shipowner that the master and crew have received familiarization with the role of the onboard PCASP security team. Exercising of the crew with the PCASP should occur during the ships voyage, prior to entering the HRA, to ensure that all involved understand their roles in completing counter piracy preventive measures and what is expected of them during an incident when the PCASP is deployed and takes action against a pirate attack of the ship.

5.12 PMSC should ensure, in consultation with the shipowner and master (subject to any additional requirements of the flag State), that the onboard team have received, as a minimum, shipboard familiarization training including life-saving, safety and fire-fighting requirements and communication protocols.

#### **Use of force**

5.13 PMSC should recognize that laws governing the use of force may differ over time and according to location. The applicable national law, including any criminal laws, for an incident on a ship from which PCASP will be operating will be principally that of the flag State. It may also include the laws and regulations of coastal, port and other States (see 1.1 and 3.3). The location of an incident and/or the nationalities of the ship, the companies and the individuals involved, including of the PMSC, the PCASP and others, will affect the determination of applicable law.

5.14 PMSC should have a clear policy and guidance on the use of force (see 3.8), and should have issued specific rules to PCASP operating for them on the use of force consistent with this guidance (rules on the use of force). These rules should reflect applicable law. The rules should be routinely reviewed and if necessary adjusted.

5.15 PMSC should ensure that PCASP operating for them have a complete understanding of, and fully comply with, the applicable laws governing the use of force. In particular, it should ensure that PCASP understand that:

- 1 they should act according to these applicable laws in the knowledge that their role in regard to the above is exclusively for the protection of life of persons on board and the ship from armed pirate attacks;
- 2 all reasonable steps should be taken to avoid the use of force and, if force is used, that force should be used as part of a graduated response plan, in particular

including the strict implementation of the latest version of BMP;

- 3 the use of force should not exceed what is strictly necessary and reasonable in the circumstances and that care should be taken to minimize damage and injury and to respect and preserve human life; and
- 4 PCASP should only use firearms against persons in self-defence or in defence of others.

5.16 An agreed plan of gradual response for use of force, including warning procedures, should be documented, and signed prior to embarkation by all relevant parties, including the shipowner, the master of the ship and the PMSC. The plan should include a description of the roles of the Master and the PCASP team leader.

5.17 PMSC, in consultation with the shipowner, should ensure that:

- 1 both the master and the PCASP team have had the rules for the use of force explained to them;
- 2 the master and the PCASP team understand and agree the conditions governing when and how the decision to invoke the rules for the use of force is made, and by whom; and
- 3 the master and the PCASP team sign an undertaking that they have read and understood the rules for the use of force.

### Reporting and record-keeping

5.18 PMSC should ensure that the PCASP team leader maintains a log recording every incident in which firearms are deployed, to be acknowledged by the master. Such incidents should be documented in detail in the form of a piracy report. A record should also be made of every instance when a weapon is discharged for any reason other than in self-defence, for example, training, accidental discharge.

5.19 PMSC should ensure that a formal written report of each incident involving the use of force, to be forwarded to the shipowner/ship operator, is made by the PCASP team leader and acknowledged by the master. This report may include:

- 1 time and location of the incident;
- 2 details of events leading up to the incident;
- 3 written statements by those involved in the incident from the PCASP team;
- 4 injuries and/or material damage sustained;
- 5 lessons learned from the incident and, where applicable, recommended procedures to prevent recurrence; and
- 6 documentation of any tests, including drug or alcohol tests, taken during the investigation of the incident.

5.20 The written report referenced in 5.19 may be accompanied by any available video footage or photography.

## Outstanding Achiever of the Decade Honour to Dr. K. Thiagarajan



Internationally renowned Population Expert and Founder of United Writers' Association Chennai, Chevalier Dr. K. Thiagarajan has been selected for the conferment of OUTSTANDING ACHIEVER OF THE DECADE AWARD and Gold Medal by Human Resources Development Academy And Bharatiya Samaj Vikas Academy, Mumbai. The Award will be presented during the Gunijan Samarashtra Sammelan on 7th January, 2013 at Mumbai. The insignia accompanying the Award eulogises that Dr.Thiagarajan has been selected among/The Community Leader category for his rich repertoire of persuasive excellence and sheer acumen in deliberating invaluable Seminars on topical interests, his audience appeal, his innovating Skill in designing and enrichment of several educational programs including propagation of Education for tribal boys and girls, his grit in internalizing the intrinsic ability to Forge endless alliance with people for a common cause always spelt extraordinary elegance.

Dr. Thiagarajan often avers the more creative the work the writer deploys and the more Whole- somely it is pursued together coalescing with intrepid vigour, the deeper, merrier and Happier the relationship that ultimately emerges. Indeed Dr. Thiagarajan's impeccable Ravishing enduring style depicted in tune with the character characteristic with the ennobling themes he conceptualizes, always exuded immense resilience placing primacy to adherence To innovation and truth standing supremely for the righteous cause. As creativity is an Important skill for a writer ,nothing is more gratifying for a writer to always "invest in the ability to think independently, create an enlightened vision for yourself and work tangibly in achieving the same" he often quibs. Several prestigious Universities including Cornell, Michigan, Illinois, Hawaii, Texas, Pennsylvania, Tokyo and other academic organizations in Hungary, Nepal, Norway, Austria, Bulgaria, Sweden, Philadelphia, Belgium, Ireland, Poland, Brazil have conferred several Academic accolades and honours to Dr. Thiagarajan for his enrichment and seemingly embarking and sensitizing schemes for the marginalized poor, which has been amply evidenced in his innumerable writings and which perhaps explains his ubiquitous literary contributions devoted to literature and arts where there is a noticeable vacuum of enthusiasm and enlightened encouragement.

A social scientist and unconventional educator of amazing ability with the Midas Touch, Dr.Thiagarajan's success story can be summed up in Mahatma Gandhi's golden rhetoric words:"A small body of determined spirits fired by an unquenchable faith in their mission can alter the course of History." Currently he is piloting an intensive comparative study on competitiveness and economic Development of nations and the application of competitive principles to myriad social problems Such as equitable and sustainable socio-economic development, judicious use of natural resources, cultural diversity, health care, conservation of environment and corporate responsibility.

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