

New Year's Message from Yasumi Morita, President, All Japan Seamen's Union

JSU to strive to realize action policies

Happy New Year to All Japan Seamen's Union (JSU) members who spent New Year's Day at sea or at home, spending time with their families for the first time in a while. I hope that all of you had a great start to the New Year.

This year, 2016, is the Year of the Monkey. According to the Chinese sexagenary cycle, it is the year of Fire Monkey, meaning that this year, the efforts that you have made will bear fruit. Believing this saying, we will continue to work very hard to see that the activities we have carried out so far and will continue to carry out this year will lead to many of our action policies taking shape.

In Japan, an island nation, the shipping and fishery industries underpin the country's economy and the lives of Japanese citizens. Also, the international and domestic transport of commodities; safe ship operations for carrying passengers on ferries, other passenger vessels and other means; and the jobs of seafarers who are engaged in fishing to secure fishery foodstuffs are all essential to Japan, a maritime nation.

However, it is hard to say whether the importance of seafarers' jobs is understood widely and accurately among the general public now. We are being faced with the challenge of having to secure and develop successors to Japanese seafar-



JSU President Yasumi Morita

ers, who are responsible for running the shipping and fishery businesses.

To address this challenge, it is important for all relevant parties, including the government of Japan as well as the oceangoing shipping, domestic shipping and fishery industries, to join forces and fulfill their respective responsibilities.

For its parts, I believe, JSU needs to conduct public relations campaigns more extensively so that it will be more widely and better known among the Japanese people. To this end, we will promote educational activity to invite children to go on board ships. We will also strive to

make specialized vocational high schools that have mercantile marine courses more popular through various efforts, including a public relations project to encourage junior high school students to go on to such specialized vocational high schools.

In advanced countries in Europe and other regions in terms of maritime affairs, seafarers are recognized as special and important workers as the foundation of maritime business. In these economies, as such, special taxation systems are available for them, with examples including a reduction and/or exemption of income tax. In the maritime nation of Japan, it is necessary to establish a special taxation system that is similar to those in such nations. We will continue to work hard to realize a reduction and/or exemption of income tax, which is the most important part of the challenges that we have been addressing to have a special taxation system.

In addition to securing and cultivating Japanese seafarers and having a special taxation system established for seafarers, we have many more challenges to tackle. For example, we need to improve the situation of ferry and other passenger services that have led to generating an employment issue due to the Japanese government's road-oriented policies. We need to work against pirates whose numbers are

on the rise and still remain a threat in waters in western Africa and Southeast Asia, despite being on the decline off the coast of Somalia. We must also deal with illegal and violent acts by anti-whaling activists against Japan's research whaling. Also, it is necessary to eliminate digital divides and further enhance the system under which seafarers and other individuals who work on board ships are allowed to cast a vote for elections while on duty at ocean.

Last year was a milestone marking 70 years since the end of World War II. Seafarers made many precious sacrifices during the Pacific War. Learning lessons from them, JSU has always conducted activities to eliminate war and realize lasting peace, in stating, "We will not become war victims or victimizers." We will continue to seek seas of peace. No matter what circumstances and situations surround us, we will strive to raise the status of seafarers, make their jobs more attractive and have relevant policies put into practice for them. We will promote industry-wide labor movements to contribute to maintaining order in a fair and equitable manner and develop fairer and more equitable markets for the shipping and fishery industries.

I will close my message by praying that throughout this year, you will all remain healthy, and all ships will be operated safely.

IMarEST launches campaign to support seafarers develop skills

The Institute of Marine Engineering Science & Technology (IMarEST) has launched a campaign aimed at supporting seafarers in developing their skills and demonstrating their competencies.

The campaign raises awareness of options available to seafarers to grow their knowledge while continuing their role at sea – such as innovative e-learning higher education courses specifically relevant

for senior management positions ashore – for example an MSc in Sustainable Maritime Operations.

IMarEST also reminds seafarers how to use their existing certificates of competency to gain professional qualifications such as Chartered or Registered status. The IMarEST recognizes certificates of competency (both deck and engine) as equivalent to up to Master's-level learning, making it easier for seafar-

ers to apply for professional registration and achieve a universally recognized professional status.

"The IMarEST recognizes that many seafarers are looking to maximize their career potential and gain additional knowledge in preparation for more senior positions ashore or afloat," David Loo-ley, IMarEST chief executive said. "Seafarers sometimes feel pressured to leave their jobs at sea earlier

than planned in order to try and move up the career ladder, sometimes leaving the sector altogether. By utilizing our latest e-learning technology, seafarers can stay at sea longer but continue to develop the skills they need to make the next career step and remain in the maritime profession.

"We believe the upskilling of seafarers will also help towards bridging the skills gap employers have

identified within the sector," Loo-ley said. "Many employers want to utilize the experience of their seagoing staff in shore-based management positions but are faced with the challenge that many lack the required knowledge. The IMarEST is committed to supporting the recruitment, retention and professional development of the very best individuals in the maritime and marine sector." (Source: Safety4Sea)

Employers need to be ready for 2010 amendments to STCW, says ICS

The transitional period for the 2010 amendments to the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (STCW 2010) comes to an end on January 1, 2017. To prevent last minute certification "log-jams", and potential difficulties during Port State Control inspections next year, it is important that maritime employers liaise closely

with maritime administrations, says the International Chamber of Shipping (ICS).

With less than a year to go before the end of this major transition, ICS and its member national associations are urging shipping companies to check that those maritime administrations responsible for issuing their seafarers' STCW certification are fully prepared, and that arrangements have been made to

ensure that any necessary training updates can be undertaken by the seafarers they employ.

The 2010 Manila Amendments to STCW entered into force in 2012, with different requirements being phased-in at various dates before January 1, 2017.

The provisions being phased-in by maritime administrations include new and updated seafarer competences, as well as changes to

some seafarer grades and certification requirements. Most maritime administrations have determined that seafarers holding national certificates of competence will need to complete mandatory updating courses in order to be certified beyond December 31, 2016.

In view of the January 1, 2017 implementation date, ICS considers that maritime administrations should, where necessary, have al-

ready approved any special updating courses for seafarers, as well as making any necessary arrangements for the issue and revalidation of seafarers' certificates in accordance with the 2010 amendments. In their capacity as flag states, administrations also need to be ready to process a potentially large number of applications for flag state recognition endorsements towards the end of 2016. (Source: ICS)

Owners advised on managing US medical costs

The UK P&I Club is offering its members some guidance on how to manage U.S. medical costs should a crew member, passenger or other maritime worker onboard a ship fall ill or become injured.

Noting that while the quality of care in the United States is generally regarded as high, the cost of treatment is inconsistent from hospital to hospital, according to Claims Executive Linda Wright.

“Unlike other developed countries, the United States does not have a uniform healthcare system. Medical facilities are free

to charge any price they wish for procedures and services. As there are no regulations regarding costs, the same procedure at different hospitals may be billed at a wide range of figures,” she said.

“It is important to ensure that the injured party is receiving the necessary treatment. With serious injuries, managing the medical services can be difficult without the assistance of a nurse case manager (NCM). The NCM is the liaison between the medical provider and your claims team. The NCM’s assessment of the treatment plan can determine the length of stay and appropriate

procedures necessary to ensure progress toward a fit for duty/maximum medical improvement status. Frequent NCM updates, with reports and test results included, assist in monitoring the health of the crew member and preparing for return to the vessel or repatriation home,” Wright said.

“A first step should be the appointment of a medical bill auditing company to review and reduce the costs. A true audit of the services provided on each invoice is the most efficient way. Savings from overcharges, coding/billing compliance, and errors can best be determined by

a diligent review of each item on a bill. Members should receive a copy of the itemized bill with procedure codes and fees to compare to the medical reports,” the claims executive went on.

“Members could also enlist a medical review company that has prearranged percentage discounts from medical providers. For example, if a bill for a serious injury or illness totals [US]\$100,000 and the bill review has a contract to offer 25 percent discount, \$25,000 would be saved on the bill. It is important to recognize that a blanket discount for all services may not always be the best strategy to minimize costs.

“The importance of appointing an appropriate medical management company at the onset of an injury or illness is high. However,” she added, “the choice of a medical manager is sometimes made by the local vessel agent (prior to contacting the Club), who may have been recruited by a specific company. If the Club and Member are not involved immediately after the incident, medical management control may be lost to the agent’s choice. Often the Club sees expensive management handling charges and weak discounts across the board from these arrangements.” (Source: *MarineLog*)

ITF makes stand against ‘unfair’ sentencing of seafarers

The ITF is making a stand against the criminalization of seafarers doing their job in two current high profile cases.

The federation has agreed to pay towards the legal costs of the court appeal of crew members of the anti-piracy patrol vessel *Seaman Guard Ohio*, who have received five-year jail sentences each from an Indian court.

The court said that “unlicensed and illegal weapons” were found on board their vessel in October 2013 after it strayed into Indian waters during a storm. The

crew members include 13 Estonian, 10 Indian, six British and six Ukrainian seafarers. Owned by the U.S. firm Advantfort, the patrol vessel was flagged in Sierra Leone.

ITF seafarers’ section chair Dave Heindel said: “This is a clear case of criminalization of the vessel’s crew. They have been sentenced for supposedly being in charge of weapons that they would never have handled. How can you imprison a ship’s cook for five years for weapons possession when the only thing he’s handled

is pots and pans? It’s an injustice.”

In a second case, the ITF has lambasted the two-year jail sentence handed out by the Spanish Supreme Court to the 80-year-old former captain of the Greek-owned *Prestige* oil tanker, which sank off Spain’s Galician coast in 2002 causing widespread oil pollution.

The court overturned a previous court sentence that had cleared Apostolos Managouras of criminal responsibility. In the previous decision, the Galician regional court had concluded that the disaster was

partly due to the 26-year-old tanker’s poor state of repair.

Dave Heindel said the new verdict “represents the dying gasps of a 14-year-old attempt to deflect blame onto the shoulders of an octogenarian man, who has been cleared in the court of world opinion and by his peers ... This innocent man cannot again be made to sit needlessly in jail.”

He added that such victimization “reminds us that we must all remain vigilant to protect seafarers from these injustices.” (ITF *Seafarers*)

EU-funded project develops improved ship-bridge designs

A three-year, EU-funded project called CASCADe has developed new methodologies for information sharing and display on a ship’s bridge aimed at improving efficiency on board and contributing towards the prevention of accidents at sea.

Drawing directly from the experience of seafarers, CASCADe has developed an adaptive bridge design methodology that treats both human agents and electronic equipment as parts of a cooperative system. This allows for the sharing of information to be optimized.

In addition, CASCADe has developed a set of adaptive bridge displays.

A touch screen “Shared Display” is intended to aid communication and cooperation on the bridge. It can be fully customized and allows one screen to show multiple sources of information in whatever configuration is most suitable for a particular situation. It provides functionality to graphically annotate maps, leave notes for other crew members or complete checklists electronically.

The CASCADe console was

integrated with tools used by pilots in their Portable Pilot Units (PPUs).

First, CASCADe developed a protocol to share pilotage routes between the PPU and the ship’s electronic charts. Second, a link was established between the PPU and the bridge screens to allow mirroring of information from the PPU screen, enabling crew members to see extra information normally only available to the pilot.

All of these CASCADe tools were tested on both a physical simulator (a ship simulator used

for training) and a virtual simulator (a software-based simulation of a ship bridge). The virtual simulation platform makes it possible to test new bridge designs at the earliest stages of development, based purely on computational models. By simulating human-machine interaction, it is possible to analyze information flow and optimize the information exchange between seafarers and bridge equipment.

Coordinated through OFFIS (Oldenburg Research and Development Institute for Information Technology Tools and

Systems), CASCADe included a consortium of seven project partners from five EU countries including BMT Group Ltd, Raytheon Anschuetz GmbH, Mastermind Shipmanagement Ltd, the University of Cardiff, Marimatech AS and Symbio Concepts & Products SPRL.

Four associated partners—Maritime Cluster Northern Germany, Nautilus International, NSB Niederelbe Schifffahrtsgesellschaft mbH & Co. KG and the University of Tasmania—supported the project (Source: *MarineLog*)

IMF staffers urge carbon tax on shipping as IMO pursues GHG reductions

Shipping and aviation may not have been explicitly included in the text of the Paris Agreement adopted at last month’s COP21 conference on climate change, but that does not mean that they will escape special treatment.

Imposing some sort of carbon tax on the two industries is an idea that is not going to go away and that will surface again, labeled as a “market based mechanism,” as IMO continues to work on reduction of greenhouse gases (GHG) from ships.

Those in favor of that approach will find ammunition in a recent discussion pa-

per on “Macro-fiscal Policies for Climate Change” prepared by International Monetary Fund (IMF) staff members.

Here, in part, is what they write:

“For climate finance, carbon pricing in developing countries would establish price signals needed to attract private flows for mitigation. Substantial amounts could also be raised from charges on international aviation and maritime fuels. These fuels are a growing source of emissions, are underpriced, and charges would exploit a tax base not naturally belonging to national governments.” And again, “Charges

on international aviation and maritime emissions (about 4 percent of global CO2 emissions, but rising rapidly) are promising.

“National governments have a weaker claim on these tax bases than they do for domestic fuels, making them appealing as a possible source of climate finance. There are challenges, including the need for international coordination (especially important for maritime, given the mobility of the tax base) and legal issues (especially for aviation, due to treaties and bilateral air service agreements limiting fuel taxes)

but the practicalities should be manageable. A global [US]\$30 per ton CO2 charge on these fuels could have raised about \$25 billion for climate finance in 2014, even after compensation for developing countries.

“On climate finance, the IMF emphasizes the attractiveness of carbon pricing instruments. Applied to developing countries these instruments attract private flows, and applying them to fuel used in international aviation and maritime transport can raise significant public sources.” (Source: *MarineLog*)

VOICES *from* SEAFARERS

**Capt. Joel L. Elefante & Crew of
MV OCEAN BLUE**

At the start of the year, we wish the JSU could have a successful action during the FOC campaigns. Keep up the good work.



**Capt. Cimarra, Edgardo Riosa & Crew of
MV BAI CHAY BRIDGE**

Every member of a labor organization gives part of their hard earnings for the union dues. May we ask the union to spend it wisely into a meaningful benefit for the seafarers.



**Signing off Crew of
MV BALTIMORE HIGHWAY**

Thanks to the implementation of the MLC 2006. We sincerely acknowledge the active role of JSU in taking part in the implementation of the seafarers' bill of rights.



**Capt. Edgar Sulpecio Carvajal Llorente & Crew of
MV MORNING SALUTE**

During the JSU Staff visit, we've been reminded of the future plans and proposals for the benefits and rights of the members. Thank you and long live JSU!



**Capt. Alexander Caga Tadena & Crew of
MV ORIENT KING**

At long last, wage increase for 2016 is approaching. We've been optimistic of this instance and wish this would change the course of our employment. Welcome to the New Year!



**Capt. Edgardo B. Fernandez & Crew of
MV LAKE DAWN**

JSU should provide a link with AMOSUP in checking the contributions of the members' provident fund that could be easily accessed by the members. We are hoping this proposal will be beneficial to all.



**Capt. Ahas Vilano Visiesto Gango & Crew of
MV ELM K**

Our beloved union should create a program of benefits for the retired seafarers. The well-being and health of every retiree is a must to be taken care of. We wish you all a happy new year and good luck.



**Capt. Alex L. Penaflorida & Crew of
MV AZUL CIELO**

Every single cent paid by the seafarers to the union dues has a valuable implication. Retired seafarers need something in return that could last their remaining times. We wish the equivalent should be worth the value. Thank you and happy New Year.



**Capt. Randy Valero Lima & Crew of
MV OCEAN COBALT**

In behalf of its Filipino members, the JSU or AMOSUP should take the initiative to meddle with the government maritime agency to process the seafarers' documents in a fast and orderly manner by citing the limited time during their stay in the country. We hope there would be a positive result.



**2nd Mate Yuan Guang Ming & Crew of
MV OCEAN RAINBOW**

In appreciation of the JSU training assistance, we'd like to comment and extend our gratitude and regards to the staff of JSU who have facilitated these training courses to be successful. We proudly salute JSU and thank you very much.



**Capt. Dominador Salao Sarno & Crew of
MV ATLANTIC EAGLE**

The long awaited wage increase for 2016 will soon be implemented. Although the increase did not reach our varied expectations, we hope this will continue to transpire annually. Thank you in advance and more power.



**Capt. Denison Maglinte Alasa-as & Crew of
MV UNTA**

Union dues of the members could be used to support the union activities and a worthy benefit should be added to the welfare services such as medical outreach for old seafarers. We are hoping this will be given attention to the future plans of the union.

Unions, employers join in fight against bullying

Maritime unions and employers have joined forces to launch a new joint international guide to preventing harassment and bullying at sea.

The guidance on eliminating shipboard harassment and bullying has been launched by the

ITF along with the International Chamber of Shipping (ICS) and is available at: <http://www.itf-global.org/en/resources/reports-publications/ics-itf-bullying-and-harassment-guide/>

The guidance sets out what shipping companies, seafarers and seafarers' organizations can do to help prevent bullying and

harassment from becoming a serious concern.

The guidance advises on the procedures needed, and the responsibilities of seafarers and their employers to use these appropriately and to be aware of any harassment or bullying in the maritime workplace.

ITF general secretary Steve

Cotton commented that bullying and harassment were unacceptable in any workplace, "but they have a particular horror at sea, where those affected may be isolated and alone, hundreds of miles from home".

The guidelines have been launched in advance of an important International Labour

Organization (ILO) Special Tripartite Committee to review progress on the Maritime Labour Convention (MLC – the "seafarers' bill of rights"), due to be held in February, where the ITF and ICS will coordinate the representation of the maritime industry social partners. (*Source: ITF Seafarers*)

Armed robbers still a threat at sea, IMB reports

Robbers, often armed with weapons, continue to be a threat to seafarers in many ports and waters. Recent incidents reported to the International Maritime Bureau (IMB) worldwide Piracy Reporting Center include the following.

- Two robbers boarded a tanker anchored at Sikka, India on December 30. The crew raised the alarm and mustered. The robbers escaped with stolen ship's property.

- Five robbers attempted to

board a bulk carrier anchored at Caofeidian, China on December 29, but abandoned their attempt after the crew raised the alarm and mustered.

- Four robbers approached a bulk carrier anchored at Taboneo, Indonesia on December 27 and attempted to board, but moved away after they were spotted by crew and the alarm was raised.

- Robbers boarded a tanker anchored at Kandla, India on December 24, stole ship's property and escaped.

- Robbers boarded a container-ship anchored at Manila, Philippines on December 19, stole ship's property and escaped.

- Around five robbers armed with guns in a speedboat approached a bulk carrier around 7 nautical miles off Doc Can Island, Philippines on December 18. The vessel increased speed and took evasive maneuvers. The robbers opened fire towards the bridge causing damage, but no crew were injured.

- Five robbers armed with

knives boarded a tanker anchored around 6 nautical miles off Pulau Nipah, Indonesia on September 19 and tied up the duty crew member. The alarm was raised and the crew mustered. The robbers escaped with stolen engine room spares.

- Four robbers armed with long knives boarded a tanker around 5 nautical miles off Pulau Nipah, Indonesia on September 8. The alarm was raised and crew mustered. The robbers escaped empty-handed. (*Source: ITF Seafarers*)

Ratifications still needed on BWM

Following the spate of ratifications in November 2015 of the Ballast Water Management (BWM) Convention, IMO and partner IHS Maritime & Trade have been engaged in a process to verify tonnage figures to ascertain whether or not the convention's final entry-into-force requirement has been met.

Although that process is not yet complete, and will continue for up to three more weeks, IMO is in a position to confirm that the November ratifications did not trigger the convention's entry into force.

Forty-seven countries have now ratified the convention, substantially more than the 30 required, but their combined fleets comprise, at most, 34.56 per cent of global tonnage, with 35 percent required for entry into force.

IMO Secretary-General Kitack Lim said, "The recent ratifications have brought the BWM Convention so very close to entry into force. While we cannot predict exactly when that will happen, I would urge countries that have not done so to ratify the BWM Convention as soon as possible so that we can establish a certain date for entry into force, and also so that it is widely accepted when it does. In particular, those countries with large merchant fleets that have not done so, are requested to accelerate their processes to ratify the Convention." (*Source: Maritime Professional*)

Safety concerns raised over GPS disruptions off US

This past summer, multiple outbound vessels from a non-U.S. port suddenly lost GPS signal reception. The net effect was various alarms and a loss of GPS input to the ship's surface search radar, gyro units and Electronic Chart Display & Information System (ECDIS), resulting in no GPS data for position fixing, radar over ground speed inputs, gyro speed input and loss of collision avoidance capabilities on the radar display.

Fortunately, the vessels were able to safely continue their voyage using radar in heads up display, magnetic compass and terrestrial navigation. Approximately 6 nautical miles later, the vessels' GPS units resumed operation. Although the vessels had back-up systems to allow a safe transit, the consequences could have been severe.

These types of events highlight the potential detrimental impact to navigation caused by GPS interference or jamming and

the importance in understanding how your vessel's or facility's equipment could be impacted by a loss of GPS signal.

Global Navigation Satellite Systems (GNSS) have become an integral part of everyday life. However, at times, the positioning signals may be impacted by interference from both natural and human-made sources. The most common types of interference are reception issues, usually due to bad installations, poor antenna positioning or faulty equipment. Jamming devices (<https://transition.fcc.gov/eb/jammerenforcement/fccdhsj.pdf>), while illegal in the United States and a threat to safety, have been used for nefarious or deceptive purposes. Interference can also be unintentionally caused when operating GNSS in close proximity to other radiating devices, such as amplified TV antennas (see our Safety Alert 11-02).

Therefore, it is important to

remember to use all available means for navigation and maintain proficiency so you can still navigate should your primary GPS fail.

Indicators of positioning systems interference include an intermittent signal, no signal, or an incorrect signal. Suspected or suspicious disruptions should be reported immediately. Critical information to take note of during a disruption event includes location, time, and period of outage.

Commercial operators are reminded, should your navigation or other equipment onboard (e.g. AIS) be impaired as a result of a disruption or interference, this should be reported to the nearest U.S. Coast Guard Captain of the Port, District Commander or Vessel Traffic Center as soon as possible; and, await further directions (per 33 CFR 164.53).

All operators should be aware, vigilant, and immediately report

GPS disruptions to the U.S. Coast Guard Navigation Center (NAVCEN). The report will be disseminated to the U.S. Air Force GPS Operations Center and the Federal Aviation Administration in an attempt to identify the problem and correlate with any other GPS incidents in the same general geographic location. Depending on the severity of the report, NAVCEN may refer it to law enforcement and/or other federal agencies for further investigation.

Reporting a disruption—or other navigation hazards or aids to navigation outages—is simple, and can be done electronically (<http://www.navcen.uscg.gov>—the preferred method) or phone call to the NAVCEN (703-313-5900), 24 hours a day.

This Safety Alert is provided for informational purposes only and does not relieve any domestic or international safety, operational or material requirement. (*Source: MarineLink.com*)

IMO's energy-efficiency training course now available online

A complete package of training materials on the International Maritime Organization's energy efficiency requirements is now available to download free of charge from the IMO website.

The package, including presentations, posters, exercises and assignments, will be of interest to anyone wanting to

understand how to implement the regulations in Chapter 4 of MARPOL Annex VI and what the technical and operational implications are for ship designers, shipbuilders, companies and seafarers.

The course has been designed to train individuals to become trainers themselves. This is to

encourage the development of a pool of people who can participate in capacity-building activities under either the auspices of IMO technical cooperation activities or in any other formal education and training scenario.

The package includes a trainers manual and modules on:

Climate Change and the Shipping Response; Ship Energy Efficiency Regulations and Related Guidelines; From Management to Operation; Ship Board Energy Management; Ship Port Interface for Energy Efficiency; Energy Management Plans and Systems. (*Source: Maritime Professional*)

ALL JAPAN SEAMEN'S UNION
15-26, Roppongi 7-Chome,
Minato-Ku, Tokyo 106-0032

Tel.: (03) 5410-8320
Fax: (03) 5410-8336
E-mail: iss@jsu.jp
Internet: <http://www.jsu.or.jp>

Publisher: Hiroyuki Tachikawa

Send inquiries to the attention of
Mr. Hiroyuki Watanabe,
Director, Foreign Trades Dept.