

Maritime
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06-07



International
What next when
you swallow the
anchor?
10-11



Awareness
Gala premier
for recruitment
films
04

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the global seafarer

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Asia sets an example

Could Singapore offer a lesson to countries like the UK and the Netherlands as they seek to protect their maritime clusters? Nautilus took part in an event last month where the city-state announced new measures to boost seafarer training as part of its vision to enhance its ranking as the world's 'number one maritime city'...

Singapore is stepping up its ambitious plans to cement its place as a global maritime centre with the announcement last month of a new package of aid to boost national seafarer training.

Government ministers have committed S\$65m (€43m) for the Maritime Cluster Fund for Manpower Development Programme, with a further S\$22m (€14.6m) being given by the Workforce Development Agency over a five-year period.

The support has been welcomed by the Singapore Maritime Officers Union (SMOU) which is collaborating with industry and government partners to run special training initiatives to create a new generation of skilled seafarers — and in particular to combat an 'acute' shortage of engineer officers.

'The maritime industry contributes an astounding 7% of Singapore's GDP and our aim is to continue to bring about greater awareness of well-paying career opportunities to young Singaporeans,' said SMOU general secretary Mary Liew.

The support measures were revealed at the eighth Maritime Manpower Singapore (MMS) conference, organised by SMOU and the Wavelink Maritime Institute last month.

Singapore is ranked as the world's number one maritime city, with some 5,000 'cluster' organisations employing more than 170,000 people. The number of international shipping groups in Singapore has grown from just 23 in 2000 to over 130 today.

The Singapore Registry of



SMOU general secretary Mary Liew meeting young recruits

Ships (SRS) now has more than 4,600 ships totalling some 84mgt on its books, putting it among the top five largest registries in the world, and Singapore's port is one of the world's busiest, handling almost 34m TEU alone last year and with plans for a new mega-port with a total capacity of 65m TEU.

However, only 1,605 of the more than 20,000 officers serving on Singapore-flagged ships are Singaporeans. SMOU says this figure can be significantly increased with measures to make the maritime career more attractive and to improve safety in the sector.

Andrew Tan, chief executive of the Maritime & Port Authority of Singapore (MPA) told the conference that the increased sophistication of ships and their complex operating systems is fuelling a growing need for well trained personnel. 'Building a quality maritime workforce and a strong maritime identity is now embedded as part of MPA's

Future-Ready framework, which guides us in ensuring that Maritime Singapore continues to stay ahead of the game,' he added.

Mr Tan said MPA is rolling out further initiatives to support the tripartite maritime taskforces for seafaring and shore-based sectors, with new publicity and outreach programmes to raise awareness of the job opportunities in the maritime sector.

He said these initiatives aim to address a number of challenges that stand in the way of Singaporeans joining the maritime industry — including 'the perception of poor living conditions and being "disconnected" from the world, as well as lack of awareness of remuneration and progression opportunities'.

Mr Tan said the taskforces will look at ways to deliver more structured on-the-job training, develop multiple progression pathways, and to help local seafarers make the transition from seagoing to shore-based jobs.

The seafaring taskforce will

returning for an additional seven months of training at the Singapore Maritime Academy before sitting their CoC 3 examinations. The WDA covers 80% of their course fees, with a further 10% from SMOU — leaving the cadet to pay just 10%.

The support packages include a 'cadet allowance reimbursement' programme that aims to help 180 Singaporeans to gain their first certificates of competence. It also includes an enhanced Tripartite Maritime Scholarship award, which is supporting 20 students this year and is backed by companies including NYK Shipmanagement, APL, PIL and PACC Ship Managers.

Further support is available through the Maritime Cluster Fund for Manpower Development programme to help seafarers taking STCW short courses by covering part of their course fees.

Mr Tan told the conference that these programmes are essential to bolster Singapore as a global maritime centre and to ensure that the pool of maritime expertise within the island state keeps pace with the rapid transformation of the industry.

'Such transformations, in both shipping and port sectors, will continue to change the operating environment for the maritime sector,' he concluded. 'What this means is that the skills and competencies of those working in the maritime sector will have to keep up with these changes. In turn, the education and training landscape has to evolve with these developments to stay relevant.'

Under the TNTA programme, trainees undergo six months of pre-sea training before sailing as cadets for 18 months, and then

Seminar puts
spotlight on
shore threat

Britain's global lead in maritime services will be lost unless effective action is taken to boost UK seafarer training and employment, Nautilus warned on the first day of London International Shipping Week last month.

Opening a high-level seminar to put the spotlight on shore-based demand for experienced seafarers, general secretary Mark Dickinson warned of a long-term failure to recruit anything near the levels required to meet future needs.

Expert speakers said shore-based companies will face rising costs as the gap between supply and demand grows. And Phil Parry, chairman of the recruitment firm Spinnaker Global, revealed details of a survey carried out with Nautilus showing that almost two-thirds of former seafarers working ashore consider that seagoing experience is essential for their job.

Full report — see pages 22-23.

Inside

Members
Captain Hans Mateboer enjoys spinning a good yarn about the sea — page 5

Proposed
Plans to build a new waterway to rival the Panama Canal have divided the central American nation of Nicaragua. 15 years — page 6

London
International Shipping Week Updates on all the major debates at LISW. Welfare: your work your ship your life — pages 10-14

Ethane addition gives triple-fuel tanker the environmental edge

Pictured left is the Danish-registered gas tanker JS Ineos Insight — the first in a series of eight 27,500 cu m vessels which can operate on ethane, LNG or conventional diesel power.

Originally designed with dual-fuel LNG/diesel power, the ships were given the capability to also burn ethane using cargo gas while carrying ethane from the US to Ineos refineries in the UK.

Owned by the Danish firm Evergas, the Danish-registered JS Ineos Insight is classed by Bureau Veritas and business development manager Martial Claudepierre commented: 'The ability to burn ethane as well as LNG to power these unique vessels is a major step forward in the use of clean fuels.'

'Using ethane required extra engine room ventilation and additional

gas detection, plus modifications to the main engines including a lower compression ratio, different turbocharger nozzles and de-rating of the engine to cope with the lower knocking resistance of ethane,' he added. 'But the gains in not carrying an additional fuel and in environmental performance from being able to burn clean fuel throughout the voyage are significant.'



INTERNATIONAL

shortreports

CAPTAIN JAILED: the captain of a US tug has been jailed for six months after being found guilty of felony maritime negligence which led to a fatal explosion onboard his vessel in 2005. Prosecutors said Dennis Egan had illegally allowed a deckhand to use a propane torch to unfreeze a cargo pump, which resulted in an explosion that killed the deckhand and resulted in a 600,000 gallon oil spill in the Chicago Ship Canal.

MYANMAR ACTION: maritime authorities in Myanmar have revoked the seafarer recruitment and placement services licenses for five local companies, while suspending five others from sending seafarers to foreign countries, according to an official report. The action is being taken in a drive to ensure that the country complies with Maritime Labour Convention requirements.

COLLISION PROBE: an investigation has been launched into the cause of a collision between a containership and a UK-managed LPG tanker off the coast of Indonesia last month. Crew members on the Liberian-flagged Navigator Aries managed to extinguish as blaze after the collision with the Panama-registered boxship Leo Perdana.

BRITTANY ADDS: French operator Brittany Ferries is poised to place an order for a new ferry under a short-term fleet renewal plan. Chairman Jean-Marc Roué said the new ship would replace the 1989-built Bretagne following 'already significantly good results' this year.

CHINESE FINES: China's Transport Ministry has fined 21 container shipping lines a total of \$684,000 over allegations that they 'violated market conditions' services between China and Japan by providing customers with rates below officially quoted levels.

COOK RULES: a new French decree has updated the status of ship's cook, ruling that the job must be full-time on ships with 20 crew or more. The decree also sets requirements for ship cook qualifications, as well as hygiene and sanitation training.

ETV CHARTERS: France is to spend €22.1m to charter two emergency towing and anti-pollution vessels from the offshore support vessel operator Bourbon. The ships will be based in the ports of Brest and Toulon under a four-year contract.

GRIMALDI ORDER: Italy's Grimaldi Group has signed a \$165m order for three new vehicle carriers for delivery in 2017. To be built in China, the PCTC vessels will be able to carry up to 6,700 cars on eight decks.

CANAL CONCERN: French dockers' unions have expressed concern that a project to widen links from the river Seine to other northern Europe waterways will lead to a loss of jobs and traffic in French ports.

CRUISE BAN: the European Union has extended restrictions imposed on Russia, including a ban on European cruiseship calls at the Crimean peninsula and Sevastopol, until 23 June 2016.

Wind power helps cut ferry's fuel costs by 2.6%



Pictured left is the Finnish-flagged ro-ro Estraden, which has just completed successful sea trials of a new wind propulsion technology which claims to be able to cut fuel bills by up to 20%.

The 18,205gt Bore Line vessel — which operates on a service between the UK and the Netherlands — was fitted with a single 18m-high Norsepower Rotor Sail, delivering savings of 2.6% during the six-month trial period.

The company said the 'ground-breaking' trials showed that the system could pay for itself within four years — with two rotors capable of cutting fuel bills by 5% — and that even bigger efficiency savings could be achieved by equipping vessels with multiple rotors.

France ordered to re-pay SNCM aid

Union accuses European Court of 'provocation' with subsidy judgment

by Jeff Apter

→ The European Court has rebuked France for failing to recover €220m 'illicit' state aid given under a public service contract for 'lifeline' ferry services between the French mainland and Corsica.

The money was given to the Mediterranean ferry operator by the Corsican regional authority between 2007 and 2013 to support SNCM services in the high season, and the court determined that it was 'incompatible' with state aid rules and distorted competition with operators such as Corsica Ferries.

In May 2013 the European Commission ordered the aid to be repaid within four months — a decision which France and SNCM fought to have annulled.

France argued that the subsidy was needed to avoid the collapse of the company, with the loss of some 1,500 jobs.

France also claimed that the liquidation of SNCM would result in a new public service contract having to be agreed for the services — posing another threat to the continuity of 'lifeline' services to Corsica.

But the European Court rejected these arguments, accusing France of a failure to fulfil its obligations.

Its judgement stated that Corsica could be supplied by vessels from other companies or by air if SNCM went bust — even if there was a long-term blockade in protest at the situation. 'The court considers that it was not absolutely impossible for France to recover the aid,' it added.

No further appeal is possible and the European Commission, which has ordered SNCM to repay after the court's first ruling, could impose fines on France if it does not execute the order.

A separate EC demand to recuperate a further €220m of subsidy paid during SNCM's privatisation in 2006 is still pending but has not yet been reactivated.

Jean-Philippe Chateil, general secretary of the officers' union FOMM-CGT, said that while the court's decision was not unexpected, it was published to coincide with SNCM's summer season — when it services are expected to do well.

He said the timing appeared to be a provocation and the unions would continue to press the government to consider the demands as null and void.

SNCM went into receivership in November 2014, but attempts to find a new owner have been delayed as a result of a decision by the commercial court in Marseilles to reject the three bids submitted and to order a new tender for the operations.

Unions had opposed all three proposed takeover packages. But they called off planned strike action when the Marseilles court agreed with the SNCM works council's view that none of the offers was acceptable and ordered the administrators to organise a further tender.

Consideration of any new offers has been put back to 25 September — two months before the end of the court's period of observation, after which SNCM will either have a new owner or face liquidation.

Officer jailed for oil dumping

→ A Russian chief officer has been jailed for three months by a US court after being found guilty of breaching pollution laws by dumping oily waste from a UK-managed ship.

Valerii Georgiev had admitted failing to maintain an accurate oil record book in violation of the Act to Prevent Pollution from Ships (APPS) when he was serving chief

mate onboard the Norbulk Shipping managed reefer Murcia Carrier last year.

Prosecutors said that Mr Georgiev had ordered crew onboard the Panama-flagged vessel to dump several barrels containing hydraulic oil overboard in international waters 280nm NE of Miami, during a voyage from Costa Rica to New Jersey.

'While Georgiev disputes the

number of barrels dumped into the sea, the government believes that about 20 barrels of hydraulic oil were dumped overboard,' the US Department of Justice (DOJ) said.

The dumping was not recorded in the ship's oil record book and prosecutors said that, when questioned by US Coast Guard officers, Mr Georgiev denied that dumping had occurred. He was also said to have

instructed crew members to lie to investigators and to present falsified oil and garbage record books when they boarded the Murcia Carrier.

Glasgow-based Norbulk Shipping was earlier fined \$750,000 and placed on probation for three years after pleading guilty to failing to maintain an accurate logbook and for providing false statements about the logbook.

Ferry master appeals against pollution penalty

→ A French court has called for crucial evidence to be submitted in an appeal against €650,000 fines imposed on the master and the owner of a Tunisian ferry accused of pollution off the coast of France.

Lawyers are challenging the €500,000 penalty

on the ferry operator CTN and the €150,000 fine for the master of the 31,647gt ferry Carthage after they were found guilty of pollution off the French Mediterranean coast in October 2009.

They have complained of 'inexact and sometimes incoherent' prosecution evidence

about the movements of the ship. A video taken by a surveillance aircraft has never been lodged with the court, despite an order from magistrates and the appeal court is now seeking more information from the pilot of the aircraft who reported the alleged pollution.

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Australian row over job losses

Government policy attacked as tanker operator switches to foreign crew

→ Protests were held in mainland Australia and Tasmania last month after a ruling outlawing industrial action by the crew of a ship who faced being replaced by cheaper foreign seafarers.

Australia's Fair Work Commission dismissed an appeal by the Maritime Union of Australia and ordered that the 36 crew serving on the Teekay products tanker Alexander Spirit should end their week-long stoppage.

The seafarers had refused to sail the 40,100dwt ship because they had been told they were going to be replaced by an 'international' crew when it arrived in Singapore.

MUA assistant national secretary Ian Bray said the move to change crewing arrangements had been taken by ship's charterer, Caltex, and was 'driven purely by the desire for increased profit'.

He accused the company of treating the Australian seafarers — who had been contracted until 2019 — with contempt. Caltex had refused to guarantee that it will not return to domestic shipping routes with a full foreign crew, the MUA warned.

The union has been campaigning against the loss of Australian-flagged and crewed tonnage, warning that there are now only two national-crewed vessels carrying fuel around the country's coast compared with 11 in 1996.



Demonstrators take to the street in Tasmania to protest at the loss of Australian seafarers' jobs

'The MUA believes Australian refining and Australian shipping remain a vital part of ensuring our fuel security into the future and unless the government does something, we are forecast to have no refineries and no Australian shipping within a few years,' it said. 'We would have no insurance policy against any major supply shock — whether it be from a refinery fire in Singapore, a terrorist or piracy attack in the Straits of Malacca, or environmental trag-

edy on the Great Barrier Reef,' Mr Bray added.

The union has accused the current government of giving the green light for shipping companies to dump Australian crews, with plans to remove the current legal protections in the Coastal Trading Act.

Australia's Labour Party warned that the government's plans to reform shipping laws would allow foreign-flagged vessels to trade between the coun-

try's ports for up to 183 days a year, paying 'third world' wages to their crews and undercutting domestic operators.

The International Transport Workers' Federation has backed the MUA. Maritime coordinator Jacqueline Smith commented: 'The ITF urges Caltex to reconsider its decision and to support Australian seafarers in the carriage of domestic cargoes. Your country's fuel and national security is at risk, as well as local jobs.'

Union condemns 'dire' bulker

The mining firm Rio Tinto has launched an investigation after an inspection revealed that Filipino seafarers on one of its chartered ships had not been paid any wages for more than two months and were running short of food last month. Unions complained after 'dire conditions' were discovered onboard the Panama-flagged bulk carrier AOM Milena during checks in the Australian port of Gladstone.

The 76,606dwt Japanese-owned vessel is being used by Rio Tinto to transport bauxite between Australian ports.

'If Rio Tinto wanted to transport this bauxite by road or rail, they would need to pay Australian minimum wages and adhere to Australian health and safety regulations, but because they transport it by sea they can avoid those requirements and slash costs,'

said Maritime Union of Australia official Dean Summers.

'It is completely unacceptable that the workers carrying this task out should be forced to go months without pay,' he added. 'What we are seeing is vicious, nasty penny-pinching on a vessel chartered by one of the wealthiest companies on earth.'

A spokesman for Rio Tinto said the company took such allegations

very seriously and was seeking immediate assurances from the owners that any issues would be resolved without delay.

'The wellbeing, terms and conditions of the people serving on vessels chartered to carry Rio Tinto cargo is of the utmost importance to us,' a spokesman said.

'We will do everything possible under our contract to ensure the crew receive their full entitlements.'

Greek owners pressed on tax

The anti-austerity government in Greece has bowed to European Commission pressure to increase the taxes that the country's shipowners pay. Under a proposed bail-out agreement drawn up last month, the Greek government promised to raise the level of tonnage tax and to gradually remove the industry's special tax status.

The maritime measures are a key part of a series of economic reforms put to the European Union and the International Monetary Fund by Greece last

month following calls from European Commission president Jean Claude Juncker for the country's owners to shoulder more of the costs of easing the nation's debt problems.

Under the 1967 Greek constitution owners pay no tax on international earnings brought into the country. There is no tax on profits from shipping nor on ship sales. Some reports suggest the Greek shipping industry has a tax burden of about 3%, compared with an average of 20% to 25% for

shore-based companies. But the Union of Greek Shipowners (UGS) claims that tax revenues from shipping have increased more than eightfold since 2013.

The industry voluntarily agreed to double its tonnage tax payments between 2014 and 2017, UGS says, resulting in total receipts of €420m. 'Moreover, since 2013, vessels flying foreign flags operated/managed by offices established in Greece became subject to Greek tonnage tax,' it argued.

shortreports

ACTION BACKED: the European Transport Workers' Federation has voiced its support for the Greek seafaring union PNO in a dispute with the country's shipowners. The union had been planning to stage a 24-hour strike last month, accusing operators of violating collective labour agreements, cutting manning scales, reducing pension rights and using uninsured crew members. It postponed the action to enable people to travel on ferries to vote in a national referendum.

CALAIS EXPANSION: the European Commission has approved a €260m public investment scheme to support an €880 project to expand the port of Calais so that it can handle a new generation of large ferries. European transport commissioner Margarethe Vestager said the project will strengthen cross-Channel links and trade between the UK, Ireland and western Europe.

RUSSIAN RULES: Russia's transport ministry is considering new rules to restrict tanker operations in its Arctic waters to Russian-flagged ships. If adopted, the law will prohibit companies from exporting Russian Arctic oil and gas with foreign-registered ships. The rules would have a significant effect on the country's owners, as most of them operate under foreign flags.

SHORTSEA DEAL: the German shortsea operator ODPR has been taken over by the French firm CMA CGM after European competition regulators approved the acquisition without any conditions. OPDR was part of the Bernhard Schulte group and specialises in shortsea services between northern Europe, the Canary Islands, the Iberian peninsula and Morocco.

GUARDS GO-AHEAD: France has given the go-ahead to three private security companies to deploy guards on French flagged ships in high-risk pirate zones. The companies — one based in the UK, one in France and one in Greece — are the first to be approved since the law on private maritime security companies was changed in July last year.

SCRAPPING AID: China has given a two-year extension to a subsidy programme to encourage shipping companies to scrap old vessels. The scheme, which began in 2013 and was due to end this year, gives shipping lines grants worth US \$242 per gross ton to replace ageing ships with newer, more environmentally-friendly tonnage.

SKIPPER SENTENCED: a court in Paris court has sentenced the skipper of a river Seine cruise vessel to prison, suspended for three years, for the death of a pilot and a six-year-old child following a collision in September 2008. The court also suspended his licence for breaching security and speed limit rules on the river.

FRENCH REGISTER: ten years after it was established with 80 ships on its books, the French international ship register (RIF) has hit the 300 vessel mark. The register has been recently boosted by the offshore support vessel operator Bourbon and an increasing number of superyachts.

WERE YOU AWARE that following the successful outcome of a judicial review in respect of two Seatax clients, (brought before the Courts by Nautilus in collaboration with Seatax Ltd as expert advisors on the Seafarers Earnings Deduction), it was deemed that the two Seatax clients did have a legitimate expectation in applying the only published Revenue Practice with regard to the application of a day of absence in relation to a vessel sailing between UK ports. HMRC did not want to accept this practice (although referred to in their very own publications) but have now accepted that expectations of a claim based on such practice would be valid until the published practice is withdrawn. Following on from this, HMRC have now confirmed that this Practice is withdrawn as of the 14 February 2014. Seatax was the only Advisory Service that challenged HMRC on this point.

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SEAFARERS AWARENESS WEEK

Reaching out to young people, online and offline

Maritime careers were at the heart of this year's Seafarers Awareness Week on 20-28 June, which saw hundreds of British maritime organisations using social media such as Facebook, Twitter and Flickr to reach out to potential recruits.

Coordinated by Seafarers UK, the week's events kicked off with an online Q&A session on maritime careers, where industry experts and training colleges answered questions and gave advice to young participants.

Additionally, many companies, organisations and individuals posted and shared stories during the week using the hashtag #seafarersweek, and supporters such as Nautilus International created news stories on their websites and social media pages.

Numerous 'real-world' events were also staged around the UK between 20 and 28 June, raising awareness of the industry among the general public as well as promoting sea careers.

Among all the maritime conferences, nautical college open days, charity abseils and fundraising dinners, the most prestigious event was surely the Seafarers UK reception at the International Maritime Organisation in London.

Attended by IMO secretary-general Koji Sekimizu, the reception took place on 25 June, the international Day of the Seafarer. It attracted over 150 top industry guests, who gathered to watch the premiere of a series of short films commissioned by Seafarers UK — see right for the full story.

Gala premiere for recruitment films

Nautilus member Georgia Atkins has a starring role in a new film to promote seafaring careers, which was premiered at the International Maritime Organisation headquarters in London last month.

Unveiled on the international Day of the Seafarer, 25 June, the film is one of five short features commissioned by the charity Seafarers UK to spread the message about work in shipping.

Nick Harvey, campaigns manager with the charity, said the films follow a variety of young people starting out on their careers at sea and were part of a programme to reach a huge audience, especially via social media.

Georgia, who has studied at Warsash Maritime Academy, is a Holland America Line deck cadet and said she was delighted to have been given the opportunity to encourage others to follow her footsteps.

'I would have loved to have seen what this film shows,' she said. 'It is the best career I can imagine.'

'People at my school had no idea what to do with me when I said I wanted to join the Merchant Navy rather than go through UCAS and off to university,' she added.

Georgia had originally considered becoming a lawyer or a teacher, but became interested in shipping after her father retired from the police and started work as a cruiseship security officer. 'I visited a bridge for the first time



have been working with,' she added. 'Everyone has been so helpful and so positive, and they have supported me all the way. They know you are the future of the industry and they really want to help you succeed.'

The films can now be viewed on YouTube and downloaded for free for use by careers advisers in schools and colleges — go to www.seafarers-uk.org/lights-camera-action to get a direct link to each one. Introduced by Anshie Patel from the Institute of Marine Engineering, Science and Technology (IMarEST), the five individual films are:

- On the High Seas — The Merchant Navy, featuring Georgia
- Seafarers Cruising to Success, featuring Royal Caribbean deck cadet Robert Mackin-Lang onboard Anthem of the Seas
- A Life Without Limits — The Royal Navy, featuring engineering trainee Beatrice Ramoala training on board HMS Northumberland
- Super Jobs on Superyachts, featuring UK Sailing Academy-trained Jamie Guerreiro, who now works on a superyacht
- The New World of Workboats, featuring Jack Owen, a trainee with Holyhead Towing Company

The guests at the IMO were also treated to a preview of the forthcoming Seavision Career Navigator portal, a new website designed to host career information and guidance for those seeking the whole picture of maritime job opportunities at sea and ashore.



Reminding retirees of their time at sea

Pictured above is comedian Tim Vine with Duncan Glass, chairman of the Royal Alfred Seafarers Society, which teamed up with the Shipwrecked Mariners' Society to mark Seafarers Awareness Week with a maritime photography exhibition.

Mr Vine was one of many high-profile guests at the 25 June exhibition, held in the grounds of the Royal Alfred's care home and sheltered housing site Weston Acres in Surrey.

The photographs on display were the winning entries in last year's maritime photography competition run by the

Shipwrecked Mariners' Society. The competition is being held again this year and will accept entries up to 7 August 2015.

Royal Alfred chief executive Commander Brian Boxall-Hunt said it had been a pleasure to host the exhibition, which had helped to celebrate the society's 150th anniversary as well as Seafarers Awareness Week. 'Memory therapies are very important for the care of a lot of our residents, especially those in the specialist dementia annex,' he added, 'so the exhibition should prove a great way of reminding them of their time at sea.'



Spreading the word in Southampton

The UK Merchant Navy Welfare Board (MNWB) seized the opportunity of Seafarers Awareness Week to, well, raise awareness!

Even in the port city of Southampton, not everyone is familiar with the important work done by seafarers, so the MNWB went out into the local

community to get the message out via an exhibition stand in the busy West Quay shipping centre.

Manning the newly-designed Seafarer Support stand (pictured above) were MNWB volunteers Sally Oliver, Ally Whitfield, Louise Furber and Peter Tomlin.

This was the first time the Board had independently manned an exhibition stand in the public domain, and it was very well received. The volunteers reported hearing comments such as 'We didn't know these services even existed' and 'It's the first time we've seen the MN represented'.

www.irishseafarerstax.ie

Like many mariners, Captain Hans Mateboer enjoys spinning a good yarn about the sea. And he has a very specific audience in mind, hears SARAH ROBINSON...

'No, the sea's not in my family — they own a carpet factory!' It's an unusual start to an interview with a Nautilus member, as we tend to find ourselves chatting about how Uncle Jim was an officer with Shell, and Grandad served in the wartime convoys. Captain Hans Mateboer, however, had a rather different source of inspiration for his career.

'I became fascinated by the sea at three years old because of a book,' he explains. 'I remember there was a tug called Captain, and I was so interested that I went on to become the town's expert on the sea.'

Little Hans lived inland in the Netherlands, an hour's drive from the coast, so he had never seen a merchant vessel with his own eyes. But he took every opportunity to go boating on local lakes, and never wavered from his ambition to become a shipmaster.

In his teen years, his transition from nautical enthusiast to qualified seafarer was greatly helped by the Dutch school system, which encouraged pupils throughout the country to consider maritime careers. 'At my high school, the teachers knew all about nautical colleges,' remembers Hans. 'And shipping companies would come in and talk to us. Some of them told us about jobs in tugs and heavy-lifting, but the one that most interested me was Holland America Line.'

The next step was to enrol at the nautical college at Delfzijl, and to find a berth as a trainee officer. Hans got his start in 1975 with the Dutch-flagged vessels run by Blue Funnel/Elder Dempster. And after a short spell with East Asiatic in the early 1980s, he eventually achieved his goal of working for Holland America.

Those were good years, he recalls, with the company encouraging him to work his way up to the level of master; he got his certificate via Delfzijl in 1988 and his first command in 1992. Then, in 1996, he was given an offer he couldn't refuse: to be one of Disney Cruise Line's first captains, taking command of the Disney Magic when it entered service in 1998.

It turned out to be quite an experience. 'Sometimes there could be 1,500 children onboard,' he marvels. 'So different from other companies. As you would expect from Disney, it was very much focused on the entertainment side. Part of my job was to discuss with the management how some entertainment idea could work at sea — or maybe to explain that it wasn't possible.'

Working for Disney was an intense and valuable period in his career, but Capt Mateboer missed Hol-



Holland America Line master Hans Mateboer with the three Peter the Cruise Ship books published to date

Inspiration for a new generation

land America, and he re-joined that company in 2002. 'I always remained good friends with Holland America,' he says. 'They said they'd have me back one day, and they kept their promise.'

So there he was, back on a traditional cruise-ship at his favourite company, yet he wasn't quite the same person as before. Something about being around hundreds of children during those Disney years seems to have triggered an idea in Hans's head: he could write his own books for very young children, to inspire a future generation to take up

seafaring — just as he had been inspired by Captain the tug.

It wasn't his first attempt at creative writing; he had been sending off short stories (in English) about life at sea to nautical publications for many years. 'Writing is a good hobby to take with you onboard ship,' he muses. 'You can get absorbed in it — it's like a mini-vacation from your day-to-day business. And it's good to have an interest that's portable; you can hardly restore classic cars there.'

Hans had also contributed to his local newspaper in his hometown Genemuiden in the Netherlands. 'Some of us used to write for the paper in our local dialect, to help preserve the language,' he explains. Writing felt like a natural thing to do, he adds, as there were several published writers in his extended family.

All this experience gave him the confidence to try his hand at the notoriously tricky genre of children's picture books, and Peter the Cruise Ship was born.

Peter is a friendly young liner who gets into various nautical scrapes with his friends Gulp the oil tanker, Slick the container ship and Rusty the old cargoship. There's also a sort-of friend called Push the tug, but the other ships are a bit wary of him because he's grumpy and keeps bumping into them.

Peter and his friends travel the world having fun and getting into scrapes, and there's often a lesson to learn (Push isn't so bad, because he's always there to rescue other vessels from a tight spot). Along the way, the author gently inserts little nuggets of maritime information to spark his young readers' interest in seafaring, like this:

Peter carefully steers toward the ocean. The red and the green buoys warn him of shallow water.

There are now three Peter picture books — Peter the Cruise Ship, Peter the Cruise Ship to Alaska! and Peter the Cruise Ship and the Pirates. Hans produced them in conjunction with Michael LaDuca, an illustrator who he's never actually met face to face. 'The way it works is I make some sketches and a plan of the book, which I send to the illustrator in New York,' he explains, 'then we work together to develop the drawings using a shared computer screen.'

He publishes the books himself, under his label Captain's Publishing, and admits it was harder than he anticipated to get the first title into print, taking about three years from when he first started writing. Part of the process involves getting the text checked by American or British friends to make sure the English flows naturally. Although Hans is now based in the USA and speaks English very well, he is aware that sometimes a phrase creeps in that indicates the author's first language is Dutch.

The drafts are also tested out on friends' children before the final version is produced, which can elicit some very encouraging feedback: 'One mother said her child wouldn't let her stop reading the first book, and she was so relieved when another story was ready...'

There are currently two main outlets for people to buy the Peter books: the US-based Captain's Publishing website and the shops onboard cruiseships. 'There's one company that supplies most of the onboard shops,' says Hans, 'and once they agreed to take the books, they put them on sale with Carnival, Holland America, Cunard and Royal Caribbean — although ironically not Disney, as they only sell their own brands on their ships.' As with any titles featured here in the Telegraph, the Peter books will also now be available via the UK-based Marine Society Shop.

What next for Peter the cruise ship? 'I haven't completed a new book for a while now,' says Hans, 'but I have a lot of ideas. I have plans for a character called Snorkel the submarine, and for a Christmas book about Peter.'

He likes to respond to his readers, he adds: 'In the pirate book, I introduced a girl character, Creola the yacht, when I heard that girls liked the books as much as boys. And if the big ferry companies wanted to sell the books onboard one day, maybe we could have a new ferry character with their young passengers in mind — a ship who's always in a hurry!'

To purchase the Peter books online, go to www.captainspublishing.com (best for buyers based in the USA or Canada) or www.marinesocietyshop.org (best for buyers based in the UK and continental Europe).



Young Hans on a visit to Liverpool with Elder Dempster's Freetown in 1976

MARITIME INFRASTRUCTURE

Plans to build a new waterway to rival the Panama Canal have divided the central American nation of Nicaragua. JEREMY DEAR reports on the controversial project and what it could mean for merchant shipping...

Work has begun on a project to build a 278km canal across the central American state of Nicaragua. Three times as long and almost twice as deep as its rival in Panama, Nicaragua's \$50bn canal will be the world's largest civil engineering project.

Up to 520m wide and 27.6m deep, the canal will be able to handle the world's new generation of ultra-large containerships — including those already too large to navigate the Panama Canal.

The scale and dimensions of the project — the biggest civil earth-moving operation in history — are astonishing. It will require the construction of a 395 sq km artificial lake and feature two sets of colossal locks, each with three consecutive chambers, accommodating bulk carriers of up to 400,000dt.

Rivers will be widened and deepened as part of the five-year construction project, which will also include two deep-water ports, a railway, two new cities, tourist complexes, a free trade zone, an international airport, power, cement and steel plants, and an extensive network of new roads.

Proposed: the perfect passage to the Pacific



A ship passes through the Panama Canal. Nicaragua claims the existing waterway will struggle to keep pace with the growth in ship sizes and increased seaborne trade. Picture: Jeremy Dear

The project's lead investor, Hong Kong Nicaragua Development Company (HKND) — headed by Wang Jing, a Chinese billionaire — claims the canal is essential to meet the rapid growth of east-west trade and

ship sizes.

He argues that up to 10% of ships in the world fleet are presently unable to use the Panama Canal and, despite its US\$5bn expansion, the waterway will only be capable of handling

ships up to 13,000TEU and 336m in length.

Projected growth in global maritime trade will cause further congestion and delays without a second route through the isthmus, the HKND suggests. On completion, an estimated 5% of global trade will pass through the Nicaraguan Canal and 3,576 ships are expected to transit the canal annually by 2020, increasing to 4,138 by 2030, and 5,097 by 2050.

'The Nicaragua Canal will be able to accommodate Super Post Panamax ships up to about 23,000TEU, and will offer the shortest shipping route between Asia and many US East Coast ports,' Mr Wang says.

'Vessel size growth has accelerated more than previously anticipated,' he adds. 'New shipbuilding orders for container vessels of 10,000TEU and above have grown far more than expected. This trend will end up putting additional strain on the newly expanded Panama Canal, leading to vessel congestion, queuing and delay costs, while at the same time leaving container lines operating 13,000-plus TEU vessels over-dependent on the Suez Canal.'

The developers claim the Nicaragua Canal would also deliver big savings for owners, cutting between 8,000 and 12,000km from voyage lengths between Asia and ports on the eastern seaboard of the US, the

Caribbean and Latin America, because they would not have to travel around Cape Horn.

Round-trip fuel savings for ULCSs on the Shanghai-to-Baltimore route passing through the Nicaragua Canal are estimated to be around \$1m.

“Rivers will be deepened and new cities and ports will be built, plus an airport and a network of new roads”

'Central America is at the centre of North-South and East-West global trade flows, and Nicaragua provides the perfect location for a new international shipping and logistics hub,' Mr Wang says.

'Shippers and shipping lines need faster delivery routes and the continually increasing cost efficiencies that come from much larger ships,' he adds. 'By accommodating the next generation of the world's

largest ships and by providing an alternative for Atlantic-Pacific trade, the Nicaragua Canal holds the potential for faster travel times, lower costs and added dependability. US and European exporters could profit handsomely as it will cut shipping costs to Asia. Petroleum and liquefied natural gas producers in particular stand to benefit.'

The company says the new canal will also improve the competitiveness of shipping iron ore between Latin America and Asia.

Keith Svendsen, head of daily operations at Maersk Line, has voiced support for the project. 'Building a Nicaragua Canal seems to make good sense,' he says. 'The canal is projected to have room for the biggest ships, while also saving 800km on a journey from New York to Los Angeles. When we built container ships 20 years ago they were scaled according to the Panama Canal, but the ships today are bigger. Even after the expansion of the Panama Canal, the biggest ships won't fit there.'

But critics claim the success of the project is far from assured. Panama Canal administrator Jorge Quijano warns that construction costs may spiral upwards to \$70bn or even \$100bn, and many analysts doubt the work can be

Nicaragua's China-backed canal

Nicaragua announced the start of work on a \$50 billion shipping canal, an infrastructure project backed by China that aims to rival Panama's waterway.



Construction of the new waterway will be run by Hong Kong-based HK Nicaragua Canal Development Investment Co Ltd (HKND Group), which is controlled by Wang Jing, a little-known Chinese telecom mogul well connected to China's political elite.

Sources: Gran Canal de Nicaragua, HKND Group, Reuters

R. Carrera 23/12/2014

REUTERS

MARITIME INFRASTRUCTURE

completed in just five years.

Some logistics experts suggest that canal transit tolls would have to be considerably higher than those in the Panama Canal for investors to benefit from the project, and that it would need to generate an annual income of about \$5bn — more than double that of its rival.

There are also doubts about the canal's ability to cut shipping times on the Asia-America route. Critics claim that, as the proposed waterway will be three times longer than Panama's, it will take longer to traverse — with a likely transit time of about 30 hours.

And questions have been raised about whether there would be sufficient supplies of water to operate two sets of locks in the event of deep and prolonged droughts that are anticipated in the region due to climate change — and whether building and operating the proposed canal is even feasible.

Nicaragua's canal will certainly face fierce competition. The China Harbour Engineering Company has offered to design, construct, and finance a fourth set of locks in Panama which — if built to the width of the proposed Nicaragua Canal — would be shorter and cheaper. China may also build a coast-to-coast railway line in Honduras, which could affect demand for the new waterway.

The project has already been dogged by controversy and, at times, deadly protests. HKND claims the route, from the mouth of Brito River in the Pacific Ocean,



Protestors take to the streets against the canal plans, accusing the country's leaders of selling the nation to foreign interests Picture: Jorge Mejia peralta

Activists accuse Nicaraguan president Daniel Ortega of selling the nation's heritage and riding roughshod over the rights of indigenous communities.

But the Nicaraguan government has hit back at critics, claiming the project will bring huge benefits to Latin America's second poorest country, lifting more than 400,000 Nicaraguans out of poverty, creating 250,000 jobs, reducing dependence on foreign aid and doubling economic growth to an average 11.6% per annum over the next five years.

worth more than the conquest of Mexico'.

Since then there have been dozens of proposals to construct a route across this stretch of central America sketched out by British, US, French, Belgian and German engineers. Napoleon III even wrote a detailed proposal for its construction while in jail. The US was all set to build the canal, but a last-minute vote in the Senate opted instead for Panama, where the French had already started work on the waterway.

Despite the doubters, and in the face of the protestors, Mr Wang remains defiant. He insists the project will be built, it will benefit global trade and local citizens and that history will be the judge. He is adamant: 'Actions speak louder than words. We want to be seen as heroes making history, not villains.'



Environmentalists warn that Lake Nicaragua's eco-systems are at risk Picture: Jeremy Dear

“Local trade unions support the canal because of the jobs created, but concerns remain over deforestation and water contamination”

through the Tule and Punta Gorda rivers and crossing a 105km stretch of Lake Nicaragua — the largest lake in Central America — before reaching the Southern Caribbean, has been chosen to minimise the impact on protected areas and wildlife, the area's water resources and indigenous territories, and to minimise the displacement of communities.

But opponents claim that 400,000 acres of forest would be destroyed during the construction and that up to 80,000 largely indigenous people may be forcibly displaced. Environmentalists, engineers and academics have expressed strong concerns about the threat to eco-systems, globally important wetland and endangered species as a result of dredging and maintaining a 103km long, 27m deep and up to 500m wide channel across Lake Nicaragua.

In addition, fears over the threats of seismic activity and the potential for contamination of the lake — which is a critical water source for drinking and irrigation — have sparked widespread protests.

Dozens of marches and roadblocks have been staged along the proposed canal route, leading to hundreds of injuries, arrests and violent clashes. Two protestors were killed during protests in Rivas in December.

Under a 50-year concession — which can be extended to 100 years — granted to HKND, Nicaragua will receive \$10m a year and will own 10% of the canal for the first 10 years. Every decade it will receive a further 10% stake, becoming a majority shareholder after half a century. As government adviser Paul Oquist says: 'We need a way out of poverty; the canal will provide this.'

Trade unions affiliated to the National Workers Front (FNT) support the canal because of the jobs that will be created directly and indirectly, and argue that without the new waterway Nicaragua will be consigned to decades of further poverty.

They also claim that environmental damage to the country's lakes and forests will be reduced by the alleviation of poverty in the area. And HKND argues the canal will be used by larger, more carbon-efficient ships which would reduce emissions by around 35%.

Tax revenues from the canal would be used to mitigate deforestation and the impact of climate change.

A canal through Nicaragua has been a dream of many an adventurous nation since Spanish Conquistador Hernán Cortés wrote in the 16th century that such a waterway would 'be

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INTERNATIONAL

shortreports

GREENPEACE RULING: an international court has ruled that Russia breached the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea by boarding Greenpeace's Dutch-flagged ship Arctic Sunrise in September 2013 and detaining its 30 crew members who were protesting about Arctic oil drilling. The Permanent Court of Arbitration in The Hague said Russia's 3nm 'safety zone' around the oil platform where the crew was arrested was neither valid nor enforceable and that it had no other legal basis to seize the vessel without the consent of the Netherlands.

SWEDISH SERVICE: SOL Continent Line and P&O Ferries have established a new service between Gothenburg, Tilbury and Teesport. The joint venture involves transshipment of freight at Zeebrugge, to which both companies have regular direct services. Four SOL Continent Line ships depart each week from Gothenburg bound for Zeebrugge while P&O Ferries has daily departures from Zeebrugge to the two UK ports.

TIANJIN ALARM: the US Coast Guard has expressed concern that ships visiting the Chinese port of Tianjin may have been exposed to potentially hazardous chemical residues, ash or other debris following the massive explosions in August. It has issued a safety alert urging vessels and facility agents, owners, masters, and operators to take steps to minimise the risk of possible contamination.

BOSPORUS BLOCKED: the Bosphorus was closed for a day in both directions last month as Turkish authorities worked to refloat a Panama-flagged bulk carrier which ran aground in the busy waterway. The 33,476dwt El Condor Pas was en route to the port of Samsun laden with iron ore when it grounded.

DIEPPE BOOST: the French port of Dieppe has reported a 25% rise in traffic for the first eight months of this year, most of it in cross-Channel trade. DFDS increased passenger numbers on its two ferries on the Newhaven service by 47.7% and its freight volumes by 37.1%, the port revealed.

LANGUAGE CALL: the French maritime officers' union CFE-CGC has written to ecology minister Ségolène Royal and maritime MP Arnaud Leroy to urge the government to make the use of the French language compulsory onboard French-flagged passenger ships.

DOCK DEATH: an Italian shipyard worker died and three others suffered serious injuries after the Italian-flagged research vessel Urania suddenly heeled portside and listed 30 degrees while dry-docked in a Livorno floating dock.

ARCTIC PASSAGE: two cruiseships operated by the French firm Ponant — Le Boréal and Le Soléal — have become the first to sail through the Northwest Passage from Greenland to Siberia, just three days apart.

COSCO BUILDS: China's largest shipping company, COSCO, has ordered 11 new 19,000TEU containerships at four domestic shipyards. The new ships are scheduled for delivery in 2018.

Sweden to bring in tonnage tax

Seafaring union welcomes long-awaited plan to end decline of the fleet

by Andrew Draper

→ Swedish seafaring unions and shipowners have welcomed their government's long-awaited announcement of plans to introduce a tonnage tax scheme.

Ministers say the new system will come into effect next July, ending years of foot-dragging and bringing Sweden onto a par with EU maritime nations.

'I am pleased that we will have a maritime tonnage tax system in place and I look forward to seeing more Swedish-flagged ships,' said infrastructure minister Anna Johansson. 'We know that this is very important in terms of jobs and it is a step along the way to achieving the lowest rate of unemployment in the European Union by 2020.'

Unions — who had been campaigning for the scheme for more than a decade, warning of the gradual disappearance of the shipping industry from Sweden — have welcomed the news. But they have pointed to difficulties surrounding the financing of the tax.

The SEKO seafarers' union said tonnage tax would help to create jobs throughout the entire maritime sector and boost the economy. Union spokesman Thomas Abrahamson commented: 'SEKO has long pushed the question of bringing in a tonnage tax system and is positive about the proposal. There are still issues around the financing, but on the whole it's positive that the proposal is coming now.'

There has been lively debate about the scheme on social

media, with many Swedish seafarers joining the conversation. Many said it would be 'too little too late', while others said the tax could help turn the tide and save Swedish seafaring jobs from disappearing abroad. Many owners have flagged vessels away from Sweden in recent years, leaving the fleet a shadow of its former self.

Shipping group Stena said the change would be a step in the right direction, but would not have an immediate impact. Anders Boman, spokesman for the owners' association, Svensk Sjöfart, said they regarded the government's decision as a 'long-term move that would save jobs in the entire Swedish maritime cluster'

'With the clear signals the government is now providing, we hope that our member compa-

nies can accommodate the future for Swedish shipping,' he added. 'There is a great potential that we must seize.'

Ahead of the tonnage tax announcement, the Swedish government presented a national maritime strategy plan that will focus on shipping, environment and people. Mr Boman said the proposals would set the basis for future renewed growth. Several owners have announced plans to register under the Swedish flag, including Stena and Donsötank. However, it came too late to stop ACL deciding to put its Swedish-registered fleet onto other flags.

The new regime requires EU approval and the government therefore thinks the earliest it can start is 1 July 2016. The unions have pressed for January as the start date.



Pictured above during its maiden voyage from the Far East to Europe last month is the world's largest pure car and truck carrier (PCTC) — the 75,717gt Höegh Target. The Norwegian-flagged vessel is the first in a series of six post-Panamax vessels being built for Höegh Autoliners over the next 18 months. The ships each have

some 71,400 sq m of deck space and capacity for up to 8,500 car equivalent units.

Höegh says a range of energy efficiency design features mean the ships will emit around 50% less CO₂ per car transported than a standard car carrier.

Picture: Eric Hour

US plan to boost its shipping

→ The head of the United States Maritime Administration (MARAD) has defended the Jones Act regulation protecting the country's coastal trades from foreign competition and has promised 'sweeping policy change' to boost US shipping.

Speaking at the International Chamber of Shipping's annual conference in London last month, Paul Jaenichen said the regulations reserving cabotage trades to US-flagged and US-crewed ships were essential.

'Every presidential administration for the last 90 years has supported the Jones Act and there's a reason for that,' he told the meeting. 'We have to have a US merchant marine, and the Jones Act is one way to maintain that, but also make sure that we continue to have an indigenous shipbuilding capacity and commercial base that supports not only commercial shipbuilding but also naval ships.'

Despite the support provided by the Jones Act, Mr Jaenichen said the US-flagged merchant fleet is continuing to decline — with a 25% reduction in ship numbers over the last three years alone.

The MARAD boss said the US government is developing a radical new maritime strategy package to combat the decline. It will aim to increase the competitiveness of the US flag with tax incentives and to recruit and train a new generation of US seafarers, with associated streamlining of the certification processes. The package will also include measures to expand the capacity of US 'gateway' ports.

Unions urge extra manning after 'wrong-way' TSS case

→ French seafaring unions have called for the European Commission to take immediate action to better regulate navigation in EU waters following an incident in which a Gibraltar-flagged cargoship sailed in the wrong direction in the Channel traffic separation scheme.

They criticised safety standards after the 2,545gt Musketier was intercepted after sailing for an hour in the wrong lane of the TSS and failing to respond to calls from the

coastguard and Channel Navigation Information Service.

'Once again, a coastal trader operating in European waters has put navigation in danger,' said FOMM CGT officers' union general secretary Jean-Philippe Chateil and ratings' union leader Michel Le Cavorzin.

'Nobody was on the bridge and the fatigue of an unskilled and a depleted non-EU crew are the main reasons for the incident that could have caused a serious accident,' Mr Chateil added.

The unions are calling for new rules to require the carriage of three officers capable of carrying out watchkeeping duties onboard all ship undertaking commercial voyages over 12 hours.

Meanwhile, the French accident investigation body BEAmer is looking into the reasons why the German-owned Musketier had failed to change course as it entered the Channel on a voyage from Russia to Spain. The vessel had been involved in a similar incident in 2011.

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Crane ship gets overhaul in France

The 18,330dwt crane ship **Wei-Li** is pictured leaving the Damen Shiprepair Dunkerque yard to sail to Rotterdam last month following 10 days of maintenance and repairs.

The Chinese-flagged vessel needed special dock bed arrangements in the yard — not least because of the 3,000 tonne crane mounted on its stern and its unconventional hull form.

A total of 225 blocks were required, along with an additional 56 steel pillars of up to 7m in length to support the stern. Wooden wedges also had to be added to the lateral blocks to take account of the unusual hull shape and to ensure complete stability in the drydock.

Work included blasting and painting the hull and the overhauling of the internal and overboard valves. The starboard propeller blades were also rebuilt and some major repairs were made to the accommodation.



Australian union warns over jobs

Cabotage plan would decimate national seafarer skills base, study finds

Australian government plans to open up the country's coastal trades to foreign shipping could decimate domestic seafaring employment, unions have warned.

Ministers have tabled legislation which will effectively grant foreign-flagged ships the unrestricted ability to trade in Australian waters, claiming that the relaxation of current controls will cut red tape, reduce freight costs and provide greater access to 'competitive international shipping services'.

The proposals would allow owners of foreign-flagged ships to pay their crews 'international' wages rather than Australian rates, so long as the ship spends

fewer than 183 days in Australian waters.

The Maritime Union of Australia (MUA) has described the bill as 'a national disgrace' and says it will destroy the country's shipping industry. 'It removes all preferential treatment for Australian ships, which has been at the heart of maritime and shipping policy in Australia for over a century,' it added. 'Removing the Australian flag from the back of Australian ships is an act of unilateral economic disarmament.'

The union points to a report by The Australia Institute, which warned 93% of Australian seafaring jobs could be lost if the new laws are introduced. 'The proposed (Bill) is likely to reduce

employment for relatively little economic benefit,' the study stated. 'What little benefit that is generated will accrue largely to foreign-owned shipping and bulk-freight using companies.'

Business groups claim the measures are needed to improve competitiveness by cutting costs for Australian manufacturers and exporters. The Business Council of Australia complained that the current rules mean that shippers have to pay twice as much to use Australian vessels, and mean that it can be cheaper to ship goods to Asia than between Australian ports.

The government says Australian seaborne trade is set to grow by 80% over the next 15 years, but

cabotage trades will expand by only 15% without relaxation of the rules.

But opposition MPs are concerned about the threats to safety, security and employment posed by the increased presence of flag of convenience shipping in the country's waters.

'The changes would dismantle the level playing field created by the former Labor government, which allowed foreign vessels to work domestic routes but required them to pay Australian level wages while engaged in domestic trade,' the MUA added. 'It is in Australia's economic, environmental and security interests to maintain a viable local shipping industry.'

Canadian seafarers in court challenge to government

A maritime union in Canada is taking the country's government to court over the issue of work permits to foreign seafarers working in the country's coastal waters at rates as low as C\$2 (€1.33) an hour.

The Seafarers International Union of Canada filed two suits against the federal government in Vancouver last month, seeking a judicial review of the use of temporary work permits for foreign crews on internationally-flagged ships in Canadian waters.

The union complains that around 4,000 temporary work permits have been handed out to foreign seafarers since 2013 — at a time when unemployment among Canadian crews is running at 25%.

SIU president Jim Given said shipping companies are abusing the system to employ foreign crews for a fraction of what Canadians would be paid. 'The law is very simple,' he added. 'They're giving work permits to foreign workers on ships in Canadian waters when the law says those jobs should go qualified Canadians first.'

'There needs to be a maritime policy and there needs to be a policy on temporary foreign workers when it comes to seafarers.'

Canadian law requires that ships carrying passengers or goods between the country's ports may only use foreign workers if no qualified Canadian workers are available, the union argues.

Under the Coasting Trading Act, operators can

apply for an exemption from the requirement to use a Canadian vessel if none is shown to be available. Once an exemption is gained, work permits for the foreign crew have to be sought.

Canada's Border Services Agency issued 142 exemptions to foreign ships last year, to enable their crews to work legally in Canada, and a further 59 have been granted so far this year.

'The government of Canada is wilfully ignoring the law and giving up on qualified, ready-to-work Canadian seafarers,' said Mr Given.

'We cannot sit by and watch while foreign workers are being given work permits and paid as little as \$2 an hour to work in Canadian waters,' he added.

shortreports

WRECK SUPPORT: Panama and Cyprus have become the latest countries to sign up to the 2007 Nairobi International Convention on the Removal of Wrecks. The treaty places strict liability on owners for locating, marking and removing wrecks deemed to be a hazard, and makes state certification of insurance, or other form of financial security for such liability, compulsory for ships of 300gt and above. The 25 contracting states now represent more than 58% of world merchant shipping tonnage.

COSTLY SALVAGE: the four-year salvage of the containership *Rena*, which ran aground on a reef off the New Zealand port of Tauranga in 2011, has cost almost NZ\$500m (€283m) — making it the second most expensive shipwreck in history. The vessel's owners, Daina Shipping, are seeking court permission to leave the rest of the ship on the Astrolabe Reef, arguing that it poses no environmental threat and removing it could be dangerous.

EVERGREEN ORDER: Taiwan's Evergreen Group has signed a deal for 10 new 2,800TEU feederships to be built by the Japanese yard Imabari. Due for delivery between 2018 and 2019, the 211m ships will be deployed on intra-Asia routes, and have a special wide hull design for operation in shallow waters, as well as an electronic-controlled fuel injection engine, which will cut emissions by around 20% in comparison with conventional vessels.

VESSEL BOARDED: Portuguese Navy special forces boarded the Liberian-flagged cargoship *Rene A* off the country's coast last month after a Turkish crewman attacked a shipmate and threatened to kill other seafarers onboard. The seafarer — who had also threatened to set the ship's cargo on fire — was arrested by a team from the naval vessel *NRP António Enes*, which was sent to the scene when the ship sent a distress call.

IDLE BOXSHIPS: the number of laid-up containerships has risen to the highest point in a year, closing in on the 500,000TEU capacity mark according to the industry analysts Alphaliner. In a report published last month, it said there were 175 idle boxships at the end of August, totalling 484,000TEU capacity. Alphaliner warned that the total is set to rise further in October following the end of the peak season.

MLC BOOST: China has become the latest country to ratify the Maritime Labour Convention (MLC) 2006, although its provisions will not apply to the Hong Kong and Macau Special Administrative Regions for the time being. The convention has now been ratified by 66 flag states accounting for more than 80% of world gross tonnage.

DANISH CALL: Danish seafarer unions have urged the country's government to make maritime skills a priority in its new 'blue growth' team to strengthen the country's shipping sector.

GAS FERRIES: leading Spanish ferry operator Baleària Eurolíneas Marítimas has ordered two ferries that will be the first newbuilds in Spain to run on LNG.

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LONDON INTERNATIONAL SHIPPING WEEK

What next when you



Professor Heather McLaughlin, director of Canterbury Christ Church University Business School



Phil Parry, Spinnaker Global chairman



Susan Thomson, master mariner, marine and projects superintendent with BP



Arjen Uytendaal, managing director of Nederland Maritiem Land

If a country wants a successful maritime cluster, then it needs to encourage — shore-based jobs in the industry. This challenge was faced head-on at the Nautilus

→ Nautilus International made sure that the issue of maritime skills was high on the agenda during London International Shipping Week — hosting a seminar on the opening day to focus on shore-based demand for experienced seafarers.

Opening the meeting, general secretary Mark Dickinson warned: 'It is people who make our shipping and maritime services the success that they are. And without a steady supply of skilled and experienced seafarers there can be no doubt that the sustainability of this vital sector faces a grim future.'

The drastic decline in UK seafarer numbers — from more than 90,000 just a few decades ago to fewer than 30,000 today — will continue as a consequence of the downturn in recruitment which set in during the 1980s, he pointed out.

Recruitment into the shipping industry has failed for more than 25 years to reach the levels needed to ensure an adequate supply of seafarers to fill vital posts in maritime industries and services ashore, he added.

Research in the 1990s had suggested that between 1,350 and 1,500 new cadets are needed each year — but this figure has not been reached for more than 30 years, Mr Dickinson said, and even the tonnage tax training link has failed to get the total much beyond two-thirds of the target.

Professor Heather McLaughlin, former special advisor to the House of Commons transport committee and now Director of Canterbury Christ Church University Business School, told the meeting that the UK maritime industry employs 132,000 people in shore-based jobs — and seafaring skills and experience are deemed essential for almost 10,000 of these posts, including marine surveyors, ship managers, maritime colleges, classification societies, ports and salvage.

The fall in UK seafarer numbers has serious implications for the maritime cluster, she pointed out. The number of serving UK officers has dropped from more than 14,300 in 1997 to less than 11,000 today, and there are forecasts that it will fall to fewer than 8,000 by the end of this decade.

There have been plenty of studies over the past 20 years to highlight the scale of the problem, Prof McLaughlin explained, and these have also demonstrated the global nature of the shortage — meaning that it is hard for employers to bring in former seafarers from abroad to fill shore-based posts in the UK.

One study suggests that the gap between supply and demand for former seafarers will rise to almost 4,000 by 2021, she said. While it forecasts that just over 2,000 of these posts could be filled by non-UK and EU nationals, there will still be a 'significant shortfall', she warned.

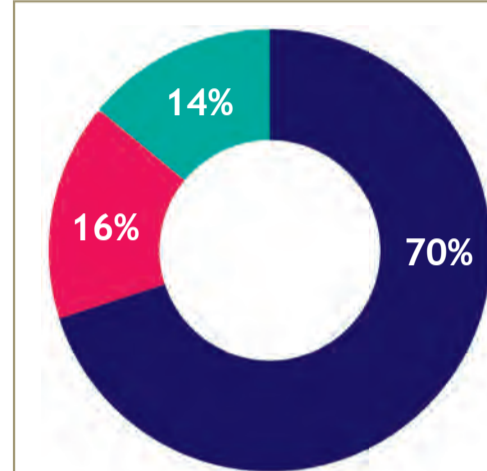
Against this backdrop, there is evidence that some companies are downgrading their requirements for seagoing experience, Prof McLaughlin noted, and others have been looking at other ways to fill the posts.

However, she warned, companies will face increased training costs to cover for the gaps in maritime expertise, and they will also face a growing risk of having personnel 'poached' by competitors. In turn, there could be a loss of quality, a greater threat of companies relocating overseas and of reduced UK competitiveness in maritime services.

Prof McLaughlin said there is scope for the maritime sector to address these challenges by doing more to encourage seafarers to stay within the 'cluster' when they leave the sea. Companies should do more to market the sector, with a strong employment brand and work to safeguard skills through communities of practice.

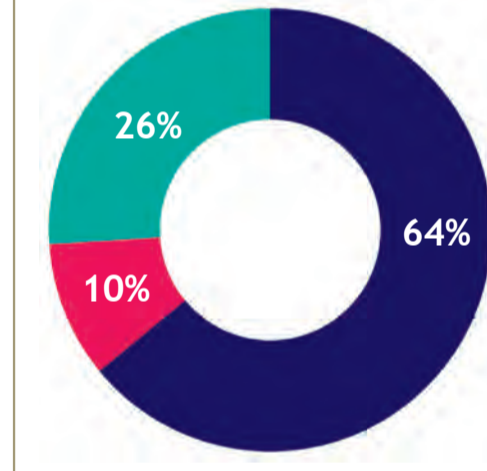
She also called for more work to be done to examine who the modern seafarer is and what makes them move into related shore-based employment.

Two-thirds of former seafarers working ashore believe that seagoing experience is essential for their job, according to a survey carried out by Nautilus and the maritime recruitment firm Spinnaker Global. Almost 400 ex-seafarers took part in the



Would you recommend a career in the maritime sector?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure



Is seagoing experience necessary for your job?

- A necessity for my job
- Not necessary for my job
- Preferred for my job

questionnaire, and Spinnaker chairman Phil Parry told the Nautilus seminar that the findings were highly significant — and, in some areas, quite surprising.

A total of 43 different nationalities responded and the participants were currently, or most recently, employed in 51 different countries. Aged between 25 and 75, they had come ashore between 1969 and 2015.

One-fifth of those taking part were aged over 60, and 26% were aged between 50 and 60, Mr Parry explained.

Just over one in 10 had come ashore aged between 18 and 25, while 18% had swallowed the anchor between the ages of 26 and 30. A further 45% had left the sea in their 30s and 24% between the age of 41 and 55.

One in 10 had come ashore with less than six years of seagoing experience and a similar proportion had more than 30 years of seafaring, Mr Parry added.

Family connections were the most common reason why survey participants had gone to sea — cited by 43%. Almost 30% said they had first heard about seafaring through school or college careers advisors, and 9% said they had come across seafaring through internet research.

Some 70% of those taking part said they would recommend seafaring as a career choice, with only 16% saying they would advise against it and 14% being unsure. 'This was very pleasing to see, as we get so used to doom and gloom,' Mr Parry said. 'It's a good news story and, in fact, this figure may get even better as maritime training offers the opportunity to get a degree without getting into debt.'

The survey showed that only 22% of companies identify, train and develop seafarers ahead of bringing them ashore. 'Generally speaking, they are reactive — but, to be fair to employers, many of them are now doing something about it,' Mr Parry said.

However, he added, only 23% of participants thought that the industry generally succeeds in recruiting into shore-based management roles those people who have the best management aptitude.

Mr Parry said there was evidence that some companies are not using their former seafarers in an efficient way and have been using them to do work where maritime skills are not required. 'Some employers are redefining roles so that seafarers are

being used in cells of expertise, with the job being moved to lower-cost areas.

The quality of an organisation is critical in such areas, Mr Parry explained, and can make a huge difference to morale and productivity.

In addition, he said, many companies are looking for advice about their recruitment needs and about how to attract former seafarers. 'There is a pressing need for young people to get better guidance at the start of their careers, in particular about the prospects for life after the sea.'

“BP is looking at its future needs and offers the sea-to-shore routes for staff”

Master mariner Susan Thomson is working to develop a new generation of maritime professionals — employing former seafarers and looking ahead to its needs for the next five to 10 years, with a recognition that success is linked to its staff.

'BP is different from many organisations as we are the shipping company and we are required to develop maritime expertise to support our operations, as well as for our shipping operations,' she said.

Ms Thomson said BP offered the

Swallow the anchor?

— and train — its seafarers to take up Nautilus seminar 'Shore Enough'...

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routes for staff — an accelerated development programme (ADP), direct hire and secondment.

The ADP — which currently has 13 students — is intended to provide a structured and long-term path for seafarers seeking a shore-based position. Candidates are selected following a four-day assessment programme and the scheme is designed to get engineer officers to chartered status and to get deck officers a degree in leadership and management, with a two-year rotational role at the start of the shore-based career.

"The programme has been going for five years, so it is still in its early days, but it certainly helps with audits and SIRE inspections," Ms Thomson added.

In terms of direct hire from the fleet over the past 18 months, BP has filled such posts as LNG assurance superintendent, assistant marine superintendent, assistant engineer superintendent, electrical superintendent and ship operator. Those selected are put through an 18-month development programme to help fill the gaps in making the transition to work ashore, she said.

BP is also working on a strategy to support women seafarers, Ms Thomson added. "It can be difficult getting back to sea, especially after having children, and the company wants to look at ways to help women to keep working ashore," she explained.

"The key for us is that seafarers need to know what they want to do," she said. "At sea, it is reasonably straightforward as you work your way up the ranks to master or chief engineer and everybody knows where they stand. But to organise your career ashore is much more complicated and you have to plan for the future."

Arjen Uytendaal, managing director of the Dutch maritime cluster organisation Nederland Maritiem Land (NML), is another former seafarer who has made waves ashore.

He told the Nautilus seminar how the Netherlands has pioneered the maritime cluster concept and developed policies to protect and enhance its position as a global 'centre of excellence'.

The Dutch maritime cluster provides direct and indirect employment for more than 440,000 people, Mr Uytendaal said, and the country's 12,000 maritime businesses contribute around €21bn a year to the national economy.

NML was established in 1997 as an umbrella organisation for the Dutch maritime cluster — promoting the sector and helping to encourage young people to consider careers at sea and ashore.

Mr Uytendaal said the Dutch maritime strategy for 2015 to 2025 is based upon a recognition that the country can compete on quality and innovation rather than cost. The Netherlands can offer a 'one-stop shop' for maritime services, within a small geographical area, he pointed out.

The Dutch maritime sector has performed better than other parts of the economy in recent years, continuing a pattern of employment growth in the face of the downturn and offering plenty of opportunities for former seafarers.

Mr Uytendaal said the number of ships under the Dutch flag has risen from 748 in 2006 to 1,082 in 2013 — with a matching increase in the number of seafaring jobs. "Demand is increasing and we need more seafarers," he added.

Dutch owners promise jobs for all cadets qualifying at the end of their seafarer studies, said Mr Uytendaal — and they had maintained this policy despite the economic slump. The programme has been so successful that cadet numbers have grown by an annual average of 8% — and by 16% last year.

"The challenge now is finding enough cadet berths," he said. "We have been building new maritime academies in recent years, but berths onboard is a big challenge. We are going to the minister and discussing with Nautilus on ways to increase the possibilities of getting certification."

"The large diversity of the maritime sector means there are always job opportunities for ex-seafarers," Mr Uytendaal concluded. "They have a very good technical education and are an excellent fit."



Richard Clayton of Fairplay chaired the discussion

Employers need to play their part in the sea-to-shore transition

The shipping industry should do more to tell young people about the opportunities ashore after seagoing careers, the Nautilus International seminar heard.

General secretary Mark Dickinson said seafarer qualifications could lead to a lifetime of work in the wider maritime sector. "We may not be able to sell it on the basis of seeing the world, but we can certainly sell the lifestyle and the extensive leave periods," he added.

"When young people go to sea, they do understand that there is potentially a further career ashore — but that is the limit of their understanding," said Spinnaker Global chairman Phil Parry.

He warned that shore-based maritime companies will face an increasing challenge to find suitable staff. "How do we maintain our business of expertise given that it is getting so hard to fill each job?" he asked.

However, Mr Parry said there is a lot of inertia within some companies — with a lot of former seafarers insisting that they are replaced with

'carbon copies' of themselves and an 'over-obsession' on the need to fill posts with masters and chief engineers.

"A second officer or third engineer in their mid-20s with seven years' sea experience including their cadetship and a degree is extremely attractive and affordable for an employer," he added.

Nigel Palmer, former chairman of the Merchant Navy Training Board, said seafarers needed more help to make the transition to work ashore. "Running a ship is very different from running an office and management skills are especially important," he stressed.

However, he added, the industry has done a lot of work to improve careers advice following a generation that had been 'scarred' by the industry's experiences in the 1980s.

Dieter Jaenicke, from Viking Recruitment, argued that there is no shortage of interest in seagoing careers. "There are a lot of young people out there with good quality qualifications who want to go to sea, but the problem is that the

berths are not there."

BP marine and projects superintendent Susan Thomson said her company is addressing this by putting an extra accommodation deck on its newbuilds. And, she added, mentoring is an excellent way of providing advice to younger officers.

But shore-based employers need to tackle the 'elephant in the room' of pay and leave, she warned. With some shipmasters able to earn as much as £100,000 a year tax-free, companies will find it difficult to attract people. "You really need to look at when people want to move ashore, who you want, why you want them and at the wages on offer."

Dick Welch, from the Isle of Man marine administration, said there is lots that can be done to help seafarers prepare for shore-based work — and there is scope to upskill them while working at sea. However, he cautioned, some seafarers who have moved ashore are returning to the sea "because working on land is not what it was cracked up to be."

How to recruit the right people

Shore-based employers of former seafarers need to up their game if they are to continue recruiting and retaining the levels of experience they require, research by a Nautilus member has concluded.

Phil Mogridge, a VTS officer serving on the river Tees, conducted the work as part of his studies for a degree in leadership in management, and set out to examine the increasingly severe recruitment challenges facing the shore-based maritime cluster and to find examples of best practice.

His thesis sets out the scale of the national and international shortages of experienced seafarers and warns of the damaging impact this may have on a wide range of companies which have traditionally relied upon maritime expertise.

To support his research, Mr Mogridge conducted a series of surveys and interviews with key personnel — including harbour masters, assistant harbour masters, and vessel traffic services officers — around the UK.

He found that just over 93%



VTS officer and researcher Phil Mogridge

of these individuals were former seafarers and that just over three-quarters of them did not have to relocate to accept their current role.

The findings suggest that location may be a barrier for some companies, Mr Mogridge says, as those in traditional maritime areas will find it easier to recruit ex-seafarers than those who need to encourage staff to move to take up the job.

Some 56% of those taking part in the survey said family influences had

been a key factor in their decision to leave the sea and work ashore, while just under one-quarter said they had made the move because they no longer enjoyed working at sea. Noting that 80% of PD Ports employees live within a 15 mile radius of Teesport, Mr Mogridge says the desire for a good home life also presents implications for companies seeking to recruit people from outside the area.

Half of the maritime professionals taking part in the survey had moved to

their current job directly after serving at sea, while 43% had been serving in another shore-based post.

Two-thirds had heard about their current job via the company website or through friends and family, while 18% had applied after spotting an advertisement in a nautical newspaper such as the Telegraph.

Faced with a growing shortage of former merchant seafarers, Mr Mogridge says companies may be missing an opportunity to widen their recruitment pool by failing to target former Royal Navy seafarers. While many ex-RN personnel have the right skillsets for shore-based posts, only 20% of those in the survey were ex-RN, he notes, and there is scope for more work with Armed Forces resettlement offices.

Other employers should also follow PD Ports by actively promoting and training people from within the company, he adds. Good links with local schools and colleges are vital, so that young people can be made aware of the opportunities to train for long-term careers in the sector.

LONDON INTERNATIONAL SHIPPING WEEK

Welfare: your work your ship your life

Nautilus took part in one of the best-attended events of London Shipping week — a special debate on seafarers' welfare. It kicked off with a powerful call to action, reports **DEBBIE CAVALDORO**...



International Registries managing partner Clay Maitland, praising the Telegraph's coverage of seafarers' welfare issues Picture: LISW

Would seafarers be better served if their interests were represented at the International Maritime Organisation rather than the International Labour Organisation?

This was the question posed by International Registries managing partner Clay Maitland in his opening speech to the maritime welfare 'big debate', held on the second day of London International Shipping Week (LISW).

He argued that the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) is unable to serve the industry to the fullest while it lacks a seafarers' committee.

Maritime labour issues are presently covered by another UN

agency, the International Labour Organisation (ILO) — which is where the Maritime Labour Convention (MLC) came from, he explained.

'As a flag state representative, I question whether the MLC is actually working as it should — advancing the rights and well-being of seafarers,' Mr Maitland added. 'I would argue that, for all its virtues, it is a convention drafted 15 to 20 years ago and reflects the mind-set of governments, trade unions and the maritime industry of the time.'

Seafarers are often not represented 'at the table' when maritime legislation is devised because of the lack of a formal seafarers' committee within the IMO, he suggested. Too many committees at the IMO exist simply because they always have, not because they are necessary, he added.

Moving seafarers from the ILO to the IMO would ensure that welfare needs are at the forefront of decision-making, and conventions like the MLC could be turned around in a shorter time, with issues like adequate connectivity onboard, proper shore leave and the health of seafarers becoming a primary driver in regulation.

'This is the age of instant access, of satellite phones and high speed internet,' Mr Maitland added. 'However, the Marshall Islands, for example, has a high percentage of newbuild ships on its register and yet most of them do not have the ability to offer good connectivity to their seafarers, especially not for ratings. This needs to be addressed, and cannot be when conventions take 10 years to introduce.'

Mr Maitland said there was a problem with fragmentation in the industry, where the difference between good flag states and bad flag states is extreme. This allows too many to look the other way when it comes to seafarers' rights, he claimed.

During his speech, he made a number of references to Nautilus and the Telegraph, naming

Nautilus as the 'famous seafarers' trade union' and saying that the Telegraph was an 'essential read' for the maritime industry as it 'highlights a great number of the problems that seafarers face'.

He pointed to a recent headline stating 'UK maritime cluster faces skills threat' and said that he absolutely agreed with this. He acknowledged that seafarers around the world were fairly plentiful, but stressed that it was highly trained, skilled seafarers who were lacking.

Mr Maitland said that the need for a global measurement

out there about seafarers, and many organisations that look after crew welfare, he stressed that there is no single place where the data could be collected, analysed and used by flag states and others to represent seafarers' needs at the highest level and to lend weight to the 'political pressure needed to bring about change'.

For example, Mr Maitland said, it is widely acknowledged that many seafarers have poor diets and there are a great many health risks associated with this. A database allowing seafarers and welfare organisations to give examples of onboard meals, and to also list the dietary-related

“Seafarers need to be represented at the heart of decision-making about their welfare”

Clay Maitland, International Registries

of maritime skills increased the case for seafarers to have a committee at the IMO, as it would enable flag states to review training and ensure this is comparable across the world. The committee would allow organisations like Nautilus to give seafarers much better representation at the highest levels — which in turn would allow welfare issues such as connectivity to be implemented in a better and quicker way.

Mr Maitland also called for the IMO to develop a database where all information regarding seafarers' rights, needs and experiences could be held in one place. 'As a flag state it would be useful to have one central resource that we can tap into to be able to represent seafarers' needs at the IMO and ILO,' he pointed out.

Whilst acknowledging that there is plenty of information

illnesses that seafarers experience and how much this costs the industry, would make the case for better food onboard much easier to make, he claimed.

Suicide rates would be useful to have, to support the arguments for better communications onboard or access to shore leave to alleviate loneliness, which may be one of the causes of suicides.

'There is a great need for a government to come forward and really advocate for seafarers' welfare to be at the heart of legislation,' Mr Maitland concluded. 'A flag of convenience country cannot do this — it would instantly vanish without a trace.'

'The UK government has the power to do this and, as the host nation, can make that approach. If a seafarers' committee was established in the future, this shipping week could go down in history.'

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LONDON INTERNATIONAL SHIPPING WEEK

The LISW welfare debate continued with a series of panel discussions, and a hot topic was the Maritime Labour Convention. Is it really helping to improve seafarers' working lives, and do enough people even know what it's all about?

Concerns about the effectiveness of the Maritime Labour Convention were raised during the maritime welfare big debate at London International Shipping Week — with a UK port chaplain warning of large scale ignorance of the 'bill of rights' amongst seafarers.

The four main seafarers' charities in the UK — the Sailors Society, Seafarers UK, the Apostleship of the Sea and the Mission to Seafarers — hosted a series of panel discussions on different aspects of welfare.

The first panel attempted to answer whether the industry was going far enough to ensure the physical and psychological health of seafarers. This was chaired by Commodore Barry Bryant, director general of Seafarers UK, who said that in his 13 years as head of the charity he had noticed that the Merchant Navy does not value its seafarers and their welfare needs as highly as the Royal Navy, where he had spent the previous 35 years.

'The Royal Navy has learnt that if it does not look after its people, they will not fight for you. I know it is not quite the same for the Merchant Navy, but seafarers are vital and must be valued and looked after,' he said.

Panellist Grahaeme Henderson, vice president for shipping and maritime at Shell, said he wanted to see much greater collaboration between companies and seafarers' welfare charities.

'Shipping companies must support these charities and the vital work they do,' he said. 'We must never forget that seafarers are people like us, with families and lives outside of their jobs, just like us. They rely on us to give them the right level of care and support and we must ensure that we live up to that responsibility.'

The second panel examined whether fair treatment of seafarers was any nearer to being a reality, especially in light of the Maritime Labour Convention (MLC).

The panel was chaired by the Reverend Canon Ken Peters, justice and welfare secretary at the Mission to Seafarers, and included Charles Boyle, director of legal services at Nautilus International, and Nautical Institute



Reverend Roger Stone, chaplain in the port of Southampton meeting a seafarer. Picture: Apostleship of the Sea

CEO Philip Wake.

Mr Boyle said that fair treatment of seafarers is often lacking when seafarers are involved in marine casualties in port states that are not flag states. 'This leaves seafarers at the mercy of the port state and some are good and some are bad,' he pointed out.

'There are too many incidents where seafarers are held for a long time, in a foreign country, awaiting the outcome of a criminal investigation following a maritime accident,' Mr Boyle added. 'I would estimate that I am dealing with a new inquiry every month following a maritime incident where a member needs legal advice or representation.'

Mr Wake said that while masters are happy with being ultimately responsible for eve-

rything that happens onboard, there is a need to ensure that all accidents are properly investigated and all causes identified to stop the master being criminalised.

'The investigation shouldn't just stop with the immediate causes on the ship,' he said. 'All the influencing factors behind the decisions taken onboard need to be considered. It is too convenient to find seafarers negligent, and the ISM Code needs to be reviewed in light of this.'

The following panel, chaired by Martin Foley of the Apostleship of the Sea, went a little further into the provisions of the MLC, asking whether the promised improvements to seafarers' welfare had

become a reality.

Reverend Roger Stone, chaplain in the port of Southampton, told the audience that he meets around 20,000 seafarers each year and in advance of the conference had been asking them about the MLC.

'I began by simply asking: "If I said MLC to you, what comes into your mind", he explained. 'At least 80% of seafarers had to stop and think for some time and then some managed to come up with "labour convention". None of them had read it and more than a few believed it to be for officers only. I told them that a copy of the MLC should be on every ship, but when one Filipino went to look for it he failed.'

'Some of the officers I spoke to said that the MLC was an additional burden on them because they had to attend training during their vacations which they had to pay for themselves,' he continued. 'One added that officers onboard his ship preferred to "close their ears" to the existence of MLC.'

'When I went on to ask what the MLC covered, many had no idea. Those that had an answer mainly said it was about rest hours and hours of work and a few knew it covered repatriation, accommodation and food,' he added. 'Hardly anyone I spoke to knew it had anything to do with welfare, access to support or shore leave.'

Rev Stone said that there was a clear distinction between good companies — with quality ships that offered recreational facilities, good and plentiful food, and internet connection — and bad companies. He added that the percentage of the companies in the 'bad' category was sadly high. Bruce Hailey, from the Eng-

lish law firm Salvus Law, said he wasn't much more positive about MLC — but he partly attributed this to the convention being a collection of regulations that already existed rather than being 'new'.

The fact that lawyers are still dealing with arrested ships shows that seafarers are still suffering, he pointed out. 'Ships are still being abandoned and seafarers are still not getting paid, so it is certainly true that the MLC isn't the end of the problem.'

The final panel of the event took a slightly different approach, and chair Stuart River, of the Sailors' Society, said that the issue was not simply that the shipping industry was changing, but technology meant that the whole world had changed.

'People have demands now that they never had before, but there are also opportunities that were never there before,' he explained. 'Maritime welfare today is about people being treated in a way that we would want to be treated ourselves and having access to the services that everyone else takes for granted.'

Mr Rivers said that welfare organisations need to consider the way they provide support to seafarers in the future. 'Whilst some port facilities mean that there is still a need for a traditional seafarers' centre, this is not the case everywhere,' he argued.

He gave an example where one seafarers' centre had become a postal collection point enabling seafarers to order items online whilst at sea and collect them from the centre when in port. He called on all charities providing welfare services in port to consider 'disruptive technology' to deliver different ways of providing welfare services to seafarers in the future.

Gregor Ross, from Globecom Maritime, a former seafarer who studied IT after coming ashore, said that maritime welfare organisations need to be much more aware that getting good connectivity onboard is expensive, difficult, and time-consuming to install.

'During the 1980s and 90s, the technology onboard ships

moved forward in leaps and bounds, especially when Inmarsat launched their first satellites,' he explained. 'However, that is no longer the case. It is predicted that the maritime industry is now between five and 10 years behind shore-based services in terms of technology and there are question marks over whether it can ever catch up.'

Mr Ross said that the technology that most people had in their mobile phones to connect them to the internet wherever they are costs around \$50, but that same piece of technology onboard a ship could be \$50,000.

'The costs have fallen,' he added. 'We are seeing a lot more companies installing good connectivity and the reasons all my customers have given is that this is purely for crew welfare purposes.'

'However,' he cautioned, 'it will always be expensive to get the sort of IT connection onboard a ship that people have on shore and we have a lot of problems managing seafarers' expectations in that respect. Once they hear they are getting internet onboard they think it will be like it is at home. To get good, fast broadband at home costs \$20 a month; to have that on a ship would be thousands of dollars a month. The signal always has to pass via a satellite, so it is always going to be significantly more expensive than land-based.'

However, maritime internet service providers challenged Mr Ross on some of these claims. Marcus Square, from Setel PowerLine, said it was time for the myth of the expense of ship broadband to be debunked.

'My company has recently received a SeaTrade award for innovation, which includes being able to go onboard and install good connections at a reasonable price in just a few hours,' he pointed out. 'However, we constantly encounter hurdles and barriers from the industry where there is an institutionalised lethargy with regards to improving crew welfare.'

Sue Henney from KVH Media Group agreed and said both the demand and the technology was there — it is simply a matter of matching the two.



Nautilus director of legal services Charles Boyle speaks at the welfare debate. Picture: Debbie Cavaldoro



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INTERNATIONAL

shortreports

EVERGREEN ORDER: the Taiwanese operator Evergreen has signed a deal for 10 new 2,800TEU ships to be delivered between the second half of 2017 and the first half of 2018. The 211m vessels will be deployed as feederships in intra-Asia trades and include a range of 'eco-friendly' features, such as the innovative Sea-Sword Bow (SSB) technology, which is claimed to reduce fuel consumption by around 10% compared to traditional bow designs, and an electronically-controlled fuel injection engine, which can cut emissions by around 20%.

FRENCH CALL: French Socialist MP Arnaud Leroy has tabled proposed legislation aiming to 're-found' the country's maritime industries. Following a report on the competitiveness of French maritime services, Mr Leroy is calling for measures to boost domestic seafarer employment in the offshore renewables sector, to limit the use of the French international register, and to provide special tax breaks for French seafarers.

RADIATION SCARE: emergency teams were called in at Ashdod Port in Israel after checks found high levels of radiation coming from a container that had arrived on a Chinese-flagged ship. Port workers were evacuated while tests were carried out, which determined that there were no risks outside the container's walls.

GREEK GROUNDING: authorities in Greece have launched an investigation after the high-speed ferry Flying Cat 4 ran aground, having missed the entrance to the island port of Tinos in thick fog. The Hellenic Coast Guard said tugs re-floated the 55m catamaran and the 235 passengers were safely evacuated with no injuries reported.

FATAL FIRE: one seafarer died and five others were injured when a Hong Kong-flagged product tanker caught fire off Shanghai last month. The blaze began in the accommodation area of the 45,740dwt Ye Chi, which was carrying 29,000 tonnes of diesel from Shanghai to Singapore.

CREWMEN INJURED: an investigation has been launched after two seafarers were taken to hospital for treatment to injuries caused when a rescue boat fell into the water from the Norwegian Cruise Line (NCL) vessel Pride of America in the Hawaiian port of Hilo.

CHINESE BOOST: China Shipping Container Lines (CSCL) has placed orders for eight new 13,500TEU vessels with a yard in Shanghai. The ships will cost a total of US\$934.4m and are due for delivery between April and December 2018.

COSTLY SPILL: the US shipping company Matson has agreed to pay Hawaii more than \$15m to cover the cost of clean-up and restoration following a massive molasses spill in Honolulu Harbour two years ago.

PORTS UNITE: Calais and Boulogne now officially comprise a joint port, following the award of a 50-year concession to the public service ports development body from the Nord Pas de Calais regional council.

Report raises concerns over French research fleet



The French oceanographic research vessel Marion Dufresne II is pictured shortly before leaving the Damen Shiprepair yard in Dunkerque last month following a major refit. Built in 1995, the 9,403gt vessel has undergone a four-month project intended to extend its life by 20 years. Work included replacement of the multi-beam sonar, rebuilding the hull, and upgrading scientific equipment and accommodation areas. French unions are concerned about proposed changes to the oceanographic research fleet following a government report on the future of the research institute, Ifremer. Unions fear the plans could increase the role of private companies such as P&O Maritime and CMA CGM, operating vessels under foreign flags.

Nordic seafarers warn over jobs

Unions in Norway, Sweden and Denmark seek action to protect members

by Andrew Draper

Norwegian unions have accused the country's shipping minister, Monica Mæland, of making misleading statements following publication of the government's new maritime strategy.

Voicing their disappointment with the long-awaited package, the unions warned that Norwegian seafarers are becoming something of an endangered species.

They said that the working group which developed the government's strategy should have tabled a robust net salary scheme to cover vessels under the domestic register (NOR).

And while they welcomed the recent increase in tonnage on the NIS international register, they pointed out that this will not have

much of an impact on Norwegian jobs.

The unions said the minister, a Conservative, had sided with the owners in the new strategy and had consequently developed an unbalanced policy package. They had been pressing for measures to enforce Norwegian working conditions in Norwegian waters and to strengthen domestic employment in the deepsea segment of the NIS fleet.

'The government has given shipowners reductions in wealth tax, maintained the favourable shipping taxation, and increased the return of refunded tax generated by taxing seafarers around NOK100m,' said the three maritime union leaders Hans Sande, Johnny Hansen and Hege-Merethe Bengtsson.

In return, they said, there is 'a clear expectation that these

measures will make ripples in the form of value creation and jobs'.

The strategy will also allow the ferry company Color Line to switch its vessels sailing between Germany and Norway to the NIS register. Seafarers fear as many as 700 jobs could be lost as a result.

Swedish officers' union SBF says the government must bring in its long-awaited tonnage tax by the start of 2016 if it is to stop the continued flagging out from the country's register.

SBF said the problems are highlighted by Atlantic Container Line (ACL), which is phasing out five Swedish-flag vessels as part of fleet renewal. With no definite decision on tonnage tax, the company has decided to place the first replacement vessel under a non-Swedish flag.

The union is calling for changes to make it easier for

Swedish seafarers to serve on foreign-flagged ships. 'A tonnage tax system and change to the tax rules for service on foreign vessels must be implemented quickly so other jobs aren't jeopardised,' it argued.

Ole Philipsen, chairman of the Danish seafarers' union CO-Søfart, has voiced concern that promises made about the country's international ship register (DIS) have failed to deliver on jobs.

He has attacked owners for 'winding down' the employment of Danish seafarers — accusing them of pursuing profit at the expense of agreements and making 'empty promises to secure even more money from public funds'. The union has also criticised the owners for seeking to extend the beneficial tonnage tax arrangements to cover off-shore vessels.

Managers in merger deal

Two leading ship management companies have reached agreement on what is described as the biggest merger in the sector, creating a new firm employing more than 24,000 seafarers and over 1,700 shore-based staff.

The proposed tie-up between the Hong Kong-based Anglo-Eastern and Univan Groups will create a new 'industry leader' — with the increased operational scale and global footprint offering better career opportunities for seafarers and shore staff, the companies claimed.

The merged operation will be called the Anglo-Eastern Univan Group, and will have 600 ships under full management, with 100 under crew management only.

Argentine union leads shipping plan protests

Members of Argentina's 3,000-strong Union of River, Fishing and Maritime Cabotage Captains & Officers (CPOFPCM) have threatened to strike in opposition to a proposed law they claim will 'doom national river cabotage workers to extinction'.

Tugs, pilots and mooring boats blockaded one of Argentina's main waterways on 13 August, forcing the partial closure of ports, in protest at a government-backed Bill they argue will lead to thousands of maritime, river and fishing jobs being lost.

Union activists were also due to march on Congress in support of a rival Bill, due to be tabled as the Telegraph went to press, in an increasingly divisive row over the future of Argentina's merchant fleet.

MP Gaston Harispe's Merchant Navy & Shipbuilding Industry Bill, supported by the majority of maritime unions, aims to rebuild the country's merchant fleet, creating thousands of new jobs. But CPOFPCM leaders claim the Bill discriminates against those working in the river fleet.

'If Harispe's bill is passed, we will consider a full strike bringing to a halt national and international trade in the Paraguay-Paraná Waterway,' union leader Captain Jorge Bianchi said.

The union claims Mr Harispe's Bill fails to set out minimum crewing levels on river-bound ships, allow for the import of foreign ships with no crew to enable Argentina to recover lost river cabotage, or offer tax incentives enabling the Argentine fleet to compete.

Challenge to US law fails

A legal challenge to the US rules requiring the use of US-flagged and US-crewed vessels on the country's coastal trades was rejected by a court last month.

A group of shippers in Hawaii had taken a class-action lawsuit to overturn the 1920 Jones Act, complaining that the regulations impair inter-state trade and therefore violate the US constitution. They alleged that the rules result in high prices and a de facto duopoly.

But a three-judge panel unanimously dismissed the action, saying that it had failed to show that the higher prices are the result of two companies operating the route and because they could not show that the lifting of the legislation would lead to lower freight rates.

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Owners welcome 'new' Suez Canal

US\$8bn expansion project will speed up transits and double traffic levels

Shipowners have welcomed the opening last month of the 'new' Suez Canal — a multibillion-dollar project to increase capacity and speed up transit times in a waterway which handles around one-tenth of all global seaborne trade.

Work on the scheme — which was carried out by a consortium including the Dutch dredging firms Boskalis and Van Oord — involved the creation of 35km of new channels, the deepening and widening of 37km of existing waterway. According to the Suez Canal Authority (SCA), more than 250 cu m of sand, clay and rock was dredged during the work.

The US\$8bn scheme was completed within a year — after it was initially projected to take three. Around 18,000 vessels a year pass through the canal at present, and Egypt's government says the expansion scheme will double traffic levels and cut transit times to 11 hours in both directions.

International Chamber of Shipping (ICS) secretary-general Peter Hinchliffe said owners were impressed that the work had been completed so quickly. 'This is a huge undertaking on a world scale. It has been completed in a time that is frankly astonishing,' he added. 'More ships will be able to use the canal, and most importantly for us, the time that ships are taking to get through the canal is being reduced.'

The Maersk Group is the canal's biggest customer, with more than 1,400 transits last year, and the 93,511gt Maersk Sheer-



The Singapore-flagged containership APL Southampton leads the way during the first southbound trial operation in the new 'double-section' of the Suez Canal. Picture: Reuters

ness, carrying 4,427 containers, was one of the ships in the first trial transit of the new waterway. Maersk Drilling CEO Claus Hemmingsen commented: 'The Suez Canal is a key corridor on the east/west trade. Maersk has used the corridor for more than 90 years and we welcome the easier transit and reduced transit times that the new expansion will bring.'

Egypt expects that the project, together with growth in world trade, will increase the number of ships using the canal each day from 49 at present to 97 by 2023 and more than double the rev-

enue from tolls to \$13.2bn within 10 years.

However, the shipping consultancy Drewry has questioned the projections. 'To achieve their ambitious targets, the SCA would somehow need to see toll revenue grow at around 10% yearly, when the outlook for the shipping is nowhere near that level,' it warned.

Egypt has also ordered further work to create a new 9.5km side channel enabling two-way traffic of vessels entering the canal through the northern terminus of Port Said. The Suez Canal Con-

tainer Terminal is also adding four new super-post-Panamax cranes next year to bring its crane total to 24 and increase annual throughput capacity to 5.4m TEU.

The Suez Canal Authority and the Egyptian Navy Hydrographic Department have produced new charts of both the 'old' and 'new' canals, replacing the existing Admiralty charts for the region. They have advised that no vessels will be permitted to pass through the waterway unless they are carrying the new charts, which are being supplied by Global Navigation Solutions.

Australian fines for dumping

The master and the owner of a Hong Kong-flagged bulk carrier have been fined for illegally dumping garbage in Australia's Great Barrier Reef Marine Park.

Cyprus-based One Armania Shipping was fined A\$4,000 (€2,638) and the master of the 39,295dwt ANL Karindia was fined A\$300 after being found guilty of breaching Australian maritime pollution regulations.

Townsville magistrates court heard that a port state control inspection by the Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) had identified that the ship had dumped food waste within the prohibited discharge area of the Great Barrier Reef.

AMSA chief executive Mick Kinley said masters and owners need to be aware that waste dumping is not tolerated in Australian waters. 'These prosecutions are a reminder to the shipping community that if they flout the regulations they can be caught and prosecuted,' he added.



The 10,944gt L'Austral is Ponant's second largest ship. Picture: Eric Hourri

French cruise firm sold

A French cruiseship company set up by a group of former merchant seafarers in 1998 has been sold to a company owned by one of the country's richest families. Marseilles-based Ponant, which operates a fleet of five luxury vessels which can carry between 64 and 264 passengers, has been acquired by Artémis, the holding company of France's billionaire Pinault family, for a reported €400m.

Ponant, which last year carried around 30,000 passengers, was bought by the French shipping

group CMA CGM in 2004 and sold in 2012 for an undisclosed amount to the private equity group Bridgeport. It employs around 800 French seafarers, and the officers' union FOMM-CGT has expressed concern that the latest change in ownership could jeopardise French jobs.

Artémis vice-president Véronique Saadé promised that the fleet would remain under France's Wallis-et-Futuna flag and said the company plans to introduce new ships for the 'internationalisation of its clientele, especially in North America and the Asia-Pacific zone'.

EU aid for 'greener' ferry fleet

The ferry operator Finnlines has been awarded €17.9m by the European Union to help cover the costs of environmental upgrades for key ships in its fleet.

The money will go towards a €60m project being undertaken by the company and its affiliates in Germany, Belgium and Spain operating three major liner services to ensure compliance with the European sulphur directive.

Approving the support, the European Commission noted that the services are part of the EU 'motorways of the sea' programme and that the upgrade work — which includes the fitting of exhaust scrubbers, new propeller blades and improved rudder hydrodynamics — will prevent 'unwanted modal backshift of cargo from sea to land on these three lines'.

In total, Finnlines says it is spending around €100m to ensure its 22-ship fleet meets the requirements of the low sulphur directive.

shortreports

CANAL CURB: drought conditions have resulted in draught restrictions that could affect almost 20% of ships transiting the Panama Canal. A fall in the water levels of the Gatun and Alhajuela Lakes means that the maximum draught will be set at 11.89m Tropical Fresh Water (TFW) with effect from 8 September, the canal authority (ACP) has advised. It says the measure is needed to 'ensure the continuous and safe operation' of the waterway and warned that draught may be further restricted to 11.73m TFW if there is no significant rainfall by the middle of the month.

US DEAL: the US seafaring union SIU has secured a long-term pay deal for more than 200 members serving with the petroleum products operator Penn Maritime following a series of tough negotiations with new owners, the Kirby Corporation. The agreement delivers above-inflation pay rises in each of the next three years and protects top-tier medical and pension benefits. SIU Vice-President Gulf Coast Dean Corbey hailed the agreement as 'one of the best in the industry'.

GREEK TAX: Greek shipowners will have to pay higher tonnage taxes as part of a new European Union bail-out deal for the cash-strapped country. Under the agreement, the Greek tonnage tax is to rise by 4% a year between 2016 and 2020. 'Special' tax arrangements for the shipping industry will also be phased out and there are reports that some owners have been considering flagging out to countries such as Cyprus if their operating costs increase significantly.

BELGIAN BASH: a steering gear failure has been blamed for a collision off the Belgian coast last month between the Marshall Islands-registered product tanker Alkiviadis and the Philippines-flagged bulk carrier Mangan Trader. The bulker struck the tanker, which was at anchor some 17nm NW of Ostend, while sailing towards the western Scheldt, bound for Ghent.

STENA COLLISION: Swedish authorities are investigating a collision between a Stena Line ferry carrying some 600 people and a laden tanker near the island of Vinga outside the port of Gothenburg. The 29,691gt Stena Jutlandica was holed on its port side and began taking on water, but no injuries were reported and the vessel was able to make it into port under its own power.

LANGUAGE ROW: the French officers' union CGC-CFE has protested to the country's sea minister over a lack of progress in talks on the use of French as a working language onboard French-flagged ferries. General secretary Patrice Le Vigouroux asked the minister: 'Do we have to block tunnels, burn tyres or overturn chauffeur-driven cars to be heard?'

CARNIVAL TERMINAL: Barcelona, Europe's largest cruise port, has given the Carnival Corporation approval to build a €30m terminal which will be used by seven of the company's 10 cruise line brands as both a destination and home port. Work on the new facility, at Adossat Wharf, will begin next year and is due to be completed in 2018.

WERE YOU AWARE that following the successful outcome of a judicial review in respect of two Seatax clients, (brought before the Courts by Nautilus in collaboration with Seatax Ltd as expert advisors on the Seafarers Earnings Deduction), it was deemed that the two Seatax clients did have a legitimate expectation in applying the only published Revenue Practice with regard to the application of a day of absence in relation to a vessel sailing between UK ports. HMRC did not want to accept this practice (although referred to in their very own publications) but have now accepted that expectations of a claim based on such practice would be valid until the published practice is withdrawn. Following on from this, HMRC have now confirmed that this Practice is withdrawn as of the 14 February 2014. Seatax was the only Advisory Service that challenged HMRC on this point.

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Unionists unite in the USA

 Working in the maritime industry can sometimes feel lonely — especially whilst working at sea. Nautilus International membership can provide a sense of being within a group of professionals in the sector — but did you know that there are 4.5m other transport workers making up one global family with us?

In July, I was privileged to be able to meet union members and officials from the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) at their annual young workers' summer school. Held at the residential facility of the International Association of Machinists & Aerospace Workers just outside Washington DC, 35 people from 27 different countries gathered to discuss how young workers could strengthen our unions' strategies to organise and build activism.

Workers across the world are still experiencing the impact of the global economic downturn, and the ITF wanted the summer school attendees to develop an international trade union response to our changing world of work.

Each of the ITF's five regions — Africa, Americas, Arab world, Asia-Pacific and ETF Europe — were represented, with seafarers' unions from Poland, Norway, the USA, Uruguay, India and Zanzibar in attendance, as well as the Croatian Seafarers' Union and Maritime Union of Australia.

We were also joined by workers from the aviation, docks and rail sectors. Working together across the transport sectors, we discussed problems faced in our workplaces, changes within our sectors and the responses of our unions.


Even though so many unions and countries were present, we agreed that many of our problems are common wherever we are in the world — issues such as precarious work (short-term contracts, bogus self-employment and redundancy) and unions being seen by employers as an inconvenience rather than valuable organisations representing workers.

It was interesting to see within the seafarers' sector how matters such as seafaring skills were viewed slightly differently based on our regions — European and Australian unions spoke of a lack of skills in their respective areas and a lack of quality training

Nautilus senior assistant organiser **Danny McGowan** recently attended a young workers' conference organised by the International Transport Workers' Federation, to learn how unions working together across borders can have a real impact on the day-to-day lives of members...



Klaus Luhta, Danny McGowan, Diane Luensmann and James Caponiti on the roof of the Hall of the States in Washington DC

 Danny McGowan visited the International Organisation of Masters, Mates & Pilots, just outside Baltimore, following his attendance at the ITF summer school. The IOMMP recently joined the Nautilus Federation, and its international president, Don Marcus, welcomed Danny to his union's Maritime Institute of Technology and Graduate Studies.

The provision of training at this site and at the union's Pacific Maritime Institute in Seattle is seen as an integral part of its commitment to develop

the skills of seafarers and the success of the industry. Chief of staff Klaus Luhta conducted a tour of the impressive facilities, including the industry-leading full-mission ship handling simulators.

Danny also visited the American Maritime Congress at the Hall of the States in Washington DC. President James Caponiti and maritime policy director Diane Luensmann spent some time discussing the work of Nautilus International and ways of working together in the future.

in other regions, for example. These regions also had more pronounced opinions on flags of convenience than some of the representatives from other areas.

The ITF has a number of global

campaigns running as we speak. One of those is the campaign for international workers' rights in the German-owned logistics company, DHL. Whilst in some countries DHL may treat its staff

comparatively well, employees in less economically developed countries have their International Labour Organisation rights flouted.

In Turkey, DHL workers wanted decent wages, overtime and rest periods. Turkish union TÜMTIS encountered resistance from DHL when it sought a collective bargaining agreement within the company. The German union ver.di took action to assist Turkish colleagues, organising protests and even attending the shareholders' AGM. As DHL Turkey dragged its heels and actively fought TÜMTIS — even dismissing some staff for union activity — German members escalated their action. It was inspiring to see that thanks to the power of international solidarity, TÜMTIS now has the right to represent DHL workers in Turkey.

I was also interested to discuss with the other attendees about how our own unions — regardless of whether we have mem-

bers working for DHL — could continue to influence the global logistics company's treatment of its employees in other regions.

Other global campaign work included speaking about the treatment of Qatar Airways' female employees — including sacking them for becoming pregnant — and the apparent failure to respond to a judgment that the airline has flouted international law on discrimination.

We also heard from Diana Robinson of the Food Chain Workers Alliance, who was keen to hear more about the Nautilus International Fair Transport campaign. Her organisation campaigns for a sustainable food system, and for fair wages and employment rights for all food chain workers — from picking and packing to delivery and sales.

Throughout the week, individual delegates had the opportunity to present a topic of interest to the summer school. I took the opportunity to give a short,

ad-hoc presentation on the progress Nautilus is making in the world of yachting, introducing it as an aspect of professional seafaring rarely thought of outside our Union.

It was encouraging to see that this led to a number of interesting discussions, showing that the yacht as a workplace had now entered the thoughts of other seafarers and trade union activists. As we at Nautilus continue to strengthen our work in this area, it is good to know that Union members on yachts can also benefit from being part of the ITF's global family.

“Short-term contracts and bogus self-employment are a problem for unions everywhere”

 Building on what we had learned over the week, the regional delegations were asked to consider young workers' problems in our areas and turn them into goals. The European group considered the difficulty transport unions can have in reaching out to members. We set a goal to form a 'framework of mutual assistance' for ITF-affiliated unions to provide a face-to-face contact point in areas where a member's own union might not be present.

We also felt that a rising opposition to free movement of labour and migration contributes to a wider feeling of discrimination amongst LGBT and other minority groups.

This led us to discuss the human rights of the members of ITF-affiliated unions across the globe. We set a goal to ensure that human rights and anti-discrimination rules are incorporated into each affiliated union's constitutions. Many unions in Europe will have already achieved this, but our thoughts were with unions in regions that experience higher levels of discrimination against minority groups.

As the summer school drew to a close and we reflected upon our experiences, it was clear that we had formed important partnerships that transcend our national boundaries. I felt encouraged to see that workers and their representatives in developing countries were building union representation as an integral part of employment. I was also pleased to see that closer international cooperation between unions is achieving valuable results.

Despite the challenges we face on an almost daily basis, I was reassured to know that our shared goals and passion for fairness, equality and justice for workers around the world will unite us as one global family for many years to come.



Danny McGowan making a presentation at the ITF young workers' summer school