



ILO consults on seafarers' ID issues

On Sept. 23-24, the International Labor Organization (ILO) held consultations at its headquarters in Geneva on the Seafarers' Identity Documents Convention (Revised), 2003 (Convention 185).

All Japan Seamen's Union President Yoji Fujisawa was present at the consultations—as a committee member representing workers—on behalf of the chair group of the International Transport Workers' Federation Seafarers' Section and seafarers around the world.

In June 2003, Convention 185 was adopted in place of the original Seafarers' Identity Documents Convention, 1985 to encourage governments to temporarily accept and make relevant arrangements for seafarers coming ashore and/or transiting to return home.

As of October 2010, a total of 18 nations, including France, Russia and South Korea, have ratified the convention. But many other major countries—such as Japan, the United States and some European nations—that call ports in other countries, have not.

The consultations were held to exchange views on a variety of subjects, including the introduction of cutting-edge safety features for new secure international identity documents for seafarers (SIDs); standards for fingerprinting, photographing and other biometric technologies; extensive technological renovations for checking SIDs; minimum requirements for liaison procedures and formalities for providing information; and an international system for supervising governments that have ratified the convention; and to encourage other nations to ratify the convention.

Fujisawa said that to allow seafarers to come ashore and/or transit, SIDs must be highly credible so that governments would not encounter problems in their immigration control, but added that it would not be acceptable to include in the seafarer IDs any personal information that the seafarer is unaware of. As such, he insisted that discussions be held toward developing SIDs to meet both criteria.

The JSU president also pointed out that because SIDs would not replace passports, their implementation would not require changing the countries' immigration policies. SIDs would only serve as certificates to ensure smooth immigration procedures for coming ashore and/or transiting, he said.

In order to secure the high level of credibility that governments demand in SIDs, he suggested that arrangements are needed to ensure consistency with ISO standards, and that SIDs be equipped with IC chips on a voluntary basis.

ITF, JNG meet over wage model

Representatives of the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) and the Joint Negotiation Group (JNG), a group of employers worldwide, held meetings in New York City on Oct. 6-7.

Previously, the ITF had demanded the reconsideration of the ongoing IBF Methodology, in which wages are calculated based on a model of a ship operated by

a crew of 23 seafarers.

The ITF said that officers' wages differed from market rates, and that the model did not reflect reality.

But meanwhile as the shipping market began to decline, ship-owners steadily insisted the methodology not be altered, saying that problems highlighted by the ITF did not exist.

As such, when a meeting was

held in Manila in September 2009, the parties decided to continue future discussions on the issue.

As a result, the ITF and the JNG have been exchanging views on a new IBF Methodology for nearly a year.

Heated discussions have been held not only between the ITF and the JNG, but also within the JNG, or between its Asia-Pacific

and European groups, which means that each party holds different opinions regarding the method of pay.

To remedy the situation, the ITF and the JNG agreed to extend the current IBF Framework TCC (Total Crew Cost) Agreement until next March, and in the meantime to continue their talks on revising IBF wages.

Unions agree to cooperate on piracy, training

Delegates from JSU, FKSU talk ratification of ILO conventions

On Sept. 30, the 14th JSU/FKSU Summit Meeting was held at the head office of the Federation of Korea Seafarers' Union (FKSU) in Busan, South Korea.

The All Japan Seamen's Union (JSU) was represented by a four-man delegation led by President Yoji Fujisawa, while the FKSU was represented by President Bang Dong-sik and five other officials.

During the meeting, President Fujisawa gave a briefing on the International Labor Organization (ILO) meeting which he had attended as a committee member representing labor.

The JSU and the FKSU exchanged opinions on promoting the ratifications of the ILO Maritime Labor Convention, 2006 and the Seafarers' Identity Documents Convention (Revised), 2003 (Convention 185) and taking action to combat piracy in the Gulf of Aden off the coast of Somalia.

As a result of exchanging views, the two sides agreed to cooperate in their joint interests.

Regarding the piracy issue, in



JSU President Yoji Fujisawa (left) and FKSU President Bang Dong-sik shake hands at a joint seafarers' summit in Busan, South Korea.

particular, the labor unions agreed that it was necessary to continue to carry on with campaigns to ensure the safety of the many ships and seafarers that are still at the risk of being hijacked and abducted, respectively.

As for the installation of a

chemical and product tanker simulator at Korea Maritime University, which is being promoted with the support of the JSU, the FKSU's president was grateful that the JSU is playing a leading role in the program.

"Thanks to help and support

from the JSU, we can launch a private-sector-led training and education project for South Korean seafarers," Bang said.

He added that after a report of this project was broadcast on TV, there has been more and more interest in it by the South Korean people.

Furthermore, he hoped that the JSU "would continue to help [FKSU] improve the quality of officers" as it pertains to "preserving the natural environment at sea."

When the summit came to an end, the 17th meeting was convened between the JSU and the Korea Special Seafarers' Union (KSSU).

KSSU President Park Sung-ryong asked the JSU to provide information so that South Korean seafarers can take and pass the required examinations to allow them to work onboard Japanese-flagged commercial ships.

The unions agreed to continue to work together in their tasks.



Discussions included the need to continue carrying out campaigns in order to assure the safety of seafarers against piracy.

IMO launches seafarers' rights center

International Maritime Organization (IMO) Secretary-General Efthimios E. Mitropoulos has welcomed the launch of the Seafarers' Rights International Center, an independent forum dedicated to advancing seafarers' interests, describing it as an important development on World Maritime Day, the theme of which is "2010: Year of the Seafarer."

The new center will be located at the International Transport Workers' Federation's London offices, with initial funding coming from the ITF's Seafarers' Trust.

An international advisory board, currently 10-strong, has already been established and the center's stakeholders will include seafarers, lawyers and other advisers, non-governmental organizations, trade unions, welfare organizations and campaigners, students and academics, shipowners and other major actors in the shipping industry, as well as governments.

During the launch of the center, Mitropoulos took the opportunity to stress IMO's long-standing commitment to seafarers and said it was fitting that the new center should be launched at IMO Headquarters on a World Maritime Day exclusively dedicated to them.

"When 2010 was first proposed as the Year of the Seafarer, I remarked upon the particular hazards that confront the 1.5 million seafarers in the world. As well as the natural hazards of the sea and the elements, which they have to deal with as a matter of course, they also face exceptional hazards, such as pirate attacks, unwarranted detention and abandonment.

"The launch of Seafarers' Rights International will undoubtedly help those seafarers that are caught up in such circumstances, through no fault of their own," by providing a center dedicated to advancing seafarers' interests through research, education and legal training concerning seafarers' issues. (Source: Manila Bulletin)

Piracy petition presented to IMO

A coalition of key stakeholders in the shipping industry today handed over a 920,000-strong vote for action to end piracy off the coast of Somalia.

Representatives from seafarers' unions, ship operators, welfare organizations and others presented the "End Piracy Now" petition to secretary-general of the International Maritime Organization Efthimios Mitropoulos in London. The event, which took place on the U.N.-designated World Maritime Day, coincided with the presentation of the petition to governments worldwide.

The petition (www.endpiracypetition.org) was launched just four months ago as the centerpiece of a campaign to persuade all governments to commit the resources needed to end the increasing problem of Somalia-based piracy. Originally intended to achieve half a mil-



London petition handover, IMO Secretary-General Mitropoulos in the foreground.

lion signatures, it has far exceeded that figure.

The campaign calls on governments to (1) dedicate significant resources and work to find real solutions to the growing piracy problem, (2) take immediate

steps to secure the release and safe return of kidnapped seafarers to their families, (3) work within the international community to secure a stable and peaceful future for Somalia and its people.

Some 354 seafarers and 16 ships are currently being held hostage in Somalia; meanwhile, pirates are being released without prosecution, free to re-offend.

David Cockcroft, International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) general secretary, commented: "At a time when some countries are actively escorting merchant ships and pursuing pirates and a few—too few—are prosecuting them when caught, the majority, including many of those who make the most from shipping, are doing little or nothing. For us, this campaign is about making everyone step up and shoulder their responsibilities."

To learn more about the piracy petition, go to: www.endpiracypetition.org

To view the ITF's video on the piracy petition, go to: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qJHSLFNt_HM

MEPC to adopt revised environment rules

The reduction of greenhouse gases (GHG) from international shipping was a major focus for the Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC) of the International Maritime Organization's recent session.

MEPC was expected to adopt the revised Annex III of the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL), covering pollution from packaged goods, and consideration of issues relating to the

implementation of the ballast water management and ship recycling conventions.

It was also expected to consider the approval of technical and operational measures to reduce carbon dioxide emissions from international shipping—specifically, the Energy Efficiency Design Index and the Ship Energy Efficiency Management Plan—as mandatory measures, possibly as amendments to MARPOL Annex VI Regulations for the prevention

of air pollution from ships, with the type and size of vessel.

The committee discussed further work concerning market-based measures, including the possible development of a mandatory IMO instrument.

A working group on GHG issues was convened during the session to refine the regulatory text implementing the technical and operational measures as mandatory standards as well as the formulas and guidelines support-

ing the regulatory text.

The MEPC was expected to consider the outcome of two inter-session working groups, one of which progressed work on the contemplated technical and operational measures to enhance energy efficiency in ship operations, while the other, consisting of a group of experts, conducted a feasibility study and impact assessment of a number of proposed market-based measures. (Source: Manila Bulletin)

Philippines DoLE mulls consoli seafarers' training course

The Philippines' Department of Labor and Employment (DoLE) has decided to include a consolidated single course on the 1973 International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL) as modified by the Protocol of 1978 in the training of seafarers.

Labor and Employment Secretary Rosalinda Baldoz said that the Maritime Training Council (MTC), an attached agency of DoLE, designed and piloted the consolidated MARPOL training program to help prevent pollution of the marine environment caused by the discharge of oil, chemicals, sewage and other waste from ships.

"The MARPOL training supports the 22-point labor and employment agenda of President Benigno S. Aquino III, which emphasizes investment in the country's human resource, our top resource, to make them more competitive and employable while promoting industrial peace based on social justice," Baldoz said.

The MARPOL training would equip the Filipino seafarers with essential skills in prevention of marine pollution, thereby, enhancing their employability and competitiveness in the seafaring industry.

The MTC has issued Memorandum Circular No. 02 requiring maritime training centers and

manning companies to secure interim accreditation pending finalization of the consolidated training on MARPOL 1-6.

The MARPOL Convention aims to entirely eliminate pollution of the marine environment by release of oil and other hazardous substances from ships and to reduce discharges of harmful substances in connection with ships' accidents.

In 2009, the Professional Regulation Commission issued Memorandum Circular 09-24 stating that MARPOL 73/78, Annexes 1-6 may be taken separately or as a single training course.

Basic principles of shipping safety are being sidelined by the environmental agenda and undermined by poor quality training, according to one of the world's largest classification societies.

Addressing shipowning representatives in London, Det Norske Veritas (DNV) President Tor Svensen warned that inadequate training and an industry-wide lack of attention to the human element and competence development had become a worrying trend in shipping operations that was unduly increasing risk.

He also questioned whether the political focus on environmental safety had distracted the industry to such a degree that safety was in

danger of being downgraded as a priority.

"I am getting quite tired of seeing oily birds take priority," Svensen told the International Chamber of Shipping's annual conference. "I know it is not politically correct to say so and I am not going to devalue the importance of oil pollution to animal life and fisheries, but the focus somehow is wrong here and we need to re-establish the balance between safety and environmental risk."

"Zero tolerance to loss of human life is equally important as

zero environmental damage."

Internal analysis of statistics by DNV has revealed a clear upward trend in the number of casualties directly related to navigational errors. Despite a historic fall in casualty statistics, the trend has now reversed to such a degree since the beginning of the decade that the frequency of serious accidents is now the same as was in 1988.

This is not the first time that DNV has issued the industry with a frank warning about declining safety standards. According to

DNV statistics collated in 2008, collisions, groundings and contacts then accounted for 60% of the most costly incidents and estimates showed that the costs of those accidents had doubled.

With navigational errors still showing no sign of declining two years on, Svensen's latest caution to industry colleagues is likely to ring alarm bells, particularly within P&I Clubs, where Lloyd's List understands several studies are producing similarly concerning results.

"Further statistical analysis is

needed, but I am sounding a warning to the industry here," Svensen told *Lloyd's List* following his speech. "I fully support all the efforts being made on the environment and I think it is a very important issue for shipping, but we must keep our eyes on the ball when it comes to safety."

DNV officials have been logging concerns during audits and projects for shipping companies. According to Svensen, a worrying trend in declining standards has been identified. Much of the training currently on offer has been described by DNV as "poor quality" and only a limited amount of time is being spent on training. (Richard Meade)

Ship safety sidelined by green agenda

Softball tournament held

On September 12, the 25th Annual Kyushu Kanmon Port Softball Tournament, held at Shin Moji baseball field, was organized and supervised by JSU Kyushu Kanmon Regional office.

The tournament was attended by Kitakyushu Mayor Kenji Kitahashi and Kyushu Representative Kii Takahashi, as well as 21 participants from various maritime sectors in the region, including one vessel, the *KDDI Pacific Link*, which was docked at Kyushu Port with a Japanese and Filipino crew.

Kyushu Kanmon Regional Branch Manager Toshiyuki Tanaka led the opening ceremony and urged all of the participants to enjoy themselves while playing safely and fairly in accordance with the tournament's rules throughout the tournament.

Photo shows Manager Tanaka awarding *M/V KDDI Pacific Link*, represented by the ship's master, for its team's second place finish at the tournament.



VOICES from SEAFARERS



Capt. Antonio H. Palacios and Crew of **M/V OCEAN CELEBRITY**

Through the clear explanation of the JSU Union Officer, we are glad to know that our union due contributions were spent on the JSU activities and funding of the various seafarers' facilities in the Philippines. These have benefited our fellow seafarers. We are hoping the JSU won't tire of supporting its members.



Crew of **M/V BELLE AYURA**

After a long sea voyage, we are so thankful of the JSU Union Officer and ISS visiting us here. Our ship is due for sale by mid-November and it is indeed a pleasure that the inquiries on compensation for unfinished contracts had been answered. It would be better if our compensation were given to us before signing off. Once again, thank you.



Capt. Agripino J. Superable and Crew of **M/V CAPE SOPHIA**

We greatly appreciate the assistance and privileges given to Filipino seafarers, as we are being updated and well informed of the welfares of all seafarers around the world. You have given enough support to enhance our ability and knowledge by providing important and necessary equipment needed for our profession to meet international standards. Thank you very much for the endless support you've given us. More power and hoping you will continue giving support and assistance.

3/E Ruben E. Calzado of **M/V HOUYU**

I am the previous trainee of the JSU/JNTO of Imai/Iwagi Shipyard through the manning agency of Leonis Navigation from 2002 to 2004. I was able to pursue my career on board and gain my knowledge through this training program sponsored by the JSU. My experience as a trainee has made me mature, and developed my mental and emotional ability. Those years as a shipyard trainee had contributed a lot in gaining skills that are useful in my present daily task as Engineer. I am so grateful for the JSU, and everyone will receive more blessings and strength.



Officers and Crew of **M/V SAGE SAGITTARIUS**

The briefing by JSU staff had clarified our inquiries about entitlements and benefits from the union. We no longer doubt the activities that we have known of the JSU that ensures its members are given their rights and benefits. More members should be organized by the JSU so that newer and long-lasting benefits can be introduced.



Crew of **M/V AMAZING GRACE**

Our working and living conditions on board are excellent, including our present wage. But if the JSU could negotiate on our wage increase, it would be better. We're patiently awaiting the next amendment of the CBA. We thank the JSU Union Officer and ISS for their efforts to continue visitation as they have clarified our inquiries regarding the AMOSUP hospital.



3/E Ronald M. Locaylocay of **M/V JAPAN PLATANUS**

The ship visitation of JSU staff had eased my boredom on board. As a Filipino, working with other Asian nationals makes no difference as long as I am performing my duties and responsibilities. Since I am the only Filipino on board this ship, I sacrifice myself for I know

there will be a future working hard for the sake of my family and being loyal to the company and to the union (JSU) where I belong.

Crew of **M/V GLOBAL SERENITY**

The various funding and training facilities through the private institutions in the Philippines are proof that the JSU had invested more for the benefits of its members without profit. We are hoping the JSU would continue its support in expanding more training projects through its training levy funds.



Officers and Crew of **M/V PACIFIC SPIRIT**

The ship visitation of the JSU Union Officer and ISS has its own importance as they had clarified our inquiries. May we thank the JSU for assistance in gaining that most likely to benefit its members. Showing the outcome, our management had informed us that we would be given a PC on the scheduled dry-docking to utilize our free email.



Crew of **M/V AQUA BLUE**

We thank the JSU staff for their regular visitation. All the important things about our rights were made clear with the proper explanations of the JSU Union Officer and ISS. We are hoping JSU will continue the aims of protecting the welfare of its members.

Capt. Raul L. Alonzo and Crew of **M/V GLOBAL SAIKAI**

The ship visitation by your JSU staff is very important, as we are informed of the important updates to our CBA, the welfare benefits that we can avail while we are on leave. Nowadays, seafaring jobs are so hectic for us, there are so much added daily work aside from our duties and responsibilities on board, and work stress is the main concern of all the crew and perhaps to all other JSU members. Therefore, may we request that the JSU help amend the duration of our contract to six months, so that we might be able to enjoy the seafaring life and our families back home.



Pirate fighting equipment could be illegal

Equipment to stave off pirates might be illegal in certain areas, military lawyer Walter Verstrepen told the Combating Piracy conference in London.

Addressing a packed audience yesterday, he warned that a countermeasure that can blind pirates could be of questionable legality “under some flag states.”

“You need to ask yourselves whether that is legal everywhere. It’s very important to tackle the issues,” he said.

Also, long-range acoustic devices don’t always work, Verstrepen cautioned, as seen, for example, in the Biscaglia case where three seafarers jumped overboard to escape the din.

“Imagine standing in the shoes

of a shipowner, hoping it would be effective and finding out it isn’t,” he mused.

Armed guards might be an option for shipowners, he went on, but they need to be fully aware of the legal repercussions in certain jurisdictions. Spain is the only European country welcoming such guards, Verstrepen pointed out.

Toby Stephens, partner at Holman FenwickWillan, said the U.K.’s general position opposing armed guards is not going to change overnight, but he added, “Is the door open? Yes, there is potential there.”

Verstrepen also called for a self-regulating professional body representing the maritime security industry. *(Source: Fairplay)*

Nato warns pirate risk picking up

NATO has alerted commercial shipping to a greater risk of piracy in the southwest Somali Basin and Arabian Sea—and issued specific warnings about pirate mother ships.

“In the northeast there are several mother ships operating east of 55E, including the Samho Dream, which may be operating in company with two unidentified fishing dhows, which may correlate with media reports concerning the pirating of two Iranian dhows near 60 degrees,” NATO said.

“There is also activity at 60E probably linked to the last known location of the Tai Yuan 227. Pirates frequently use these pirated vessels to extend their range and increase their endurance. The area south of 3S off the Tanzanian coast is also very active with three recent incidents noted and the Asphalt Venture pirated in this area [as of September 29].

“This area is likely to remain active for some time due to the prevailing weather conditions.”

NATO said ships’ masters should note that the Tai Yuan 227 is a white-hulled fishing vessel about 50-meters long, with the registration numbers BH3Z87 painted in large black letters on the hull.

It said the 319,000-dw/t Samho Dream, which has an orange hull and white superstructure, was probably conducting pirate mother ship operations near the shipping lanes, about 190 nautical miles southeast of Socotra Island.

“These vessels represent an active threat to merchant shipping and any small boat observed in the open ocean more than 300 nautical miles from the Somali coast should be considered to be a potential pirate vessel.”

Guns don’t mean discount

Shipping insurers told a piracy conference that the sector remains so dubious about armed guards on deck that owners cannot expect their use to produce a discount.

Nigel Carden, deputy chairman of the UK P&I Club, told delegates in London that the International Group of 13 clubs does not advocate the use of armed guards and warned that hiring them produces a “risk of shipowners being held vicariously responsible” for injuries they might cause. *(Source: Fairplay)*

Somali pirates extend reach

Somali pirates have carried out 35 of the 39 ship hijackings reported globally this year and extended their reach to the southern Red Sea for the first time, according to a maritime watchdog.

The International Maritime Bureau (IMB) said that the number of hijackings worldwide in the first nine months of 2010 had risen from 34 in the same period last year.

“Somali pirates used oceangoing fishing vessels to reach as far as the southern Red Sea, where they hijacked a chemical tanker in July 2010, the first such hijacking recorded in the area,” it said. “Pirates are heavily armed with automatic weapons and rocket-propelled grenades.”

The London-based watchdog also reported a rebound in attacks in the South China Sea, a one-time hotspot where piracy had been virtually eradicated by naval patrols. Incidents in the area tripled to 30 in the year so far.

“The pirates in this area use almost identical methods of attack, suggesting that a small number of groups is responsible,” IMB director Pottengal Mukundan said. “The fact that vulnerable vessels are boarded by pirates whilst steaming is a matter of concern.”

Bangladesh’s port city of Chittagong has also been hit by an upsurge in incidents, with an increasing number of thieves boarding vessels at anchor or nearby. Around Indonesia, 26 incidents were recorded, up from seven in 2009.

The IMB commended the international naval presence protecting merchant shipping off the Horn of Africa, but said that no flotilla could ever hope to guard such a vast stretch of ocean.

As Somali pirates moved further offshore to evade the naval presence, attacks in their former hunting ground off the Gulf of Aden fell to 44 compared with 100 for the same period of 2009.

The IMB said that in the first nine months of 2010 there were 289 piracy incidents on the world’s seas, slightly down from 306 a year earlier.

So far this year, pirates have boarded 128 ships and fired at 52, while 70 vessels thwarted attacks. One crewmember has been killed, 27 injured and 773 taken hostage. *(Source: Manila Bulletin)*

IBF approves anti-piracy guidelines

New anti-piracy guidelines aimed at both seafarers and shipowners have been agreed upon by the International Bargaining Forum (IBF) at its meeting in New York.

The forum’s recommendations include assurance that every seafarer held captive has their wages paid to their families until they are released and that the families are properly informed about the steps taken

to free any seafarers who are captured.

It was found that shipowners and managers should have plans in place to attend to the psychological and medical needs of the seafarers and their families during and after the period of captivity. Owners and managers should also agree to fully cooperate with naval forces and law enforcement officials to bring pirates to justice, including pay-

ing accommodation and fare expenses for any crew that are required to testify, the IBF said.

Another recommendation is that IBF ships comply with best management practices and ensure seafarers are fully trained to increase their safety.

The IBF brings together the International Transport Workers’ Federation and international maritime employers groups. *(Source: Fairplay)*

U.S. law could affect single-hull market

U.S. Congress has passed legislation that would seriously impair future marketability of remaining single-hull tankers, such as those serving the LOOP offshore terminal.

Lawmakers passed the Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2010, which also includes many other measures effecting shipping operations, and then signed by President Barack Obama.

The act will amend OPA ’90 to include as a responsible party “the owner of the oil being transported in a single-hull tank vessel after December 31, 2010.” The act would also mandate new regulations, one year after enact-

ment, “to reduce the risks of oil spills in operations involving the transfer of oil from or to a tank vessel.”

In a boost for seafarer rights, its language addresses long-running complaints of costly shore-leave procedures. The act mandates that U.S. ports “provide a system for seamen to board and depart the vessel through the facility in a timely manner at no cost to the individual.”

It also would indemnify U.S. owners and crew using deadly force against piracy, declaring that they “shall not be liable for injury or death caused to any person participating in the act of

piracy.”

Finally, the act would limit cruise liabilities from crew class-action suits on allegedly unpaid overtime. The “double wage penalty statute” of the circa-1790 Seamen’s Wage Act requires employers to pay two days’ wages for every day a wage debt remains due—with no ceiling and no statute of limitation on claims.

Cruise lines paid out US\$50 million in settlements on pay suits in 2003-05. The new language would cap cruise liability at 10 times unpaid wages and requires a class action to be filed within three years of the claim. *(Source: Fairplay)*

ASF worry over piracy increase in South China Sea

The Asian Shipowners’ Forum (ASF) Safe Navigation & Environment Committee (SNEC) has expressed concern on the increasing number of attacks in the South China Sea, with 18 incidents of piracy and armed robbery reported in waters off the Anambas and Mangkai islands.

The ASF SNEC has urged all states to cooperate and be more proactive, both onshore and at sea, to prevent such crimes from taking place.

The committee noted that the

secretaries-general of the International Maritime Organization and the United Nations have both responded to a letter from the ASF expressing the ASF’s concerns about pirate attacks in the Gulf of Aden, Somali Basin and the Indian Ocean.

The ASF also welcomed the appointment of Jack Lang as the U.N. Special Advisor on piracy it is to be hoped that he will facilitate the development of an effective mechanism for prosecuting captured pirates.

Considering the outcome of the 56th session of the IMO Subcommittee on Safety of Navigation (NAV 56), the ASF was pleased to note that NAV 56 had provisionally adopted a proposal by Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore that all applicable vessels display night signals consisting of three all-round green lights in a vertical line when crossing the Traffic Separation Scheme in the Singapore Strait, to be included as a recommendatory interim measure. *(EHL)*

Irika Shipping whistleblowers rewarded \$125,000 each

Four crewmembers that exposed an Irika Shipping “magic pipe” violation have been awarded US\$125,000 each by a U.S. judge.

Maryland U.S. District Judge J. Frederick Motz made the award pursuant to the Act to Prevent Pollution from Ships, which allows whistleblowers to receive an award of up to half of the fines collected under the statute.

Motz ordered Greek shipman-

agement company Irika Shipping to pay \$4 million for illegally dumping oil-contaminated bilge waste from the 75,151-dw/t bulk-er Iorana during port calls in Baltimore, Md.; Tacoma, Wash.; and New Orleans, La. Irika pleaded guilty to the violation in July 2010.

The Irika investigation was launched in January after a crewmember passed a note to a Customs inspector after the ship

arrived in Baltimore. The note alleged that the ship’s chief engineer had directed the dumping of the oil through a bypass hose, known as a “magic pipe,” to circumvent pollution prevention equipment.

The whistleblower’s note said, “We are asking help to any authorities concerned about this, because we must protect our environment and our marine lives.” *(Source: Fairplay)*

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