

INTERNATIONAL

Call for overhaul of maritime state aid guidelines

NAUTILUS AT WORK

Declining levels of trust reported between ship and shore

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Safety implications due to commercial pressures

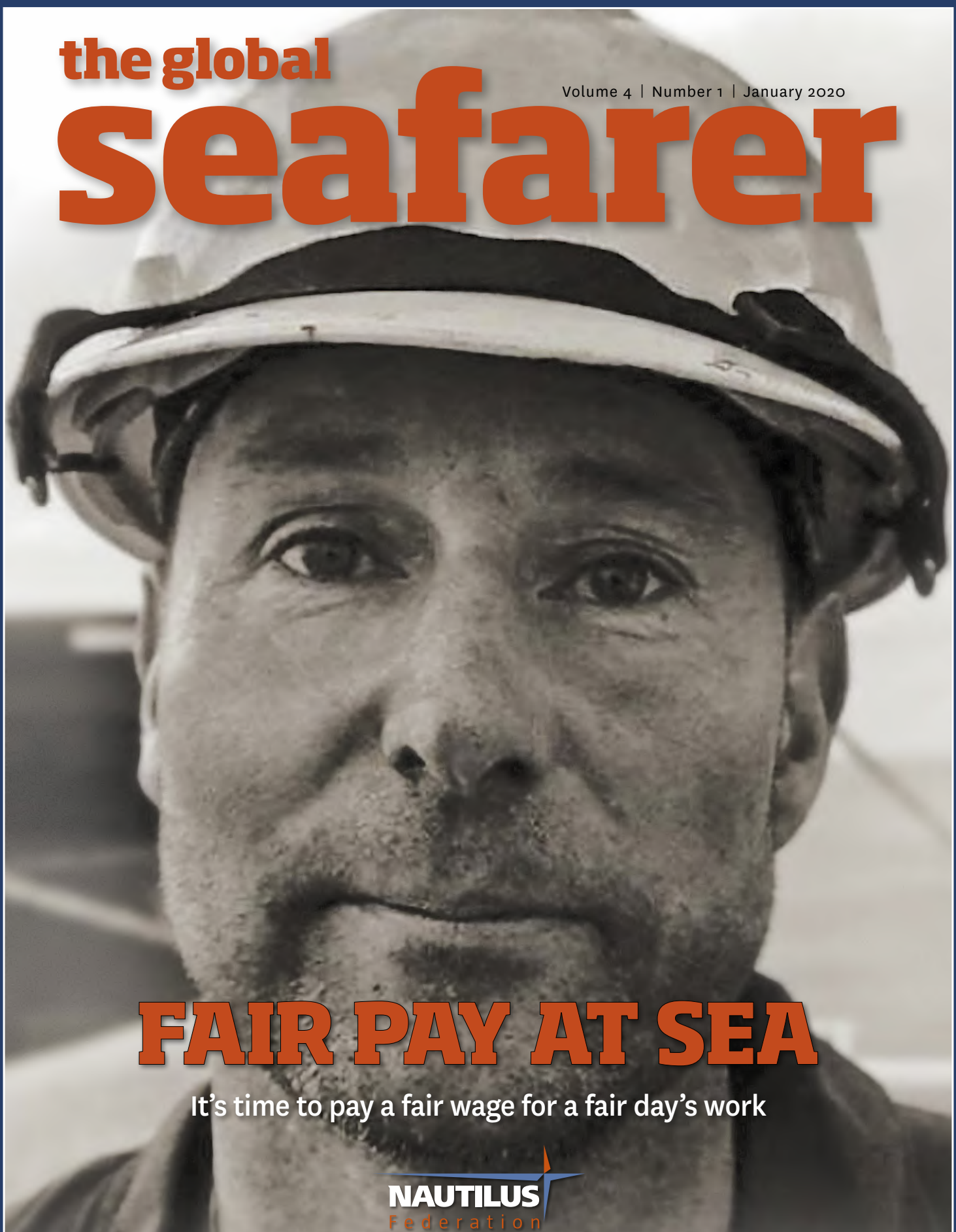
INDUSTRY

New polar safety guidelines welcomed

the global

Volume 4 | Number 1 | January 2020

seafarer



FAIR PAY AT SEA

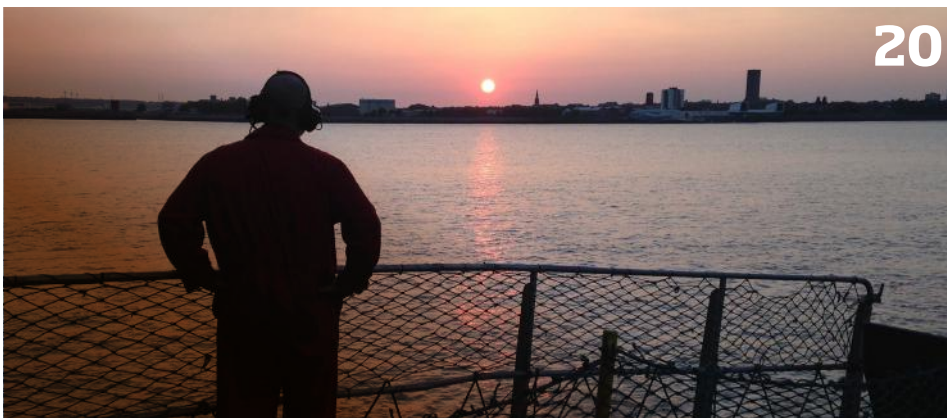
It's time to pay a fair wage for a fair day's work



A Federation of Maritime Professionals

the global seafarer

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Watchkeeper error blamed for Ulysse and CSL Virginia collision



The ro-ro Ulysse struck the containership CSL Virginia off the coast of Corsica in October 2018. Image: Préfecture Maritime de la Méditerranée

Officers using their mobile phones while on watch have been blamed for an incident in which a ferry crashed into an anchored containership in the Mediterranean, an investigation has ruled.

The Tunisian-flagged ro-ro Ulysse struck the 54,592gt containership CSL Virginia amidships while sailing at 19 knots off the coast of Corsica during a regular voyage between Genoa and Tunis in October last year.

A major clean-up operation had to be mounted to deal with spilled fuel oil and it took five days to separate the two ships.

A report published in July by the French investigation body BEAMer says accumulated fatigue and family and personal worries experienced by the ferry's watchkeeper may also have been a factor in the accident.

Investigators found that the officer – who was alone on the bridge at the time – had been seated in a chair with limited visibility ahead. He had been 'kept busy with personal communication' on his mobile phone before going to the chart table – behind closed curtains – to fill in the logbook and plot a point on the chart only seven minutes before the collision.

The investigation also revealed that one of the two pairs of binoculars on the ferry's bridge were defective and the ship's X-band radar was out of use.

CSL Virginia had its deck lights lit and had been detected by the ferry's radar more than an hour before the accident, the report notes.

The ferry's watchkeeping officer had failed to carry out any visual or radar assessment before allowing a lookout to go below to carry out safety checks, it adds. Although he had spotted CSL Virginia on the ECDIS, he had assumed the other ship was crossing ahead and was not a danger.

BEAMer said it had not ruled out the 'very plausible' explanation that the officer had fallen asleep, even though he testified that he was awake when the collision occurred.

Investigators said the officer had been serving onboard the ferry for five months at the time of the accident. 'Considering the pace onboard ferries, and the lack of information about his paid-off date, family tensions could have led him to complacency and cause a lack of involvement in his function during watch,' the report notes.

CSL Virginia's radar had been set with a

one nautical mile guard zone. But because it was on standby at the time, no warning had been sounded.

Investigations revealed during its 13 days at anchor, the vessel had experienced several close-quarters situations, with a number of ships passing it at less than 0.3nm. However, the report points out, these potentially dangerous situations had not been noticed by its master.

The report says CSL Virginia's lookout was 'inappropriate' for the traffic conditions in the 'unwise' anchoring area, and its master had also been on a personal mobile phone call less than a quarter of an hour before the collision.

BEAMer criticised the poor safety culture within the Tunisian ferry company, but said the collision was the direct consequence of human error. 'A boredom factor, related to the length of sea-going periods, has certainly had an effect on the involvement of the officers of the watch onboard both vessels,' the report concludes. 'Onboard both vessels, the use of mobile phone for personal concerns took precedence over the officer of the watch duties, leading to a lack of surface situation monitoring.' **i**

Liquefaction led to missing bulk carrier and loss of 25 crew

Intercargo has urged 'shipowners, operators and seafarers to exercise extreme caution' when loading nickel ore and other cargoes known to liquefy, after its bulk carrier Nur Allya went missing in August with 25 crew onboard.

The 52,400dwt Nur Allya, owned by Jakarta-based Gurita Lintas Samudera, was en route to Southeast Sulawesi when it sent a distress call while passing northern Buru Island on 20 August.

The official air and sea search and rescue operation for the 2002-built vessel, which is understood to be carrying nickel ore, was called off on 11 September with the discovery of just a life raft, a lifebuoy and an oil slick.

In a press release on 29 August, while the search was still underway, Intercargo acknowledged that 'the cause of the potential casualty is not known', before going on to say: 'Moisture related cargo shifting and incidents on voyage, widely known as liquefaction, continue to be a major concern for dry bulk shipping, as our Association has highlighted in earlier notes this year.'

The release expressed frustration at the 'lack of consolidated efforts and commitment from all stakeholders' to 'eliminate the problem and safeguard the lives of innocent seafarers'

According to DNV GL, the sheer strength of liquefaction means cargo such as nickel ore



An Intercargo bulk carrier casualty report in April 2019 highlighted the ever-present threat of cargo liquefaction. Image: Getty Images

behaves like a 'viscous fluid'. If liquefied cargo slopes toward the side of the cargo hold in synchronisation with the roll motion of the ship, it may develop a severe list and capsize abruptly.

Intercargo highlighted the threat of liquefaction in its latest report. Data showed 101 of the 188 lives (53.7%) lost on bulk carriers above 10,000dwt between 2009 and 2018 were down to cases of cargo liquefaction. The deaths occurred on nine different ships – six carrying nickel ore from Indonesia, two with laterite (clay) iron ore from India and one with bauxite from Malaysia. **i**

Alcohol main factor in fatal accidents

Alcohol continued to be the leading known contributing factor in fatal boating accidents in the US in 2018, according to a new US Coast Guard report.

Published in August, the 2018 Recreational Boating Statistics Report said that alcohol was a factor in 100 deaths, or 19% of total fatalities.

Operator inattention and inexperience, improper lookout, machinery failure and excessive speed ranked as the top five primary contributing factors in accidents.

The report also revealed that the Coast Guard counted 4,145 boating accidents in 2018 that involved 633 fatalities, a decrease of 3.8% from 2017. Reported recreational boating injuries also fell compared to 2017, from 2,629 to 2,511.

The fatality rate was 5.3 deaths per 100,000 registered recreational vessels, representing a

3.6% decrease from the previous year's fatality rate of 5.5 deaths per 100,000 registered recreational vessels.

Where the cause of death was known, 77% of fatal boating accident victims drowned. Of those drowning victims with reported lifejacket usage, 84% were not wearing a lifejacket.

The report highlights that while the falling statistics are good news, a few obvious yet all too often ignored safe boating habits could reduce the number of incidents even further.

'While these decreases are encouraging, there are still too many deaths and injuries that could be avoided through the use of lifejackets and eliminating alcohol consumption while operating a boat,' said Captain Scott Johnson, chief of the Office of Auxiliary and Boating Safety at Coast Guard Headquarters. **i**

In brief

MM&P safety study

The International Organization of Masters, Mates & Pilots, in conjunction with Dalhousie University of Halifax, Nova Scotia, has conducted a study on the complex issues underlying the topic of responsibility for shipboard safety. The study describes the maritime safety regulatory regime; a number of high-profile international maritime accidents; and commercial pressures on front line personnel (ship's officers and crew), safety inspectors and management.

Diving boat fatalities

At least 25 people died in a fire onboard a 75-foot commercial diving boat, the Conception, which was anchored off the coast of California's Santa Cruz Island. There were 39 people aboard the boat, including a six-person crew and 33 guests who had embarked on a Labor Day dive trip to Channel Islands National Park off the coast of Southern California. Five members of the crew escaped in an inflatable boat and were rescued by a nearby vessel. The bodies of 25 people have been recovered or identified, the US Coast Guard said.

Hurricane Dorian relief

The Captain Richard Phillips Lane Kirkland Trust is taking donations to help support the Hurricane Dorian relief efforts. Contributions are tax deductible for US citizens and will be used to assist students affected by this monster storm. The Phillips Trust will also be taking a portion of proceeds from upcoming events to help with support. Donations can be made via the Phillips Trust website.

Four rescued from car carrier

The US Coast Guard (USCG) rescued four trapped crew members from a capsized car carrier off the coast of Georgia on 9 September, more than a day after the vessel had overturned. Traffic at Port of Brunswick was suspended as authorities raced to rescue the crew and a pilot from Hyundai's Golden Ray, which was listing heavily and had caught fire in nearby St Simons Sound as it left for Baltimore.

In brief

Cruise crew unhappiest

Seafarers working on cruise ships and ferries are among the unhappiest in the world, according to the latest Seafarers Happiness Index by the Mission to Seafarers. Crew were upset by delayed wages, less shore leave, workload stress caused by smaller crews and a lack of understanding from shore staff about seafarer welfare. Abandonment fears continue to grow, with many seafarers expressing a sense of vulnerability following several recent incidents around the globe including reports of aggression, violence and bullying against female seafarers.

Loneliness risks

A new study has urged cargo shipping companies to provide greater support to seafarers to help prevent anxiety and depression. The Cardiff University research found that long working hours, isolation and extended periods away from home put seafarers at risk of poor mental health. Employers should provide self-help guidance on improving mental resilience and contracts that balance work and leave time, introduce anti-bullying and harassment policies, train officers to create a positive onboard atmosphere and set up confidential counselling services, the study says.

Safer sea rescues

France's National Society for Rescue at Sea (SNSM) has been told to improve communications between management and its centres and boost its internal democracy following the death of three volunteers during a rescue operation this summer. The volunteers died when rescue vessel Patron Jack Morisseau capsized off Sables d'Olonne on the western coast of France.

Nautilus backs funding plea for aid and training vessel

Nautilus is backing moves by British shipbuilder Cammell Laird to secure UK government funding for the Britannia Maritime Aid (BMA) charity via the International Aid budget.

Cammell Laird chief executive John Syvret wrote to UK maritime minister Nusrat Ghani to ask for government support.

Launched at the UK Chamber of Shipping during London International Shipping Week in September, BMA is a registered charity backed by Nautilus and put together by a group of maritime professionals and training experts.

BMA plans to build a £150m concept vessel that will deliver humanitarian aid and disaster relief, while simultaneously providing a dual role as a training platform for UK and Commonwealth cadets, apprentices and trainees. It would also deliver ocean advocacy programmes, including marine clean-up and research.

Following design approval and fundraising, the vessel would take four to five years to build and would be based full-time in Barbados.

Meanwhile, BMA is considering an interim vessel, bought second-hand and refitted for purpose. Funding is planned as a mixture of crowdfunding and government support. The charity believes that the project fits with the UK

government's Maritime 2050 strategy.

The project had a letter of support from the then Secretary of State for International Development Penny Mordaunt earlier this year.

Cammell Laird says the vessel will prove 'excellent value for the UK taxpayer, compared with the cost of maintaining a Royal Navy asset on disaster relief duties. 'If the ship could be financed through the International Aid budget (providing much needed aid in kind rather than cash) then it would effectively be cost-neutral.'

The first-of-its-kind disaster relief and training ship will have a training centre, landing craft, helicopter drones, rough terrain vehicles, onboard medical facilities, briefing rooms, and full mission bridge and engine room simulators for trainees.

An armoured beach recovery vehicle and onboard workboat will allow for beach surveys and clean up – even where harbours are damaged and inaccessible to other vessels. Cadets will be deployed to assist in the clean-up, providing practical experience to supplement college education. The ship will have capacity for up to 6,000 tonnes of vehicles and aid supplies including field hospitals, field kitchens, tents, fresh water and fuel for devastated areas. **i**

Unions call for action on piracy

Nautilus has added its voice to calls by unions for urgent global and regional cooperation by governments and shipping companies to fight piracy off the coast of west Africa.

An attack on two vessels in the Gulf of Guinea – a designated International Bargaining Forum 'high risk area' – in early November led the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) to issue the call for action.

On 2 November, pirates kidnapped nine crew members from Norwegian-flagged MV Bonita while the vessel was at anchor off the coast of Benin in West Africa. Two days later, four crew members were taken hostage off the coast of Togo from Greek-flagged Elka Aristotle.

Several other abductions have been reported in the Gulf of Guinea in recent months, including eight crew taken off Cameroon in August, and 10 Turkish seafarers off the coast of Nigeria in July.

Nautilus general secretary Mark Dickinson said



▲ On 2 November pirates kidnapped nine crew members from Norwegian-flagged MV Bonita

unions were concerned at the mounting physical and mental health toll on seafarers while transiting West Africa. He urged members to call the Nautilus 24/7 helpline in case of emergency.

Members can also contact their Union industrial representative in business hours while ashore and by logging into My Nautilus.

ITF seafarers' section chair David Heindel called on the shipping industry, governments and unions to work collaboratively to eliminate piracy in the Gulf of Guinea. **i**



▲ Leda Maersk: The investigation concluded the harbour pilot and bridge team was 'primarily navigating using visual cues outside the ship, rather than fully using the electronic navigation aids

Maersk safety review urged after grounding

Maersk Line should review navigational and pilotage safety across its fleet following an accident last year in which one of its vessels ran aground while entering a port in New Zealand.

An investigation found that neither the Otago harbour pilot nor the ship's bridge team had recognised that the 50,688gt vessel had deviated from its planned track as it rounded the final bend in the channel before its berth.

'This was because they were all primarily navigating using visual cues outside the ship, rather than fully using the electronic navigation aids, all of which clearly showed the ship deviating from the centre of the channel,' the NZ Transport Accident Investigation Commission (TAIC) report concludes.

'The grounding is an example of why it is not appropriate to use visual navigation alone when manoeuvring large ships in narrow channels, and in the dark,' it adds. 'With so little margin for error, it would have been appropriate to utilise fully the accuracy of electronic navigation aids such as portable pilot units (PPUs) and ECDIS. Had the pilot done so, the ship's departure from the intended track would have been readily apparent in time to avoid the grounding.'

Investigators said the pilot had stopped using his PPU when he realised it was showing the ship to be off-track because there was an 18m offset to allow for the position of unit's aerial in relation to the vessel's centreline.

An ECDIS off-track alert had been activated before the grounding, and acknowledged by one of the bridge team, but the information had not been shared with the rest of the team.

'The fact that none of the bridge team was actively monitoring the progress of the ship on the electronic navigation equipment is indicative of their having relaxed when the pilot embarked and put too much faith in the pilot getting it right,' the report states.

TAIC said the Leda Maersk incident shared similarities with four reports it had published in the past five years involving groundings that were all due in part to poor standards of bridge resource management and pilots and bridge teams not sharing the same concepts of the passage plans.

Investigators discovered that the passage plan on the pilot's PPU was slightly different from that on the ship's ECDIS. Although this was not a factor in the grounding, the report stresses: 'If there is no agreed plan there is a danger that the pilot and the ship's crew will have differing mental concepts of how the pilotage will be performed.'

The report points to evidence that those on the bridge were not working as a team. 'The ship was at a critical phase of the agreed passage plan, yet none of the bridge team was totally aware of the factors influencing the track of the ship towards the left channel bank,' it adds. **i**

In brief

Tugs strike over safety

French unions staged a national 24-hour tug strike in October, to raise safety concerns over a towing company's proposal to reduce the number of officers on its tugs from four to three.

The CGT, CFDT and CFE-CGC unions acted after the towing company in the Mediterranean port of Sète, approached the maritime administration in September, requesting the green light to reduce onboard tug manpower.

The action resulted in major stoppages in Marseilles, Le Havre and Calais and other French ports.

Box ship firefighting

The International Union of Marine Insurance (IUMI) has fired a warning shot over box ship fire-fighting capabilities following an escalation in numbers of onboard fires.

It stressed the need for improvements in crew safety and the environment and said the mis- and non-declaration of cargo was aggravating the problem.

This year has already seen an alarming number of box ship fires including on the Yantian Express, APL Le Havre, APL Vancouver, the Grande America, E.R. Kobe and KMTC Hong Kong.

EMSA pollution response

As the Telegraph went to press, the European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA) was due to participate in a pollution response exercise in Malaga, Spain which would test the national maritime contingency plan and subsequent coordination among the local, regional, national and international organisations involved in pollution response.

The exercise would also provide an opportunity to assess the collective response capacity in the event of a large-scale oil spill in the Mediterranean, according to the agency.

In brief

Boxship slams tanker

Ocean Network Express containership ONE Blue Jay collided with moored oil/chemical tanker Gunece while entering the Greek port of Perama, near Piraeus, on 26 September. Gunece was badly damaged, with a crack in one of its ballast tanks, and two crew members were injured.

Zero carbon plan

A coalition of Pacific island nations are looking to raise \$500m to reduce carbon emissions from shipping in the region to zero by 2050. Led by the Marshall Islands, the Pacific Blue Shipping Partnership wants to retrofit existing passenger and cargo ferries with low-carbon technologies and buy new zero-emissions vessels.

Icebreaker eco expedition

The German icebreaker Polarstern has set sail for the central Arctic on a year-long, \$158m research expedition through the ice, to gain a better understanding of climate change. The vessel will act as the base for the Multidisciplinary drifting Observatory for the Study of Arctic Climate (MOSAIC).

CMA CGM's Arctic no-go

CMA CGM said use of the Arctic Northern Sea Route from Asia to Europe 'will represent a significant danger to unique ecosystems due to accidents, oil pollution or collisions with marine wildlife' and vowed not to use the route.

Floating nuclear plant

Russia's first floating nuclear power plant Akademik Lomonosov has left Murmansk on tow for its 4,700km voyage to the Arctic port of Pevek, where the 144m-long barge-type vessel will replace the town's nuclear and thermic power stations. It will produce energy for 100,000 people and local industry.

Safety takes back seat in competitive flag market

The International Organization of Masters, Mates & Pilots (MM&P) has published a study on shipboard safety, which focuses largely on the safety implications of the commercial pressures faced by the shipping industry worldwide.

Seafarers are 'pressured to keep quiet and keep the ship moving' by ship operators, who don't want to lose income while a ship is pulled out of service to be repaired.

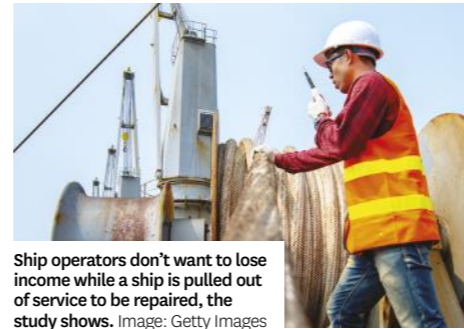
Competition wrought by the safety-light flag-of-convenience (FoC) system has increased commercial pressure on flag states, which may turn a blind eye to safety problems to attract and retain clients, the study found.

Ship's officers who bring safety issues to the attention of management are exposed to the risk of retaliation. As whistle-blowers they may face punishment, demotion or even termination.

Marine inspectors are often pressured by their superiors to 'look the other way'.

Onshore management discourages reporting to maintain immunity from personal liability.

These factors may have contributed to several fatal maritime accidents that involved significant



Ship operators don't want to lose income while a ship is pulled out of service to be repaired, the study shows. Image: Getty Images

loss of life or damage to the environment: the 2002 Prestige disaster; the sinking of the Russian riverboat Bulgaria in 2011; the Korean ferry Sewol in 2014 and the Stellar Daisy sinking in 2017.

The study proposes 'greater uniformity by flag and port states in implementation of international safety regulations, with strict enforcement by Port State Control, including the ability to look behind certificates of compliance issued by flag states or other inspection organisations.'

Spotlight: Why Accidents Are Often Not Accidental was written in conjunction with Dalhousie University of Halifax, Nova Scotia. **1**

CARGO SHIP BANNED FROM PARIS MOU

The Saint Kitts and Nevis-flagged general cargoship Sara has been banned from Paris MoU ports for three months after several 'serious violations', including insufficient food for the crew, were discovered.

The ship was detained in the north Italian Port of Monfalcone on 3 September, after the Paris MoU report found 20 violations, five of which were said to

be individual grounds for detention.

The violations relate to navigation safety, safety on board, seafarers' living and working conditions, and deficiencies in the overall safety management of the ship by the shipping company, Baku, and Azerbaijan based shipowner, manager and operator Sio Shipping. **1**

Unions back search and rescue

Nautilus is supporting the Seafarers' Union of Croatia, a sister union in the Nautilus Federation, and the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) in backing further search and rescue efforts for the missing master and crew of tug supply vessel Bourbon Rhode.

The families of the missing men have taken hope from a potential sighting of the crew.



Bourbon Rhode: chance that remaining seafarers could be found

'We cannot stop looking for them as long as there is hope that they can be saved,' the families said on their crowd funding page, which has been set up to collect funds to

continue the search.

The families have also created a Facebook group to collect information about the sunken ship and lost crew.

At the time of the incident, the Bourbon Rhode was 1,200nm off the coast of the island of Martinique and 60nm southeast of the eye of category 4 hurricane Lorenzo, when the master asked for help due to water ingress. **1**

Climate change goals challenge sounded for maritime industry

'All hands on deck' are needed to beat climate change and achieve international goals on peace and prosperity, former UN secretary-general Ban Ki-moon has told the International Maritime Organization (IMO).

The Paris Climate Change Agreement and the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are the two 'defining challenges of our time', Mr Ban told IMO member states, NGOs and IMO staff at IMO headquarters at the end of October.

The SDGs are a call for action by all countries – poor, rich and middle-income – to promote prosperity while protecting the planet.

Mr Ban highlighted the IMO's commitment to supporting the ocean goal SDG 14 – including its work to address marine plastic litter. Shipping itself is vital to world trade and development and the achievement of many SDGs. With 11 years to go to fulfil the goals set out in all 17 SDGs, 'we need an all hands on deck approach where everyone joins together in multi stakeholder



▲ Former UN secretary-general Ban Ki-moon tells the IMO it is at the 'vanguard of global efforts' Image: IMO

partnership,' stressed Mr Ban. 'Considering the great importance of the shipping industry for our economies and the environment, IMO truly represents the vanguard of global efforts to build a more prosperous and sustainable global future.'

Mr Ban also warned against rising unilateralism. 'In times of increasing discord, I believe that achieving the UN SDGs and meeting the Paris Climate Change Agreement are two efforts that should unite all nations, all industry and all civil society,' he said.

Mr Ban lauded IMO's work on climate change, including the adoption of the initial IMO GHG strategy, as well as its work on capacity building, to promote a safer, more secure and more environment-friendly shipping industry, and focus on empowering women in maritime.

'Taking stock of the current realities of global development and climate change, I believe IMO and shipping industry are well positioned to help navigate us toward safer harbours,' said Mr Ban. **1**

Union welcomes new polar safety guidelines

Additional guidelines for polar shipping have been welcomed by Nautilus International.

The new joint guidelines, known as the Polar Water Operation Manual (PWOM) are from the International Chamber of Shipping (ICS) and the Oil Companies International Marine Forum (OCIMF). The manual aims to support masters and shipping companies to develop a PWOM that best suits the needs of their individual ships, environmental hazards and nature of operations.

The additional International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (STCW) training requirements under the Polar Code are the internationally agreed minimum standard to allow seafarers to work in polar regions.

Nautilus professional and technical officer David Appleton said: 'Companies that are experienced in



The new guidelines aim to help shipping companies meet the Polar Code Image: Getty

operating in these areas have well-established systems to ensure that their seafarers are appropriately qualified above and beyond the minimum requirements, and any guidance that can assist other companies to reach the same standard is welcome.'

In the UK the Merchant Navy Training Board has also developed Polar Code training course criteria which ensures that UK seafarers are able to gain the required certificates to continue working in these areas. **1**

In brief

Ocean Cleanup

A Dutch NGO that develops technology to extract plastic pollution from the oceans is ploughing ahead with the latest stage of its successful garbage collection scheme. Ocean Cleanup has been used to collect rubbish from the Great Pacific Garbage Patch, the largest of five accumulation zones of plastic in the world's oceans.

India bans plastic

India is the first country in the world to ban single-use plastics on all ships in its waters. The ban will take effect in two stages – the first effective immediately and the second on 1 January 2020. Items prohibited include cutlery, plates, cups, and drinking water bottles.

Weather data

More data collected by ships at sea will help improve extreme weather forecasts and benefit mariners. The World Meteorological Organisation and IMO highlighted the need to close the gap between met-ocean providers and users of this information in the maritime industry.

Go slow no go for IMO

IMO member states have rejected proposals for speed reduction regulation to reduce carbon emissions and opted for a goal-based approach. However, no details on what these might be have yet emerged. The next Marine Environment Protection Committee will meet from 23-27 March 2020.

In brief

EU ship recycling list

The European Commission (EC) has added a further eight shipyards to its list of facilities suitable for the dismantling of EU-flagged vessels. Five of the new yards are in Norway, two in Denmark and one in Turkey. Norway and Denmark have notified their agreement to the EC, while the non-EU yard applied to join the list and demonstrated that it fulfils the strict requirements for inclusion. The latest European list of ship recycling facilities currently contains 34 yards, representing a total available annual recycling capacity of nearly 2.4MT.



France ready for 'no-deal'

France is ready for a no-deal Brexit after spot tests of lorries at Brittany Ferries' Portsmouth and Caen-Ouistreham ferry terminals, said French Economy and Finance minister Gérard Darmanin. The Brexit dress rehearsal by French officials of new customs checks on lorries arriving in France were successful, he said. French authorities have set up a 'smart border' with cameras to scan the licence plates of lorries heading to Britain and link them to shipping documents filled out online.

DFDS and Moby 'swap deal'

Danish operator DFDS and Italian ferry operator Moby Lines, in a rare event for the ferry sector, are to swap two vessels. DFDS will acquire Moby Line's Moby Aki and Moby Wonder fast ferries built in 2005 and 2001. The vessels will be delivered in October 2019 and undergo refurbishing and renaming. Moby will acquire DFDS's King Seaways and Princess Seaways, built in 1986 and 1997. The bareboat-chartered ro-pax vessels will operate on the Newcastle-Umuiden line from January 2020.

REGULATION

ETF calls for maritime state aid overhaul

The European Transport Workers' Federation (ETF) and the International Transport Forum have called on the European Commission to revise EU state aid guidelines for maritime transport to make them more transparent and effective in job creation, reflagging, and training and education for European-domiciled seafarers.

A joint ETF/ITF report found limited evidence that maritime subsidies achieve their stated aims, for example in defending domestic ship registers and seafarer employment.

'Reorientation of maritime subsidy policies could improve outcomes and halt a race to the bottom between subsidy regimes,' the report found. 'Global convergence of reforms would be the ideal for ensuring a level playing field for competing flags but incremental improvements could be achieved and subsidies would be more effective if their objectives were clarified and they were made conditional on positive impacts, e.g. on decarbonisation and employment.' The most economically distorting schemes should be prioritised for reform.

'Analysis confirms what workers and their unions have long suspected: maritime subsidies are failing to achieve their desired objectives,' ETF acting general secretary Livia Spera said.

EQUALITY

DENMARK DIVERSITY DRIVE

Denmark is looking to recruit more women into its shipping sector with the launch of a new campaign called Girl Power in September.

World Careers, the joint recruitment drive of Danish maritime cluster Blue Denmark, launched the campaign to increase numbers of women in the industry. Only 3% of Danish seafarers are women, with the gender bias also noticeable on shore.

'There is a sea of opportunities,' World Careers campaign manager Anne Bay Riisager said.

The campaign's website features interviews with women in the sector, talking about why they chose a maritime career, news of upcoming Blue Denmark events, a jobs portal offering information on the latest vacancies and



ETF acting general secretary Livia Spera said maritime subsidies are failing to achieve their desired objectives

'Unless this system is totally reformed, European shipping will need financial support,' International Transport Workers' Federation general secretary Stephen Cotton said. 'The question for maritime subsidies in European shipping is not an "if" but "how". Europe must support the sector but in a different and more efficient way to actively support job creation and training for European domiciled seafarers.'

Nautilus deputy general secretary Marcel van den Broek said: 'Fiscal support measures are desperately needed in order not to lose the battle with open registers. In many cases, these subsidies can be used differently and better.'

'This is certainly the case in Europe when it comes to safeguarding maritime jobs for Europeans and thus preserving maritime knowledge in Europe.' **i**



Inspiring young women to choose a career in maritime

Image: World Careers' Girl Power website

recruitment videos on World Careers TV.

'The fight for young people requires a continuous presence to make them look towards maritime,' Miss Riisager said. **i**

POLITICS

ITF SLAMS US PLANS TO DENY VISAS TO CREW ON VESSELS CARRYING IRANIAN OIL

The International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) has criticised the US government's decision to deny seafarers a US visa if they work onboard a vessel carrying Iranian oil.

It is unfair to expect seafarers 'to have any influence over the destination of a vessel or its cargo', ITF seafarers' section chair David Heindel said. Mr Heindel expressed 'serious concern' over the lack of understanding shown by many governments in relation to international shipping and the role played by seafarers.

The ITF's comments came in response to a statement by the US State Department to the maritime industry in August, invoking anti-terrorism legislation to deny seafarers a US visa.

Seafarers' lives have been put at risk in recent months following a ratcheting up of political tensions in the Strait of Hormuz. Attacks have been made on several commercial vessels including an attempted hijacking of the BP tanker British Heritage by the IRG.

'Seafarers, whether officers or ratings, rarely know where the vessel is bound,' Mr Heindel



ITF seafarers' section chair David Heindel Image: ITF said. 'If a vessel is directed to an Iranian port, it's common that the captain will be the only one who knows the destination a day or two before.'

'The crew, especially ratings and lower-ranking officers, will not know and have no possibility to refuse or disembark the vessel during the voyage.'

'Seafarers usually have no idea who actually owns the vessel on which they are working, much less who owns the cargo.' **i**

MSC makes EU's Top 10 carbon polluters list

Swiss-Italian-owned global container shipping operator Mediterranean Shipping Company has joined coal plants and Ryanair on the EU's list of top 10 carbon emitters, according to official emissions data.

The MSC fleet was responsible for about 11 million tonnes of CO₂ emissions in 2018, according to the European Federation for Transport and Environment, commonly referred to as Transport & Environment (T&E).

The data shows that MSC would be the eighth biggest emitter in the bloc if shipping was part of the EU's emissions trading system. The airline Ryanair was tenth on the list. The rest are all German coal plants except number one, which is the Elektrownia Bełchatów plant in Poland.

According to T&E: 'Ships sailing to and from Europe emitted more than 139 million tonnes

of CO₂ last year – meaning that if shipping were a country it would be the EU's 8th biggest emitter after the Netherlands.'

'Shipping is the only sector with no measures to reduce its emissions in the bloc and yet it does not pay for its carbon pollution.'

'Meanwhile, the maritime sector is exempt under EU law from paying tax on its fuel, an effective subsidy worth €24 billion a year.'

T&E is a European umbrella for NGOs working in the field of transport and the environment, promoting sustainable transport in Europe.

It currently has 60 national member and supporter organisations in 25 countries, including the UK's Transform Scotland, the Environmental Transport Association and the Campaign for Better Transport. **i**

In brief



Unions back migrant rescue

French maritime unions have expressed support for Corsica Linea's action in saving 18 migrants in danger of their lives on a craft that had been without power for several days. Its Méditerranée ferry deviated from its regular route between Algiers and Marseilles in the night-time rescue operation. Crew gave medical treatment to the rescued migrants and ensured they were fed and could rest before landing them the following day at Alcedia, Majorca.

Top accolade

Captain George A. Quick, an international expert on maritime law, regulations and policy, is the recipient of the 2019 Safety at Sea Lifetime Achievement Award. The Award honours individuals who, over the course of their careers, have shown leadership in their area of expertise and made profound contributions to crew wellbeing and safe ship operations. Captain Quick is vice-president of the Pilot Membership Group of the International Organization of Masters, Mates & Pilots (MM&P).

US Coast Guard backlog

The US Coast Guard is recommending mariners submit applications for merchant mariner credentials and medical certificate extensions at least two months prior to the expiration date due to long backlogs in processing caused by the government shutdown at the beginning of the year.

In brief

Ferry action compo

The highest court in France has awarded shipping company La Méditerranée €1.73m in compensation for loss of income, after its cargo ship Kalliste was blockaded in Marseille for nine days by 100 striking ferry seafarers. The French government was found responsible for the blockade by workers of struggling ferry company SNCM because it had approved a lower court's decision to use force to prevent access to the ship and to move on the protesters. In the end, force was not used, and the blockade ended peacefully.

French pensions fears

FNAPMM, France's national federation of Merchant Navy pensioners' associations, said the 0.3% increase in retired seafarers' pensions due on 1 January 2020 is not nearly enough. The Federation said that the rise 'far from compensates for losses in retirees' pensions' purchasing power', especially for lower grades and widows, the latter often receiving pensions that are under the legal minimum.

Contract dumping strike

Italian maritime unions FILT CGIL and Uiltrasporti staged a second 24-hour strike against ferry operator Blu Jet's 'contractual dumping'. The unions are fighting to level out the current salary differences of employees on the same grades covered by the collective agreement of FS, the state railways group of which Blu Jet is the maritime subsidiary. The fast ferry operator ensures lifeline links between Italy's mainland and Sicily across the Strait of Messina.

Unions urge new EU boss to end social dumping

Nautilus International and the European Transport Workers' Federation (ETF) have called on newly-appointed EU transport commissioner Adina Vălean to end social dumping in European waters.

Ursula von der Leyen, the president-elect of the European Commission appointed Ms Vălean as transport commissioner for 2019-2024 following a final round of hearings from candidates on Thursday 14 November.

Nautilus international organiser, Danny McGowan, said: 'We hope that under Ms Vălean's stewardship, the opportunity will be seized to eradicate social dumping from maritime and other transport modes. We look forward to working with our ETF colleagues and the European Commission to further job security for the benefit of all Nautilus members.'

ETF general secretary Livia Spera said: 'Whilst Ms von der Leyen's initial mission letter overlooked the social dimension of the transport sector, we expect Ms Vălean to take this very seriously. Millions of workers across Europe are calling for action.'

Connemara re-flag overshadowed by new non-French ferry charter

The CGT and CFDT officers and ratings unions have welcomed the re-flagging to the full French flag of Brittany Ferries' chartered Connemara ferry from the Cyprus register with the creation of more than 100 new jobs. But they are protesting at the conditions surrounding a newly-chartered ferry to the western Channel ferry operator's fleet that will not be registered under the French flag.

Brittany Ferries chartered the Connemara from Stena ro-ro in May 2018 to open a new maritime route between Ireland and Spain linking Cork, Roscoff (France) and Santander. The unions contested the arrival of the ship that Brittany Ferries wanted to operate without a single French officer or French seafarer for the first time on one of its ferries.

Brittany Ferries management said that it had promised to transfer the Connemara to the full French register within two years and had done so by creating 111 new jobs including 25 officers.



Adina Vălean Image: Wikimedia Commons

The ETF – which represents over five million transport workers from more than 200 transport unions and 41 European countries – is currently campaigning for an end to social dumping and for improved working conditions in all transport modes. It will discuss how to apply EU labour standards to transport workers and to ensure social protection with Ms Vălean when she takes her seat at the European Commission. **i**



Meanwhile, unions at Brittany Ferries have forged an agreement with management that, for the first time, enables captains and chief officers to elect representatives to serve on the western Channel ferry operator's collective agreement negotiation teams. The CGT, CFDT and CFE-CGC have won recognition that Captains and first officers can vote in the company-wide elections for representatives of all grades on Brittany Ferries' statutory works council.

Elections will be held at the end of this year and will come into effect on 1 January 2020. **i**



Nautilus/ITF inspector Tommy Molloy Image: ITF

Nautilus/ITF inspector speaks against slavery

The Nautilus/ITF inspector for Liverpool, northwest England and Wales Tommy Molloy has participated in a major anti-modern-day slavery event in Liverpool, UK.

Organised by the UK Border Force at the Merseyside Maritime and International Slavery Museum, the two-day event marked National Anti-slavery Day and included talks from victims of modern-day slavery, charities and non-governmental organisations, as well as the International Transport Workers' Federation.

Mr Molloy gave a talk about his work, took

questions from members of the public and ran a display of photographs taken during some of his inspections.

'While there's greater awareness about the victims of modern-day slavery, the exploitation of seafarers remains largely hidden from the public,' Mr Molloy said. 'So, when we find it, it's our role to work closely with the Border Force and other agencies to uncover it, expose it and prevent it. Events like this help us to shine a light on what is the dark side of modern seafaring.' **i**

ITF and Saudi Arabia join forces to support seafarers in Saudi ports

The International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) and Saudi Arabia have joined forces to support seafarers in the Kingdom's ports and to work towards the ratification of the Maritime Labour Convention (MLC) 2006.

The International Maritime Organization (IMO) permanent representative of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Essam M Alamdari, met ITF inspectorate coordinator Steve Trowsdale and ITF Arab World network coordinator Mohamed Arrachedi at ITF headquarters in London on 21 October.

In addition to agreeing co-operation to support seafarers in Saudi ports, the meeting discussed greater collaboration between the ITF and Saudi Arabia's maritime authorities at international and



From left: Steve Trowsdale, Essam M Alamdari and Mohamed Arrachedi meet at ITF headquarters in London. Image: ITF

regional levels and the country's ratification of MLC 2006.

Recent successful collaboration included repatriation of five seafarers with owed wages from the vessel MKN 205 in Damman port.

The Saudi ports network, supervised by Mawani, the Saudi Ports Authority, a government

agency founded in 1976, consists of nine major ports, six of which are commercial and three are industrial.

The ITF now represents more than 35 unions in the Middle East, North Africa and the Gulf states. It opened its regional office, ITF Arab World in Amman, Jordan in 2004. **i**

In brief

Unions bounce back

Almost 500,000 American workers participated in strikes in 2018, up from 25,000 in 2017, according to data from the US Bureau of Labor Statistics. Not since 1986 has the number of workers going on strike been so high. Factors in the trend include a strong economy which has led to low unemployment, widespread discontent with increasing inequality, a decline in middle class living standards and changes in the political scene, the Masters, Mates & Pilots union (MM&P) said.

Short sea support

The MM&P union has joined 32 other transportation sector unions in calling on Congress to enable development of a domestic shortsea shipping industry. 'We can create good US jobs, enhance sound environmental and energy policies and relieve congestion on highways — all with minimal cost to taxpayers,' the unions said in one of six policy statements issued by the AFL-CIO Transportation Trades Department.

Unions back cargo laws

A coalition of maritime unions, shipping companies and advocacy groups has called on the US Senate to audit federal agencies' compliance with cargo preference laws. The information supplied by the audit would provide 'an objective overview and clearer understanding of the degree to which federal agencies may be, contrary to the law, bypassing US-flag vessels in favour of foreign-flag vessels to move US government cargoes', the group said. It underlined the direct relation between the enforcement of cargo preference requirements and national defence capability provided by a strong and active US-flag merchant marine.



HAVE YOUR SAY IN FUTURE SKILLS SURVEY

Serving seafarers and shore staff asked to contribute to major EU maritime education project

Nautilus members have been invited to take part in important research that aims to find ways to ‘future-proof’ European maritime skills. The views of seafarers are being sought as part of the European Union’s SkillSea project, which is tasked with ensuring that the region’s seafarers are equipped with the right skills for the rapidly-changing maritime labour market.

Launched in January 2019, the four-year SkillSea project is being run by a consortium of 28 national maritime authorities, shipping companies, shipowners’ associations, maritime education providers and seafaring unions – including Nautilus International – from 16 European countries.

It aims to develop strategies to identify and meet the future skills needs of the maritime sector, to break down barriers to mobility of employment within the sector, and to attract more European young people to work in maritime industries.

The SkillSea project is led by the industry’s social partners – the European Transport Workers’ Federation (ETF) and the European Community Shipowners’ Associations (ECSA) – together with a specialist maritime education provider, the Rotterdam-based STC Group.

The initiative was launched in response to the many trends which are transforming seafaring – including digitalisation and automation, and the increasing impact of environmental regulations.

The project seeks to foster cooperation between industry, education and training providers, and authorities to identify skills gaps and the need for new types of training for seafarers and shore-based

▲ Nautilus representatives David Appleton (far left) and Andrew Linington (front centre) at the latest meeting of participants in the SkillSea project

staff in the maritime sector. It seeks not only to produce a sustainable skills strategy for European seafarers, but also to increase the number of European maritime professionals – enhancing the safety and efficiency of this vital sector.

SkillSea will develop learning packages in the blended learning concept, which combine online and face-to-face tuition. Content will include digital skills (reflecting the changes in the industry and new forms of learning), ‘green’ skills (reflecting the increased environmental regulation affecting the industry), key competences, soft skills and knowledge of science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM subjects).

Key aims and objectives include:

- Analysing the effect of technological developments on the industry’s skills requirements
 - Securing a better match between the industry’s skills needs and the education and training of seafarers
 - Overcoming barriers to the mobility of seafaring labour and improving career progression in the sector
 - Improving cooperation between education providers, maritime authorities and industry
 - Ensuring that Europe retains a world-leading supply of maritime skills and experience
- Nautilus members are now being asked to help with a crucial part of the project – a survey of seafarers and shore-based staff to gather the

views and experiences of maritime professionals on current and future training needs.

Members are invited to complete an online questionnaire that aims to help identify any gaps and mismatches in current maritime education and training programmes in Europe – with special regard to the impact of the many technological developments which are affecting the way in which ships are operated.

Feedback from serving seafarers and shore-based staff will also help the project to develop proposals for the design and delivery of the vocational education and training needed to maintain European maritime know-how.

Nautilus professional and technical officer David Appleton said: ‘This is a much-needed project which is designed to give seafarers the skills and training that they need now, and into the future.

‘We hope that as many members as possible will support the project by taking part in this survey. Their views and experiences are essential to ensure that we develop training programmes which are not only needed by seafarers, but also reflect the realities of the shipping industry and its need for highly-skilled personnel.’

The future skills survey is split into two versions, for shore personnel and seagoing personnel. To access both of these, follow the links from the Nautilus website at: www.nautilusint.org/en/futureskills

Nine in ten seafarers fear criminalisation, finds Union

Almost 90% of seafarers fear criminalisation at work, a new Nautilus International survey has found.

A quarter of the 612 seafarers surveyed by the Union identified the issue as a truly global one, saying they did not feel safe from criminalisation anywhere in the world – a change from the Union’s 2010 survey when member concerns centred around North America, Europe and Africa.

Pollution was identified as the biggest issue that respondents believed they could be criminalised for. Most respondents believe the public and political reaction to a spill affects the likelihood of being treated fairly, with many speaking of the fear of being held criminally responsible for circumstances that were out of their control.

Nautilus International general secretary Mark Dickinson said: ‘The seafaring industry is truly unique, and this unfortunately means that sometimes workers find themselves in

situations that simply wouldn’t happen in the vast majority of other professions. We cannot let the voice of our seafarers on the impact of the fear of criminalisation be ignored.’

The new criminalisation report forms the basis of Nautilus’s Fair Treatment campaign, which is committed to raising awareness of the issue of criminalisation at sea and providing practical support for seafarers.

The Union’s support network includes a 24/7 helpline, a worldwide network of lawyers and the JASON advice and assistance scheme (the Nautilus Federation’s Joint Assistance & Support Network), run in partnership with Nautilus Federation unions.

The Union has also developed a new mobile app, giving members instant access to advice following an incident at work. The app – which was shared with members for testing at the 2019 Nautilus General Meeting – has on and offline functions to support seafarers regardless of location and internet access. **i**

Crews are an ‘afterthought’ in IMO regulations, argues Union official

Nautilus professional and technical officer David Appleton told the International Federation of Shipmasters’ Associations (IFSMA) General Assembly in Helsinki that seafarers remain an afterthought when developing International Maritime Organization (IMO) regulations, and when crew are considered it is in the context of who should take the blame for maritime incidents.

He was speaking on the work of the recently-established Human Element Interest Group (HEIG), a body made up of non-governmental organisations at the IMO – including the International Transport Workers’ Federation (ITF), the International Chamber of Shipping (ICS) and IFSMA.

HEIG addresses ‘obvious issues’ that are often ignored when legislation is drawn up, said Mr Appleton – such as fatigue, poor design of ships and equipment, complexity and administrative burden.

Psychologist James Reason in the 1990 publication Human Error found: ‘Rather than being the main instigators of an accident,



Nautilus professional and technical officer David Appleton addressing the 45th IFSMA Annual General Assembly in Helsinki

operators tend to be the inheritors of system defects created by poor design, incorrect installation and bad management decisions. Their part is usually that of adding the final garnish to a lethal brew whose ingredients have been long in the cooking’

Seafarers who make a mistake are often treated as if they had carried out an ‘intentional violation’ – leading to sacking or imprisonment.

HEIG has reviewed the Human Element Checklist and will consider the problem of deaths in enclosed spaces. **i**

In brief



L-R Micky Smyth, Sinclair Pirie and Davie Bruce outside the offices of Orkney Ferries

Fresh terms at Orkney Ferries

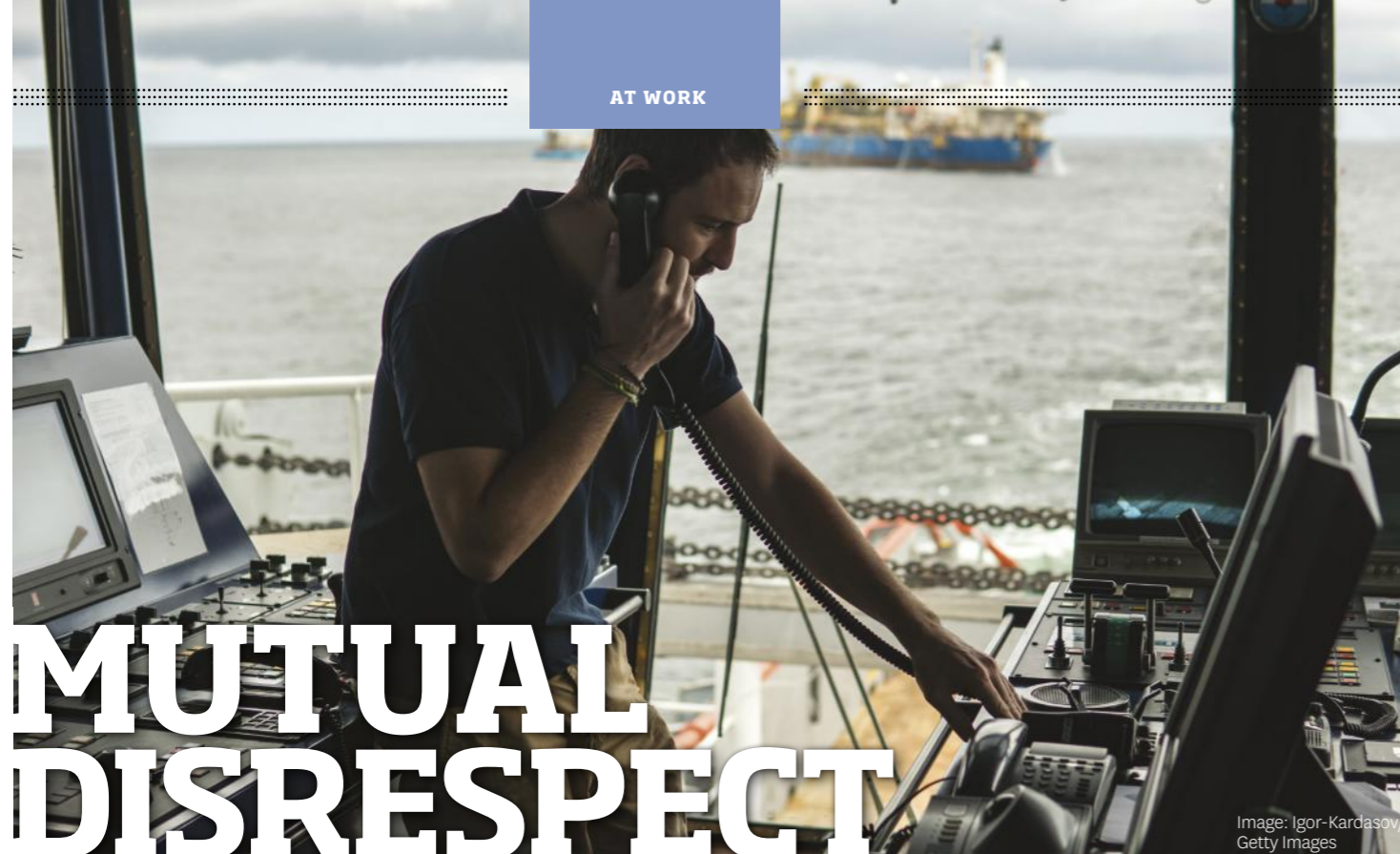
After lengthy negotiations, Nautilus has agreed updated terms & conditions with Orkney Ferries, which recognises the Union as being representative of all its members for the purpose of collective bargaining, pay negotiation, hours of work, and general conditions of employment. The final meeting was held at company offices in Kirkwall by Nautilus national ferry organiser Micky Smyth, liaison officer Davie Bruce and Sinclair Pirie, with officials and representatives of RMT and Unite. From Orkney Ferries was Andrew Blake (ferry services manager), Brian Archibald (harbour master & head of marine services, engineering and transportation) and Andrew Groundwater (head of HR and performance).

CalMac three-year pay deal

Following a consultation exercise in October 2017, in which 90% of members participated, Nautilus has received written confirmation from CalMac of an uplift in 2019 salaries of 2.6%. This was the Retail Prices Index (RPI) rate of inflation for August 2019 and will be paid in the October pay run. Over the three-year period, Nautilus increased members’ salaries at CalMac by 10%, along with the bonus payments of 1.5% of salary per year. That included a rise of 3.9% in 2017, 3.5% in 2018 and the latest 2.6% in 2019.

Leech takes over at Technip

Following an internal re-organisation, Nautilus International head of organising Gary Leech has taken over responsibility for all members employed by Technip. Mr Leech will continue to work closely with liaison officers Derek Scott, George Christie and Willie Jackson to maintain the high standards of support and professionalism members have long received.



MUTUAL DISRESPECT

Image: Igor-Kardasov/Getty Images

Trust between seafarers and shore-based management has declined to ‘disturbing’ levels, a major research project has discovered. **ANDREW LININGTON** reports

Masters and officers are feeling increasingly unable to exercise their professional judgement as a consequence of the growing use of bureaucratic systems and procedures, coupled with increasing surveillance from ashore.

That is the conclusion of an international study carried out by experts at Cardiff University’s Seafarers International Research Centre (SIRC). The analysis warns that the breakdown in trust between ships and shore presents worrying implications for the morale and wellbeing of maritime professionals and may have damaging impacts upon shipping companies.

Presenting the findings, SIRC director Professor Helen Sampson

said the shipping industry has increasingly adopted ‘punishment-centred’ bureaucratic systems at corporate level and through international regulations.

A series of high-profile accidents – such as the Herald of Free Enterprise and Exxon Valdez disasters – resulted in the introduction of procedural and paperwork measures such as the International Ship Management (ISM) Code, and new rules and record-keeping requirements through amendments to the MARPOL, STCW and SOLAS Conventions, she pointed out.

This has meant that tasks which were previously carried out in accordance with the judgement of senior officers have become transformed into activities which follow a set of prescribed steps –

designed by shore-based managers – which are laid out in a manual and often supported with requirements for the completion of further documents, such as checklists.

Almost all forms of regulatory enforcement in the shipping industry now rely on the maintenance of records which serve to demonstrate compliance with international standards, the researchers point out. Companies face big fines and seafarers can be jailed or dismissed if these records are not properly maintained.

Seafarers’ autonomy has been further eroded since the late 1990s by the increasing use of technology to monitor shipboard operations from ashore. At the turn of this century, most ships simply faxed daily reports to their managers – but now data on everything from course

and speed to engine performance can be continuously transmitted to remote centres on land.

As a result, the study notes, decisions that seafarers had previously been required (and trusted) to take onboard in isolation from shore-side management have rapidly become subject to scrutiny and second-guessing.

Prof Sampson said the SIRC team had carried out extensive research, funded by the Lloyd’s Register Foundation and the TK Foundation, to find out how these trends are affecting seafarers. Researchers carried out nine observational voyages, conducted 400 interviews with officers and ratings, and analysed some 2,500 questionnaires completed by maritime professionals from the UK, China, Singapore, India and the Philippines.

The feedback gathered showed many masters and officers now feel unable to exercise their professional judgement in situations where they retain the legal and/or moral responsibility for the consequences of their actions or inaction.

Almost one-third of respondents said they had been prevented by shore staff from taking action in the best interests of crew, and 18% in the best interests of the ship.

Not only do seafarers feel less trusted, but they also fear an increased risk of losing their job if they are found in breach of the ‘new normal’. The research uncovered cases which showed that some seafarers have good reason to have such fears, Prof Sampson said, and there was also evidence to show that some masters and officers feel unable to act independently even in an emergency.

Examples include a case in which shore-based managers resisted a master’s request to change course to avoid a typhoon and another in which a chief engineer’s request for new parts was questioned by personnel ashore.

The study warns that masters are

under particular pressure, as they remain formally charged with responsibility for crew safety whilst being insufficiently protected against dismissal to resist management pressure.

Many seafarers say that trust has also been reduced by a lack of support and respect shown by shore-based managers – some described as being authoritarian and others as sometimes verbally abusive.

And the lack of trust was shown to be a two-way channel. The researchers found numerous seafarers who described a lack of faith in shore-based managers’ experience and knowledge and who considered that managers were ill-placed to offer proper assistance when unexpected problems arose.

This lack of confidence was compounded by a strongly held view that, even where managers had appropriate seafaring experience, they generally ‘changed sides’ as soon as they left the sea and went to work in the office, becoming concerned with the ‘bottom line’ above all else.

Prof Sampson said that the breakdown of trust can lead to ‘organisationally dysfunctional behaviour’ – with many seafarers not sharing information with the company and barely one-third saying that they always told shore staff the whole truth about the situation onboard – often because they feel the need to protect themselves against blame and recrimination.

This can lead to seafarers covering up for colleagues – even in some quite serious situations, such as an oil spill.

The researchers also found that

seafarers ‘caught between a rock and a hard place’ may also take ‘defensive actions’ such as following instructions that they believed were inherently unsafe but demanding written instructions, dithering while awaiting office decisions, or taking unapproved action and facing the consequences.

All this can increase stress, reduce morale and lead to poor decision-making, the study warns. ‘Hesitation, inaction, and taking the wrong actions all have the potential to produce very serious consequences for seafarers, and companies, because of the safety-critical nature of the industry,’ it points out. ‘However, hesitation in any organisational context is likely to be negative and may result in the persistence of bad practice, lost deals, and so forth.’

The researchers found that seafarers perceive the consequences for those who resist instructions from shore-based managers, in order to protect the safety and welfare of their crew and/or vessel, are severe. It is likely that this has an adverse impact on their desire to continue with a job at sea, the study adds.

However, the researchers found seafarers who talked openly about the fears they had in connection with standing up for what they believed was right – and frequently safe – in the light of their professional experience and training.

‘Many seafarers were concerned that disagreements with their managers would result in future sanctions, including dismissal, and in this context it is no surprise that there are increasing reports of senior officers simply awaiting their next instruction from the office rather than exercising their own discretion,’ the study noted. ‘That this happens in a sector where timing may be critical and workers’ lives are frequently in the balance is especially disturbing.’ **i**

2,500

questionnaires were completed by maritime professionals from the UK, China, Singapore, India and the Philippines

30%

of respondents said they had been prevented by shore staff from taking action in the best interests of the crew

Increasingly-automated onboard operations are turning seafarers into ‘machine minders’ and are serving as a ‘breeding ground for boredom at work’, according to a new study by French maritime medical experts. **ANDREW LININGTON** reports

MARITIME MALAISE

Research published in the *International Maritime Health* (IMH) journal has warned that the impact of monotonous tasks at sea may reduce attention and vigilance, increase the risk of accidents, and lead to higher levels of smoking, drinking, eating disorders and addictive behaviours amongst crew members.

The study, carried out by members of the French Society for Maritime Medicine (Société Française de Médecine Maritime), says that increasing industrial automation is posing a growing problem, and it points to similar research undertaken in the aviation and road transport industries examining the effects of repetitive tasks and little or no intellectual stimulus.

A condition described as ‘automation complacency’ has been diagnosed amongst airline pilots, in which they can become over-reliant on automated systems and fail to exercise sufficient vigilance or sustained attention. In some cases, they rely on automation rather than exercising their manual pilot skills and abilities.

Some airline pilots complain that modern cockpit systems make it harder for them to revert to manual mode and that their job satisfaction has declined as a result of becoming ‘system monitors more than pilots’.

Psychologists commonly define boredom as ‘a state of low arousal and dissatisfaction attributed to an inadequately stimulating situation’. Boredom occurs when workers are faced with a monotonous life combined with frustration, the IMH paper notes. This combination is often found among seafarers, because of the monotony of work onboard, routine deck-work or using machinery, being on watch, or doing maintenance tasks, especially at sea,’ it adds.

The research compared a group of seafarers serving with a French oceanographic research company with shore staff. It found significantly higher rates of cigarette smoking amongst the seafarers – with more than 15% being smokers, compared with 9.3% of office staff.

While only 12.5% of officers were on medication, 27.4% of office staff and 30.8% of ratings were on medication. Just over 10% of ratings

were taking drugs to reduce anxiety (anxiolytics) and 5% were taking anti-depressants, compared with 2.5% of officers on anti-depressants and anxiolytics, and 6% of office staff taking anxiolytics and 8% on anti-depressants.

Researchers said differences in the level of job demand and job control meant ratings were much more likely to be classed as passive rather than active in their work, and therefore much more prone to boredom, with high levels of boredom-proneness almost twice that of officers.

‘For many of them, this would translate to the existence of a state of boredom due to a lack of external stimulation and, in particular,



monotony and the routine nature of the work, a loss of a sense of the meaning of work, or a divergent perception of the passage of time,’ the study states.

‘The boredom proneness test does not just appear to quantify a personality trait but is also influenced by the level of job satisfaction,’ it adds.

The researchers found that while just over one-quarter of officers said that much of their work was repetitive and monotonous, almost 50% of ratings described their duties that way. Fewer than 6% of officers said time always seemed to pass slowly at work, compared with 32% of ratings.

And while one-quarter of officers said they feel they work below their abilities for most of the time, the figure was just over 60% for ratings.

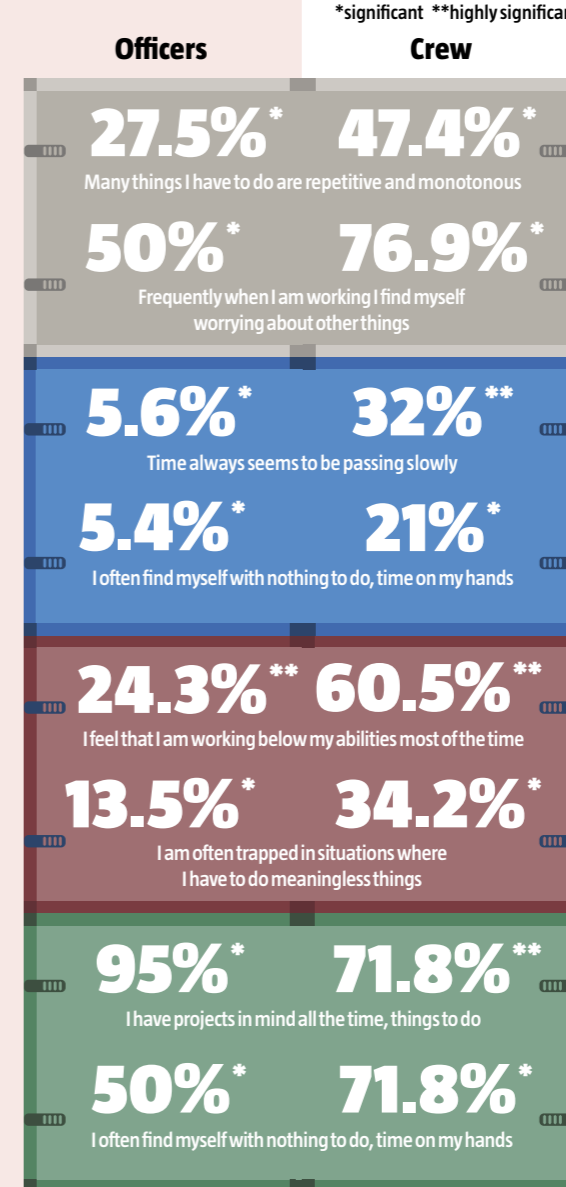
Such figures highlight a problem with the work routine for many seafarers, the report argues, ‘which is today transformed on modern ships into watch and maintenance work, of no particular interest to these seafarers’.

Combined with the ‘familiar frustrations of separation from family, containment in a confined space, and poor relationships with people onboard’, these factors create the classic conditions for boredom, it adds.

The paper points to other research linking proneness to boredom with depression, and the researchers said there was evidence of this amongst seafarers. However,

Key findings from the French study published in IMH journal

Percentages indicate the proportion of participants agreeing with each statement



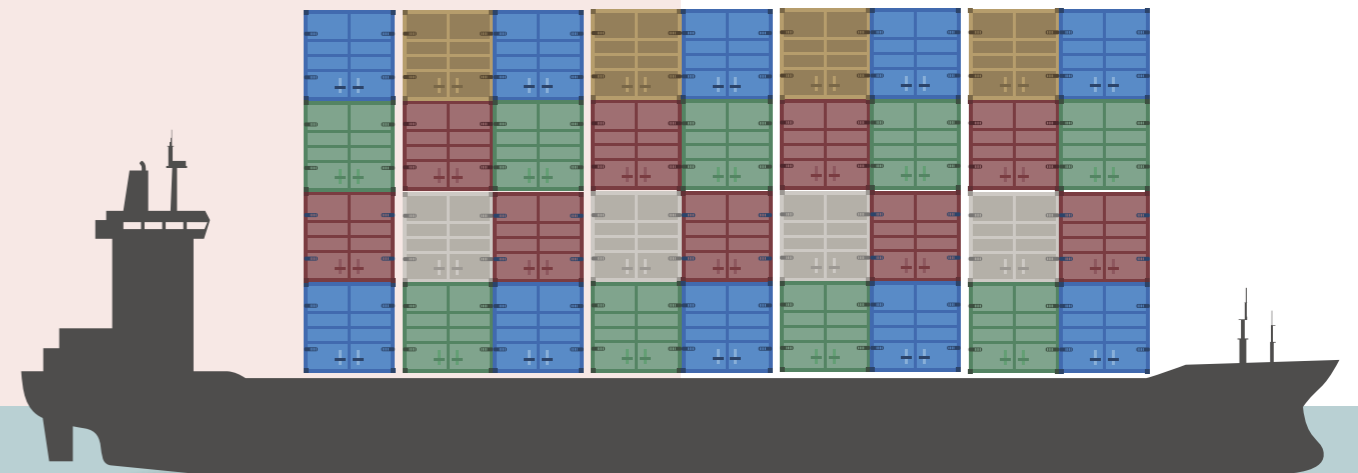
there were differences between officers and ratings – with officers being more affected by levels of external and internal stimulation and ratings more influenced by living and working conditions.

The study suggests that it might be useful to screen seafarers – and especially ratings – for their proneness to boredom and depression as part of their ‘fitness to work’ process. Although those found with high scores should not be automatically refused work, the researchers suggest they should be subjected to ‘enhanced monitoring’.

The research notes that some individuals are better able to cope with boredom-inducing factors than others, and studies in aviation have shown that airline pilots have been able to develop techniques to stave off the effects of low stimulation. Most say chatting to their colleague on the flight deck is the most effective way to do this, while one pilot spoke of treating the autopilot ‘like a bad co-pilot and watching everything the airplane is doing’.

Other aviation research has found that while cockpit automation can sometimes relieve pilots of certain tedious tasks and give them more time to think ahead, their thoughts may drift onto non-work related matters. Ultimately, it argued, more should be done to improve the design of automated systems so that they ‘more meaningfully engage the human operator’.

The study suggests that it might be useful to screen seafarers for their proneness to boredom and depression as part of their ‘fitness to work’ process



THE LATEST RACE TO THE BOTTOM



Nautilus has expressed grave concerns over news that a cruise operator is offering British officers salaries below the UK minimum wage – exploiting highly-qualified seafarers, encouraging social dumping and undermining hard-won gains in pay and conditions. It's time to get behind the Union's **Fair Pay at Sea** campaign and stamp out these practices, writes **HELEN KELLY**

A recent social media furore over low pay in the cruise sector has lifted the lid on exploitative practices employed by global operators to drive down wages and conditions for newly-qualified British and European officers. Royal Caribbean Cruise Lines (RCCL), the world's second largest cruise operator in terms of revenue, is advertising third officer positions on its Royal Caribbean International (RCI) fleet for as little as \$2,000 (£1,541) per month or \$16,000 (£12,358) per year for a 4:2 rotation. That equates to an approximate hourly salary of £4.28 – less than the UK National Minimum Wage for young people under the age of 18 (£4.35) and significantly less

than that for 18-20 year-olds (£6.15).

The role and others aboard RCCL's brands Azamara and Celebrity Cruises are being promoted by UK-based recruitment agency Faststream via email to British and European Economic Area (EEA) seafarers.

The successful candidate is expected to have experience in rank on any type of passenger vessel, an Officer of the Watch CoC unlimited, and the right to live and work in the European Union. That means they will have completed three years' study and work as a cadet at a reputable British or mainland European training facility.

Once onboard they can expect to work 12 hours per day. Third officers with RCI do not get paid for shore leave.

Nautilus International general secretary

Mark Dickinson strongly criticised RCCL for exploiting newly-qualified third officers and introducing a race to the bottom on crew wages.

'There is no future for an industry which keeps scouring the world for the next source of cheap labour,' he said. 'The future should be one of high quality and respect.'

The Union recently launched its **Fair Pay at Sea** campaign to achieve decent treatment for members and all seafarers, including legislation that sets minimum wages in national waters.

Nautilus is also working with the European Transport Workers' Federation (ETF) to introduce a minimum wage for seafarers in Europe.

Such legislation would prevent social

◀ **The Royal Caribbean vessel Allure of the Seas**
Image: Royal Caribbean International

dumping in the UK and Europe – a practice where employers use cheaper labour than what is available domestically, such as employing migrant workers or moving production to a low-wage country or area.

Nautilus believes the advertised RCCL third officer roles are a clear case of social dumping.

Comments by Faststream chief executive Mark Charman seem to back this up.

Mr Charman told the Nautilus Telegraph that UK nationals were not in fact the target audience for the position, despite being actively marketed to via email and its website. 'Based on our experiences, the applicants applying for these jobs, and the applicants we have placed into these jobs, these are not UK nationals,' he said.

Representatives from RCCL and all its brands were unavailable for comment despite repeated attempts by the Nautilus Telegraph.

Hiding behind the flag

RCI is based in Miami, Florida, and its vessels use the Bahamas flag of convenience, which requires it to pay crew minimum salaries as set by the ITF/International Labour Organisation (ILO). The current ITF/ILO third officer minimum wage is \$1,822 per month.

RCCL brand Celebrity Cruises also advertises third officer jobs for \$2,000 per month. Its 'upmarket' Azamara brand advertises the same position for \$2,700 per month. Both brands use the Malta flag.

Nautilus's position on ILO minimum wage standards has always been that quality ship operators should be paying well above these absolute minimum levels, and that they should not be used to drive wages down.

Nautilus does not have a recognition agreement/collective bargaining agreement (CBA) with parent company Royal Caribbean Cruise Lines (RCCL) or any of its cruise brands RCI, Celebrity Cruises and Azamara.

However, Nautilus does have CBAs with other reputable international cruise operators which offer Third Officers in the range of £1,950-£3,400 per month.

Morally questionable

While RCCL is not doing anything illegal by paying third officers at just above the agreed international minimum, many

Nautilus members and other seafarers who shared their views on social media found the company's actions to be exploitative and morally questionable. Some felt the cruise industry as a whole promoted a glamorous image that hid the reality of pay and working conditions for crew.

'I don't doubt that by the moral definition there is a level of exploitation going on of junior seafarers,' said Nick Chubb, founder of maritime technology consultancy Thetius. Mr Chubb is the author of the hard-hitting blog-post on Splash247 titled 'Why are third officers being paid less than coffee shop workers?' which sparked the social media uproar.

The Nautilus Telegraph has been told of at least one British third officer who took a position with RCCL brand Celebrity Cruises at \$2,000 per month, desperate to find work after being unemployed for many months. Having completed two rotations,



'There are some basic rules of play that we must insist on. Our social conditions. Our environmental standards. Our safety and health standards'

he is now working for a rival UK-based company at a much higher salary.

Nautilus International member and UK resident Phillipa Bowden, who holds a Master Mariner Unlimited certificate, was approached by Faststream about the RCI role and found the level of pay and conditions insulting.

'When you consider most companies now pay at home too or compensate for leave period in the wage paid onboard, plus considering you work seven days a week, 10 hours a day, the pay is still an insult to anyone who has worked hard to get their Officer of the Watch,' she said. 'Yet at the same time I feel concerned that people are working for that, with a job that holds a lot of responsibility.'

Nautilus member and UK resident Bradley Jones felt that RCCL was taking advantage of newly qualified Third Officers who may be struggling to find work.

'There is still a clear disconnect and divide between the value put on serving seafarers, especially those with watchkeeping duties, and the pay and conditions we are offered,' he said.

'When you actually put pen to paper and weigh up the pay and conditions against the responsibility the individual who takes up this post is duty bound to carry out, it's actually very insulting.'

Another member, who asked not to be named for fear of reprisals, felt that the job ad was discriminating against British nationals.

'This really is infuriating. They aren't allowed to discriminate by nationality, but this is the most obvious loophole, and yet no one will do anything about it.'

Fair Pay at Sea

As well as tackling the social dumping practices described above, the Nautilus **Fair Pay at Sea** campaign will target known scams by unscrupulous operators who seek to undermine ITF/ILO agreed minimum rates by creating new subordinate ranks aboard vessels.

On some vessels, traditional third officer jobs are being redefined as 'junior officer' roles with a much lower rate of pay. Junior officer is a generic descriptive term used for Third Officers. There is no officially recognised rank of 'Junior Officer'.

A similar scam is happening with the traditional AB role. Dishonest ship operators are redefining that role, which is already one of the most poorly paid onboard, as a 'catering boy' in order to cut wages further.

That situation is clearly not sustainable.

'Ultimately, we think the solution is to swim completely against the tide of Reaganite and Thatcherite neo-liberalism which has served hard-working seafarers so poorly, and insist that in the UK and Europe, shipping is regulated to our standards,' Mr Dickinson said.

'We're not closing the sector down. But we do insist on some basic rules of play, that we will regulate: Our social conditions. Our environmental standards. Our safety and health standards.'

'It's those social standards that we can't accept to be regulated to the minimum.'

Members affected by any of these issues are advised to get in contact with the Union.

PAVING THE WAY FOR SOCIALLY SUSTAINABLE SHIPPING

The European Transport Workers' Federation launched its European Maritime Space for Socially Sustainable Shipping concept with the support of Nautilus International, academics and researchers at the Fair Shipping Conference in Brussels. The document sets out ambitious plans to create a level playing field without social dumping, where fair employment conditions for all European workers would apply. **HELEN KELLY** reports

The European Transport Workers' Federation (ETF) and Nautilus International have set out a bold plan to secure the future of European maritime workers with better, well-paid jobs and enhanced working conditions. The **European Maritime Space for Socially Sustainable Shipping** concept creates momentum for real action on jobs and puts collective bargaining agreements (CBAs) at the heart of future negotiations with employer groups and other social partners.

At the launch of the plan in Brussels on 5 November 2019, Nautilus general secretary Mark Dickinson said: 'We need to create a level playing field at the EU level which provides an opportunity for higher cost European seafarers to secure training and job opportunities. For third-country operators to compete with European shipowners at European standards and avoid the race to the bottom that we have seen in recent years. We cannot compete down there.'

'Only when the competition is obliged to work to EU social standards within European waters can EU shipping, employing more EU citizens, thrive.'

ETF political secretary for maritime transport Philippe Alphonso set out how conditions for crew are determined by the country where a ship is registered and whose flag the vessel is flying. This means that many ships



EU-owned vessels do not have to respect European labour rights if they fly a non-EU flag

trading in EU waters do not have the obligation to respect EU legislation regarding labour rights and conditions, because they fly the flag of a non-EU country.

This can be true even when ships are owned by European companies, including those who benefit from state aid schemes such as Tonnage Tax. Such companies are often trying to reduce costs, but this leaves European seafarers exposed to unfair competition from seafarers outside Europe in a way that workers on land are not.

Even European seafarers who do find work in the sector may not enjoy the same rights as European shore-based workers.

The European Maritime Space reforms would instead bring the

European seafarers need a level playing field
Image: Lee Patten



ETF Fair Shipping logo

maritime sector in line with on-land businesses, meaning that all shipping services operating in EU waters would have to follow EU and/or member state legislation, Mr Alphonso said. This would offer fair employment conditions for all crew, regardless of their nationality or place of residence, and protect EU seafarers from unfair competition based on low cost and low standards.

'Our main aim is to defend and improve jobs, careers and skills of European seafarers who need and are needed for a thriving European maritime industry,' he said. 'So, let's discuss together how a European Maritime Space could add value to these objectives.'



Nautilus general secretary Mark Dickinson speaking at the launch of the European Maritime Space for Socially Sustainable Shipping in Brussels

Terje Pettersen from the Norwegian Seafarers' Union added: 'Several studies recently carried out in Norway all came to the same conclusions. The concept is perfectly legally applicable, and the limited increased costs can be forwarded to the shippers.'

Shifting the debate

The ETF and its social partner, the European Community Shipowners' Associations (ECSA), have been discussing this apparently thorny issue of quality jobs for European seafarers for the

best part of 25 years – ever since the 1996 Dublin conference organised by the European Commission to debate whether the European seafarer was, in fact, an endangered species.

That debate led directly to the adoption of the State Aid Guidelines paving the way for government support for EU shipping and EU seafarers that today is estimated to cost EU taxpayers some €3bn per year. Without that support via Tonnage Tax regimes and support for training, the EU seafarer's

The ETF and Nautilus believe that the State Aid Guidelines system is in need of an overhaul

endangered status would no doubt have been escalated to extinction.

The Guidelines may have slowed down the decline in EU seafaring skills, but they have not managed to halt it entirely. The European maritime industry now faces a demographic cliff edge, with many maritime professionals expecting to retire over the next 10-15 years, and with unrelenting pressure on seafarers' terms and conditions of employment.

The ETF and Nautilus International firmly believe that the State Aid Guidelines system is broken and in need of an overhaul. Recent research commissioned by the ITF/OECD and authored by Olaf Merk – **Maritime Subsidies: Do They Provide Value for Money?** – backs this up.

In simple terms, the State Aid Guidelines require two things in

The legal basis for a European Maritime Space

Professors Tarjei Bekkedal and Finn Arnesan from the University of Oslo's Centre for European Law have published a report into 'Fair wages and working conditions within the European Maritime Space'.

The report presents recommendations upon which a European Maritime Space can be constructed, and which can guide the drafting of a legal framework that strikes a fair balance between competition and free movement on the one hand, and fair wages and working conditions on the other.

It found that the law of the EU Maritime Space differs from that of the European Working Space in general, with no legal arguments that can explain or justify this difference. 'In our view, the current state of the law is at odds with the fundamental legal values espoused by the

Treaties and the key European policy on the establishment of a European Social Pillar,' the authors said.

'The main message is that people believe that everything in the fields of maritime is guided by the Flag States Principle,' Professor Bekkedal pointed out.


'We argue that is plainly wrong.'

The research found that if EU law is invoked, which it normally will be for European businesses operating in Europe, the basic principles of freedom of movement and freedom to provide services are also invoked. And if EU law is invoked, the Flag States Principle cannot be invoked.

'You have to choose whether you would like to invoke rights stemming from EU law or the Flag States Principle,' he said. 'You can't invoke the right to free movement and Flag State Principles

at the same time.'

Some countries, however, will allow ships registered domestically to be flagged in a third state, which allows shipping companies to import third country conditions into the EU.

'I think that's very much against the basic values, the basic foundation for the principle of mutual recognition,' Professor Bekkedal said. 

For a full copy of the research report, please go to: www.jus.uio.no and search for European Maritime Space (it makes no difference whether you are in the Norwegian or English version of the site). Alternatively, scan this QR code.



return for member states giving subsidies to EU shipowners. Shipowners must grow their national maritime skills base – i.e. increase the number of seafarers they train and employ – and increase the number of ships under EU flags.

Yet EU seafarers continue to decline in numbers and the proportion of EU ships flying EU flags is now down to only 18%.

The new European Maritime Space calls for accountability and transparency in State Aid Guidelines. The Commission must now ensure that the goals to increase jobs for EU citizens and grow EU-registered shipping are delivered. If shipowners want to continue receiving subsidies, then they must deliver what they promised.

‘No action is no longer an option,’ Mr Dickinson said.

Level of ambition

As the event in Brussels kicked off, news broke that the long-awaited new European Commissioner for Transport had been announced. The European Commission’s president-elect Ursula von der Leyen reportedly accepted Romanian MEP Adina Valean for the position.

The ETF and Nautilus International are now ready with ideas to contribute to a new European Maritime Transport Strategy, which must set a level of ambition that has never been seen before.

DG MOVE director for waterborne transport Magda Kopczynska echoed Mr Dickinson’s statement in her keynote speech that wrapped up the launch event. Ms Kopczynska, who is the highest ranking official in the seaborne directorate, said: ‘I can make a commitment that no



▲ **Magda Kopczynska**
Image: European Union / Wim Daneels

action is no option.’

She stressed the distinction between protectionism and protecting European standards as part of a new way forward.

‘We need to protect Europe better,’ she said. ‘Europe as a space for values, Europe as a space for doing business, Europe as a space for competitiveness and for the social dimension.’

‘We can’t go the protectionism way because it doesn’t work in the current world today, but we definitely need to be better with protecting.’

A sustainable European Maritime Space should not be limited only to facilitating trade, clearing customs and easing reporting formalities. It should also be based on European social standards for those working onboard vessels operating in European waters.

Mr Dickinson told the audience – which included attendees from employers’ associations, shipowners, ship manufacturers, port operators, the European Commission, members of the European Parliament, academics and NGOs – that we now have a unique opportunity to discuss the basis of a European Maritime Space. ‘Don’t repeat the failures of the past – let us make a real change,’ he urged.

‘We believe that the European Maritime Sector needs a high level of ambition – ambition for jobs, for skills and for the future. It cannot be otherwise.’

The concept note for the European Maritime Space for Socially Sustainable Shipping can be downloaded from: www.etf-europe.org/resources – or by scanning this QR code:



European shipowners’ plan offers nothing new

A Maritime Growth Plan developed by European shipowners has been criticised as offering ‘nothing new’ by unions.

The European Community Shipowners’ Associations (ECSA) Maritime Growth Plan contains no solid commitments towards decent work, ensuring flag growth or improving the attractiveness of careers at sea, Nautilus International and the European Transport Workers’ Federation (ETF) said.

‘ECSA’s plan is hardly ambitious and merely repackages existing work streams and ongoing EU-funded projects developed via the EU Sectoral Social Dialogue Committee (SSDC) on Maritime Transport,’ said Nautilus International general secretary Mark Dickinson. ‘We know it won’t work because it has not worked in the past to arrest the decline of EU flags and EU skills.’

The ETF has proposed its own concept – a ‘European Maritime Space for Socially Sustainable Shipping’ with the support of academics and researchers. It offers a legal framework for quality shipping and the establishment of a level playing field for both shipowners and seafarers based on a race to the top instead of a race to the bottom.

The ESCA Maritime Growth Plan ‘completely ducks the question of ensuring EU flag growth, preferring to talk only about the amount of world shipping that EU shipping companies control,’ said ETF political secretary for maritime transport Philippe Alphonso. ‘We believe this is not enough – the EU State Aid Guidelines for maritime transport specifically require growth in EU registered tonnage in return for state aid subsidies.’



▲ **Philippe Alphonso**

ETF General Secretary Livia Spera said: ‘The ECSA growth plan is all carrot and no stick. The time for state aid without guaranteed return is over.’

the global seafarer



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