

# Happy New Year 2018

## Shipping, fisheries industries underpin people's lives Necessary to secure, grow Japanese seafarer successors

**HAPPY NEW YEAR** to union members who celebrated the New Year at sea while on duty and at home with their families after long separations.

It has been slightly over 72 years since the All Japan Seamen's Union (JSU) was established in October 1945. During the Pacific War, a total of 60,643 seafarers lost their precious lives. Learning from this experience, we have always been strongly seeking world peace and seas of peace, developing a variety of activities to this end.

In Japan, which is surrounded by sea, the shipping and fishery industries bolster the maintenance and development of the national economy and the livelihood of Japanese citizens. Japan could never remain as a maritime nation without seafarers, who work very hard day and night to operate ships safely and fulfill other responsibilities, while having to remain separated from their families and society. They are engaged in carrying goods both internationally and domestically; transporting people on ferries, passenger ships and others; and operating fishing boats to secure seafood products.

Nevertheless, it is hard to say their importance is acknowledged or recognized widely or correctly among the general public. As such, it is a major challenge to secure and cultivate successors to Japanese seafarers who lead the maritime industry.

To secure successors in the shipping and fishery industries who are inevitable to the development of Japan and the livelihood of Japanese citizens, it is necessary for the government of Japan and the maritime industry to work hand in hand to publicize maritime affairs and get people thinking about maritime affairs. For its part, the JSU will continue to work to make seafarers known more widely and deeply as an occupation. To this

end, we will help children who will play important roles in future generations feel the appeal of the ocean and ships by encouraging them to go on board ships and participate in seine fishing. We will also carry out PR activity, called the "J-Crew Project—Yappari Umi ga Suki" (We Love the Ocean After All), to urge students to go on to specialized vocational high schools, colleges and universities that have merchant marine-related programs.

It is needless to say that securing safety at sea is necessary and essential to seafarers, who work at sea, while also necessary and essential are work environments that can help their families see them off to work without anxiety. As for the anti-piracy actions taken in waters off the coast of Somalia and in the Gulf of Aden, I would like to express my gratitude as seafarers and vessels were protected regardless of the countries they belonged to. In 2015, the number of patrol vessels deployed was reduced from two to one, as the number of piracy and other cases had decreased to zero. Today, however, piracy and other incidents are occurring again. To secure safety for seafarers and vessels, we are demanding that inquests be conducted to resume the number back to two.

In the Pacific War, many requisitioned seafarers and private vessels were sacrificed. Taking this sad experience into consideration, we will patiently ask the government of Japan and the Ministry of Defense to be self-contained in respect to moving goods and forces in case of emergencies.

As for the efforts that we make regarding the taxation system for seafarers, we will continue to have it introduced in municipalities other than Yokkaichi and Toba cities, Mie Prefecture. In many countries that are advanced in terms of shipping, tax incentives have been implemented to secure native seafarers. To raise seafarers' status and secure successors,



Yasumi Morita  
President  
All Japan Seamen's Union

we will work hard to have a tax cut policy (an income tax reduction) implemented immediately.

In addition, we are also working on the maintenance of educational institutes for cultivating seafarers and an increase in the number of students accepted, the development of information infrastructure, the construction of new fishing vessels to replace existing ones, whaling, actions to eliminate marine accidents and ensure safety, the promotion of modal shifts, the maintenance and continuation of ferries and passenger ships and the promotion of safety in channels inside ports and harbors. We will strive to seek understanding from and promote cooperation with union members who work on site and people from relevant industries to realize these action policies, and develop activities accordingly.

I would like to close my New Year address by praying that seafarers will stay healthy, and that vessels will be operated safely in the year to come.

# Shipyards and search for best newbuild values

Rising waves of nationalism are being seen in politics around the globe, and the trend is also bleeding over in ship construction. Owners are ordering a larger number of ships from yards in their home countries, as can be seen in the chart below.

Japanese owners have always been partial to domestic yards, due in part to the tight relationship between Japanese trading

houses and builders. However, many small owners continue to favor their country's yards. This is a longstanding trend, and is little changed from 2012 to the present.

One of the big shifts reported is the increasing number of ships ordered by Chinese owners at their home based yards. Orders placed jumped from 18 percent in 2012 to 28 percent in 2017, and the trend looks like it will continue. Financing made avail-

able by national banks and leasing companies will ensure that work continues to be steered towards businesses in mainland China.

South Korea has seen a modest boost as well, but interest from their countrymen remains a much smaller piece of their business than the other two Asian shipbuilding powerhouses.

Some of the domestic orders are driven by protectionism, such as orders placed in U.S. yards. Cabo-

rage laws such as the Jones Act tend to drive this activity. The impact of the dramatic fall in oil prices in 2014-15 can be seen in the sharp drop in orders at Norwegian yards, which had specialized in supporting the offshore industry.

Trends in economic nationalism come and go over the decades, and the current favoritism for domestic work will not continue indefinitely. However, it does look like we will see a higher percentage of

owners ordering from the yards in their home countries in the near term. This will be most noticeable in low specification ships. Specialized units and complex projects should continue to go to the most capable builders though. Independent owners with access to financing will seek the best yards at the fairest price. Meritocracy still reigns supreme in the highly competitive, and global, business of shipping. (Source: *VesselsValue Ltd.*)

## S'pore aiming to ride transport tide with ambitious project

Staying ahead of the competition in an industry that suffers from excess capacity and price wars is tough, but that is precisely what Singapore's maritime sector, centered on its transshipment port, must do.

Acknowledging this, an ambitious plan to help the sector navigate rough seas is set out in the Industry Transformation Map. The goal is to grow the sector's value-add by \$4.5 billion and create over 5,000 good jobs by 2025. This effort is vital as the maritime industry as a whole employs more than 170,000 people and contributes 7 percent to the economy. Last year,

container throughput at the port in Singapore rose 8.9 percent to 33.7 million, making it the world's top container transshipment hub.

No hub can afford to rest on its laurels as the pressure to find ever shorter sea routes and smarter, faster ways to move goods from where they are produced to where they are consumed is relentless. There is also intense competition from regional ports stretching from Malaysia to Shanghai.

To stay ahead, Singapore must be dogged in exploiting technology and other means to boost its logistics capabilities. It calls for

widespread acceptance of "real and deep transformation over the next few years", as Senior Minister of State for Transport Lam Pin Min put it, so that new growth opportunities can be captured.

Expanding the sector's value-add will be key to ensuring Singapore remains a global maritime hub prized for connectivity, innovation and talent. Only a combination of human skills upgrading and the managerial ability to work with radical new technology will make the transformation map viable. Key to this ongoing endeavor is the multibillion-dollar Tuas proj-

ect, which will, when completed, increase the port's capacity to 65 million TEUs of cargo – more than double what was handled last year.

This expansion is the latest in a series of bold moves to grow Singapore's port by building ahead of demand. Indeed, Singapore might have been too cautious in the past in planning infrastructural projects to catch a rising tide. Now, the thinking behind the Tuas megaport is that it is impossible to consistently ensure that just enough capacity is available at the right time. Instead, projects must be ready to benefit from rising tides

as global demand recovers from a period of stagnation.

Tuas is set to be not just huge but also efficient and intelligent, harnessing emerging technologies and data analytics to optimise operations. While the Government has both the resolve and resources to invest in the infrastructure and tools to keep Singapore's port competitive, the challenge – as faced by other sectors experiencing disruption – is to help workers adapt to change and to upgrade their skills to meet the needs of a 21st century port in a fast-changing world. (Source: *Straits Times*)

## Inmarsat adapts Fleet Xpress plans to meet OSV requirements

Inmarsat has launched a new set of Fleet Xpress plans designed specifically to meet the technical and commercial requirements of offshore support vessels (OSVs).

The new plan exploits the technical capabilities inherent to Fleet Xpress, such as high-speed connections and guaranteed performance, to offer vessel operators levels of flexibility that are naturally suited to the demanding requirements of a high-end sector such as offshore support.

It recognizes that connectivity needs onboard OSVs change frequently and that swings in data usage are likely to be more pronounced than for conventional cargo ships by accommodating free upgrades and downgrades in

service levels during the 36-month contract period.

When on-hire, the appetite for bandwidth from OSVs can be immense. Projects often generate considerable volumes of data that need sending back to shore for analysis, with third-party contractors onboard and an intense working environment. Furthermore, OSV operators also traditionally are generous with crew welfare.

Supported by a 1m antenna, Fleet Xpress for OSVs delivers committed information rates of up to 3Mbps for uploads and 6Mbps for downloads with a standard antenna, climbing to 5Mbps and 10Mbps, respectively, with an enhanced antenna. When off-hire, a more economical 128kbps/128Kbps link

may be sufficient to keep core operational data exchange ticking over.

This elasticity means that OSV operators can utilise the full potential of Fleet Xpress for the duration of a project and then switch to a narrower "standby" link between projects, also avoiding early termination costs. A network service device (NSD) manages bandwidth and regulates the flow of data traffic between the vessel and shore. The offer also includes provision for owners to suspend services for up to 180 days, subject to equivalent contract term extension.

"The global footprint of Fleet Xpress means OSVs can count on reliable connectivity wherever in the world they are deployed," says Eric Griffin, VP Maritime, Off-

shore Energy and Fisheries, Inmarsat. "Unlike conventional VSAT installations, Fleet Xpress is designed for seamless global mobility and automated satellite and beam switching, supported by the added resilience of unlimited FleetBroadband back-up. Inmarsat satellites are supported by redundant land-based infrastructure to ensure network availability, as defined in the service level agreements that form part of a subscription."

In addition, the new set of OSV plans can be used in conjunction with new hardware from existing terminal manufacturers that will provide a dual antenna solution to minimise outages caused by line of sight blockages, a common occurrence for OSV vessels due to their

proximity to rigs and operating in high seas. This will be managed by a single antenna control unit that will handle the service and seamless switching between antennas.

"The connectivity requirements of offshore support vessels place unique demands on satellite operators. Successful and timely completion of a contract is increasingly dependent on a highly resilient, high-capacity data link. The technology behind Fleet Xpress has the capacity to meet these demands and our new plan sets a precedent in joining the dots between the technical requirements and commercial realities of OSV operation and highlights how Fleet Xpress can be used in the energy sector," said Mr. Griffin. (Source: *Inmarsat*)

## Underwater seal repairs help avoid drydock and off-hire costs

Following a spate of stern tube seal failures, Antwerp-based Hydrex has reiterated its capability in carrying out repairs to stern tube seals during a ship's routine port visit, saving the expense and loss of revenue of unscheduled drydocking.

Stern tube seals can suffer undue wear or damage due to a variety of causes, causing water ingress and oil leaks. With ever-tightening environmental regulations resulting in heavy penalties for oil pollution, rapid and timely repairs are essential.

The company's flexible Mobdock repair method allows seals to be repaired or replaced while the ship is afloat in harbor, allowing shipowners to keep vessels earning revenue by avoiding extra visits to drydock.

A recent stern tube repair was carried out to a tanker berthed in Antwerp. "Although this was very close to our headquarters, we can undertake similar work anywhere," Hydrex CEO Boud van Rompay said. "Our well-stocked fast-response center can deliver the necessary equipment

anywhere in the world without delay. All of our offices are equipped with the latest facilities, lightweight equipment and tools, and our network of skilled technicians can be mobilised to be ready to start work as soon as the ship arrives at its next port of call."

It is not always straightforward to replace seals. There can be considerable variation in the size of the stern tube itself and the liners can be worn down and show ruts. In the case of the tanker in Antwerp, a thorough underwater

inspection of the stern tube seal assembly revealed that a rope and a fishing net had become entangled. Hydrex divers removed both, and the flexible Mobdock was installed to allow the repair work to be undertaken in dry conditions.

Hydrex technicians removed three damaged seals and replaced them with new ones. Hydrex worked in close cooperation with the seal manufacturer, which allowed the company to provide the client with original spare parts, thus guaranteeing a sound repair

using the best quality material. To help ensure this, a technician from the seal manufacturer was in attendance during the repair.

Van Rompay said: "Taking advantage of the Hydrex flexible Mobdock technique, the team was able to carry out the entire repair on-site and underwater. Because all the required equipment is ready to be transported at any time, there is no wasted time making preparations and it is possible to carry out the entire job without delays to the vessel's schedule." (Source: *Hydrex*)

VOICES from SEAFARERS



**Capt. Platon M. Pornel and crew of MV PACIFIC NOBLE**

On behalf of the officers and crew, I would like to extend our heartfelt gratitude to the staff of the JSU for enlightening us with regards to our welfare and benefits.



**Some crewmembers of MV COMET ACE**

We have heard that the CBA negotiation maybe concluded in February. Thanks for your efforts and we hope everything will be resolved positively. Happy New Year to all of you!!!



**Capt. Ernesto R. Umipig Jr, and some crewmembers of MV KEN VOYAGER**

Free Wi-Fi internet connection onboard should be provided in the CBA so that we can communicate with our families conveniently. Also, members should be provided with health cards so that anytime they can have medical attention for free.



**Capt. Brando A. Torrino and crew of MV TRANS FUTURE 11**

We would like to thank you for visiting us at the Port of Hakata. Thank you very much for the souvenirs and reading materials.



**Capt. Cleto C. Aguelo and crew of MV STAR PATHFINDER**

Thank you for your efforts in resolving seafarers' requests and problems. We appreciate your visit to our ship even in heavy snowfall. Keep up the good work!!!



**Officers and crew of MV EUROPEAN HIGHWAY**

Happy New Year to all the seafarers in the world!!! Thank you JSU for always visiting us and giving us information on maritime matters.



**Some crewmembers of MV GLORIOUS SENTOSA**

We really wish our ship be provided with Internet connection. Convenient communication with our families is very important. Please include a provision in the CBA that Internet should be provided to ships free to crewmembers.



**Capt. Alexander J. Locket and some crewmembers of MV WESTERN OWENDO**

We appreciate your visit to our ship and the discussion we had even in a limited time. Thank you for the information regarding the CBA.



**Filipino crew of MV ARIES LEADER**

We have been waiting for the new agreement and we hope it would be concluded soon. Thank you for coming and for the information you provided. Please continue visiting ships so that we can all be updated with the maritime news.



**Capt. Marlon A. Dayag (standing 7th from left), officers and crew of MV FUJISUKA**

Thank you for the explanation regarding the JSU Union Dues and the benefits accorded to the members. Happy New Year To All Seafarers!!!



**Capt. Jesus S. Lapitan, C/E Mario N. Alentajan (inset) and some crewmembers of MV HOUYU**

It's nice meeting you again. Working and living conditions of seafarers onboard have been improved a lot because of what you are doing. Thank you also for the facilities you made in the Philippines.



**Capt. Sheldon T. Tirazona (standing center) with some crew of MV ANSAC CHRISTINE NANCY**

Please negotiate for an increase in wages especially for the ratings. Also the Food Allowance should be increased. Thank you for visiting us.

## Yemen's Houthis threaten to block Red Sea traffic

Yemen's Houthi rebels have threatened to block the vital shipping route that connects the Mediterranean Sea with the Arabian Sea and Indian Ocean.

The president of the so-called supreme political council, which runs Sanaa and other rebel-held territory, had made the threat in a meeting with the deputy UN envoy to Yemen, according to both Saudi and Houthi media.

Council president Saleh Al Samad told the UN's Maen Shureim that the Houthis will turn to "strategic choices" if the Saudi-led coalition fighting in Yemen does not halt efforts to retake ports in Hodeidah province, where coastline runs along the Red Sea.

Pro-government forces—backed by the coalition—have been making rapid advances in rebel-held Hodeidah, hoping to prevent the Houthis from using the province's ports to smuggle in weapons from Iran.

According to Saudi Arabia's Al Hadath news channel, Mr. Al Samad said the rebels would "cut international navigation", while the Houthis' Al Masirah TV elaborated, reporting that he threatened to "block the Red Sea and target international navigation".

The Red Sea runs between two chokepoints, the Suez Canal and the Bab El Mandeb.

The U.S. Energy Information Administration estimated that 4.7 million barrels of oil were transported through the latter daily in 2014, mostly headed to markets in Europe.

On the other side of the Suez Canal lies the Mediterranean Sea and on the other side of the Bab El Mandeb the Gulf of Aden. Beyond that is the Arabian Sea and Indian Ocean.

Shureim, in Sanaa to resume peace negotiations, was due to meet with Houthi leaders to discuss paving the way for another round of negotiations with the government.

In his meeting with Shureim, Al Samad criticized the United Nations' efforts to resolve the war in Yemen, including the role of special envoy Ismail Ould Cheikh Ahmed, Al Masirah TV reported.

"We've come to a stage where we don't care any more about the role of the UN in solving the crisis in Yemen," Al Samad said.

The Saudi-led coalition, in which the UAE plays a leading role, has been fighting in Yemen since March 2015. It wants to restore president Abdrabu Mansur Hadi to power. His internationally recognized government was forced to flee Sanaa after it was seized by the Houthis in September 2014. (Source: *The National*)

# Changes in shore leave rights enter force

Seafarers' rights to shore leave have been strengthened through amendments which entered into force globally on the first of the year, under the revised treaty, which aims to achieve the smooth transit at ports of ships, cargo and passengers.

The amendments to the Convention on Facilitation of International Maritime Traffic (FAL Convention) also bring in a new requirement for national governments to introduce electronic information exchange, including electronic data interchange (EDI), to transmit information related to maritime transport. This should be in place by April 8, 2019, with provision for a transitional period of at least 12 months during which paper and electronic documents would be allowed.

Use of a "single window" for data is encouraged, to enable all the information required by public authorities in connection with the arrival, stay and departure of ships, persons and cargo, to be submitted via a single portal, without duplication.

In addition, a number of standard forms, standards and recommended practices relating to stowaways have been updated.

The FAL Convention has 118 signatory States.

### Shore leave

The amendment to the international standard on shore leave adds a new provision, on top of the requirement to allow crew ashore while the ship on which they arrive is at port. This new provision says there should be no discrimination on grounds of nationality, race, color, sex, religion, political opinion or social origin. Shore leave should be granted, irrespective of the flag State of the ship.

If any request is turned down, the relevant public authorities must provide an explanation to the crew member and the master, which the seafarer or master can request to be provided in writing.

### Security and stowaways

The section on preventing stowaways is updated and expanded.

National authorities are recommended to apply operational procedures equivalent to those in the IMO International Ship and Port Facility Security (ISPS) Code, to prevent stowaways accessing a ship.

A new standard requires governments, where appropriate, to incorporate legal grounds to allow prosecution of stowaways, attempted stowaways and any individual or company aiding a stowaway or an attempted stowaway with the intention to facilitate access to the port area, any ship, cargo or freight containers into their national legislation.

### New FAL Forms

Updated FAL forms are in effect from January 1, 2018, covering IMO General Declaration; Cargo Declaration; Ship's Stores Declaration; Crew's Effects Declaration; Crew List, Passenger List and Dangerous Goods.

Three additional documents have been introduced for ships' clearance that may be required by the shore authorities—security-related information required un-

der SOLAS, advance electronic cargo information for customs risk assessment, and advanced notification form for waste delivery to port reception facilities.

### FAL Convention

The FAL Convention, first adopted in 1965, aims to harmonize procedures for ship's arrival, stay and departure from port. It includes mandatory "Standards" and "Recommended Practices" on formalities, documentary requirements and procedures which should be applied on arrival, stay and departure to the ship itself, and to its crew, passengers, baggage and cargo.

The revised annex, which was developed following a comprehensive review of the treaty, will ensure the convention adequately addresses the shipping industry's present and emerging needs and serves to facilitate and expedite international maritime traffic. The objective is to prevent unnecessary delays to ships, and to persons and property on board. (Source: *IMO website at www.imo.org*)

## ABS achieves industry leading safety standard milestone

ABS yesterday announced it had zero work-related lost time incidents during 2017. The corresponding Lost Time Incident Rate (LTIR) of 0.00 represents a significant milestone in the organization's continuing journey to safety excellence.

"Safety is the heart of our mission and remains at the core of all we do, so we are thrilled to realize this exceptional safety

record result," said ABS Chairman, President and CEO, Christopher J. Wiernicki. "This achievement adds to our already strong industry-recognized safety leadership. At the same time, we continue to promote safety excellence through ongoing training and process improvements that enable and empower employees to recognize and control hazards in their daily work

environment."

ABS has an ongoing safety excellence program which incorporates strong occupational health and safety processes and policies, including its Stop Work Obligation rule authorizing all employees to intervene if safety is in question in any aspect of their work.

ABS continues to strengthen its global Health, Safety, Qual-

ity and Environmental (HSQE) record with increasing engagement of several leading safety behaviors, including timely reporting of potential incidents or hazards and documenting near misses. ABS also holds a leading position in safety with all major Port State Control areas while maintaining its focus on exceptional client service delivery. (Source: *ABS*)

## ITF issues statement on UAE's new protection for seafarers

ITF released a statement in response to the circular issued by the UAE Federal Transport Authority – Land And Maritime, requiring all UAE-flagged ships trading internationally and all ships operating in UAE waters to have a contract of insurance to protect seafarers.

David Heindel, chair of the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF), seafarers' section, said: "We are strongly behind the mandate issued by the Federal Transport Authority – Land and Maritime, for the financial protection of seafarers operating in the waters of the United

Arab Emirates (UAE).

"Basic rights are being violated on a daily basis by companies operating in this region who not only fail to pay wages, but also fail to provide safe working conditions and enough food and clean water for their seafarers.

"This mandate makes clear that

ship owners must provide financial protection against abandonment, death or injury.

"This is a huge step forward in a region where, historically, ship owners have been allowed to repeatedly abuse the rights of seafarers. This has to stop and it has to stop now." (Source: *ITF*)

## PSC inspections focusing more on risk profiling

Port State Control inspections are increasingly focusing on the risk profile of the ship under inspection with inspectors singling out the performance of the ship manager and the flag state recognized organization (RO) as major factors to concentrate on.

Petros Achtypis, chief executive officer of Cyprus-based Prevention at Sea (PaSea), said PSC inspectors were changing the way they inspected ships with greater emphasis being placed on a vessel's risk

profile.

Many PSC Memoranda of Understanding were starting to draw direct parallels between the risk profile of the ship and the performance of the ship manager and the RO.

"There is a growing trend to look at ways to identify operational and management risks and detect any pitfalls that could lead to accidents or injury," he said.

Since risk assessment became part of the ISM Code the shipping in-

dustry has viewed risk identification and assessment as a simple process, limited to the use of one matrix—(consequence) x (probability).

"With the technical knowledge in risk assessments currently available, it is proved that the use of one matrix is inadequate. I believe that risks, when identified, should be categorised and a new matrix developed with accurate results helping to calculate the actual risk," Mr Achtypis stressed. (Source: *Prevention at Sea*)

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