



## 3rd East Asia action week held

### *ITF inspectors, union members check pay, conditions*

The third East Asia maritime week of 2015 held September 14-18, saw scores of ITF inspectors, joined by maritime and dockers' unions, checking pay and working conditions on board vessels at ports in Japan, Russia, South Korea and Taiwan.

Fusao Ohori, ITF coordinator in Japan, reports that union activists visited 95 ships during the week. As well as finding unsafe conditions and other deficiencies, which the vessels were instructed to rectify, the inspections also found unpaid seafarers on board some ships – in one case, union staff negotiated with the owner to pay the owed wages, in accordance with the Maritime Labour Convention 2006 (MLC).

The union teams were, once again, refused admission to ships owned by the anti-union Japanese shipping company Kotoku Kaiun, in violation of the MLC. The Japanese unions held a further protest rally outside the company's offices, but it refused requests for a meeting.

In the Far East of Russia, union teams visited 24 vessels in the ports of Vladivostok, Nakhodka and Vostochny. Where ships were found not to have ITF-approved agreements setting minimum salaries, the owners were sent notices to enter into negotiations with their national seafarers' union to approve one.

The teams also found that



Union members prepare to board a vessel for inspection of seafarers's working conditions during the third East Asia maritime action week.

Russian crew members often had to wait two to four months to get their wages, which were often low. ITF inspector Petr

Osichansky reports that the inspection teams managed to obtain about US\$80,000 in back pay owed to crew members dur-

ing the action week, so it had "been quite successful and fruitful...and ITF inspectors and trade unionists helped hundreds

more Russian, Chinese and Filipino seafarers learn about ITF and their rights." (Source: ITF Seafarers)

## Internet on ships a key to recruiting, retaining seafarers

Easy access to the internet onboard ships is a key requirement if young people are to be attracted into the seafaring profession and shipping needs to be more visible in the public eye, according to speakers who addressed an IMO symposium on maritime education and training, held on World Maritime Day (September 24, 2015).

The IMO symposium provided an opportunity for a discussion on the future of maritime education and training and how it can meet the demands of the shipping industry and aimed to address the World Maritime Day theme: "Maritime education and training", through targeted discussion on the topic,

"Shipping's future needs people: Is global maritime education and training on course?"

Ensuring a high proportion of students moved into the maritime professions after completing their maritime training was an important issue, according to Professor Jingjing Xu, Associate Dean, Research, Faculty of Business, Plymouth University, who said conditions for seafarers onboard needed to be appealing if the predicted lack of officers and rating in the future is to be addressed. Poor internet access on board ships was the largest disincentive to young people taking up seagoing roles, she said.

Speakers from the shipping and

maritime industry and academia addressed three sessions, covering: opportunities for the young generation in the maritime industry; seafaring as a profession; and developing seafarer skills through quality maritime education and training.

IMO Secretary-General Koji Sekimizu, who opened the symposium, reiterated the need for high-quality maritime education and training as the bedrock of safe and secure shipping industry. Attracting new recruits into the industry was highly important, he said.

All speakers at the symposium stressed the need to raise the profile and the image of shipping in general, in order to attract young people into

the maritime professions. Opinion formers, including teachers and politicians, including those managing education policies, were key targets who should be informed about shipping and the maritime world.

Other speakers brought up the paucity of training berths. A cadet, one of 32 cadets from 16 countries attending the symposium, highlighted the fact that her country did not have training ships to offer seagoing experience, so this was a key issue which needed to be resolved so that their training did not go to waste due to lack of sea experience.

Government policies, particularly those of flag States, at national level could impact on maritime educa-

tion and training and on recruitment. The percentage of women seafarers was still very low and this was still a matter than needed to be addressed.

Some speakers raised the important issue of ongoing quality assessment of seafarer training courses, as required under IMO's International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers. Following a career at sea, former seafarers needed to be supported into maritime careers onshore, including any necessary re-training.

Symposium presentations will be available on the IMO website. (Source: IMO)



# Refresher courses misunderstood

Clyde Marine Training's survey shows that just under half of Merchant Navy personnel are still unaware of what STCW Refresher Training means and what they have to do to be compliant a full five years since the Manila Amendments were first introduced.

The survey carried out during June and July 2015 found that 46 percent of those questioned were either unaware or unsure what refresher courses meant for them and what they needed to do to remain qualified. A further 37 percent were unaware of the date

when refresher courses will become mandatory.

The Manila Amendments to the STCW Convention mean, "If you are serving on board ship and are qualified in any of the following you must as of the January 1, 2017 have documentary evidence of either completing the training course or updating training within the last five years."

The courses in question are; Fire Prevention and Fire Fighting; Advanced Fire Fighting; Personal Survival Techniques; Proficiency in Survival Craft and Rescue Boats (other than Fast Rescue Boats); and Proficiency in Fast Rescue Boats.

In addition seafarers revalidating their MCA CoC will have to submit certificates to show that either the courses listed above have been completed within the past five years or that updating (also known as "refresher") training has been undertaken.

Speaking about the findings Clyde Marine Training Managing Director, Colin McMurray, announced the creation of a dedicated helpdesk to assist and inform all seafarers of their obligations. "We knew there was still a lot of confusion regarding refresher training, the timescales involved and the courses and skills affected. With

less than 18 months to go until compliance is compulsory it's clear the level of confusion is higher than we thought. The concern is people will leave taking refresher courses to the last minute and may find they run out of time to complete them all. So we've created a dedicated helpdesk to assist and inform seafarers of their obligations and just what qualifications they need to update. People can reach this helpdesk by phone or email and speak with a qualified trainer with previous Merchant Navy experience who can advise on their individual requirements." (*Source: Maritime Professional*)

## Crewtoo report shows seafarers dread port calls

Seafarers sometimes fear port calls because of the increase in workload caused by the many audits and inspections when a ship is in dock, according to the results of the second Seafarers Happiness Index report published by Crewtoo, the online social network for seafarers.

This increase in workload at port also caused a drop in satisfaction levels towards shore leave, as the amount of work often eats into the time available for relaxation.

In addition, a number of seafarers noted that getting ashore costs them at least US\$100, which presents a major barrier to taking shore leave. Increased stress during port visits and either reduced or non-existent shore leave gives seafarers very few opportunities to relax and unwind away from their vessels.

Designed to monitor and benchmark seafarer satisfaction levels via 10 key questions, this second quarterly report shows a seafarer satisfaction level of 6.44 on a scale of 1 to 10, up 0.02 from the inaugural survey published in May this year.

This second report of the Crewtoo Seafarers Happiness Index shows several areas where satisfaction improved versus the first report. For example, there was an improvement in crew satisfaction with salary levels and an improvement in their feelings about the standard of food available onboard. The availability of exercising onboard was also viewed more positively, as was the satisfaction derived from crew interaction and team building, which increased from 6.96 to 7.16 and became the highest score in the survey.

"The Happiness Index is an important barometer of seafarer satisfaction with life at sea," said Anneley Pickles, head of Crewtoo business development.

"Happy people are loyal, motivated, and embrace challenges. If the industry really acts on the responses to these regularly updated surveys, it will not only reap the rewards with a more motivated, loyal, and hardworking workforce, but it will attract new talent to the industry, something which is sadly lacking at the moment."

Answers to the survey are received from across all ranks and nationalities including seafarers from the Philippines, U.K., Poland, Croatia, Germany, U.S., Canada, India, and Turkey, as well as a number of African nations. The age of survey respondents ranged from 16 to the late 60s. Masters made up the largest proportion of responses by rank; some 11% of respondents stated that they were currently serving in the role of captain. The majority of responses were from seafarers working on bulk carriers and container vessels. (*Source: World Maritime News*)

# AMOSUP, JSU build schoolhouses in storm-ravaged area

The Associated Marine Officers' and Seamen's Union of the Philippines (AMOSUP) and the All-Japan Seamen's Union (JSU) recently embarked on a joint school building undertaking, in coordination with the Department of Education (DepEd) in areas devastated by super typhoon Yolanda in November 2013, to help children, mostly of seafarers' families, move on.

Labeled as SPEAR (Seafarers Project for Emergency Assistance in Rebuilding Classrooms), the greater majority of beneficiaries are hometowns of hundreds of AMOSUP-JSU seafarers. These include Bantayan Central School in Bantayan Island and Oboob, Bantayan in Cebu province; Baspar Elementary School in Tacloban City, Leyte; and Catbalogan III Central

Elementary School in Catbalogan, Samar.

A memorandum of agreement (MOA) was recently signed by AMOSUP President Dr. Conrad F. Oca, JSU President Yasumi Morita and Dept. of Education (DepEd) Secretary Armin Luistro for the construction of the school buildings in the area and the needed school buildings' furniture and equipment for an estimated cost of P13.5 million.

According to Oca and Morita, as provided in the MOA, the DepEd undertakes to provide policy guidelines and directions in coordination with AMOSUP to ensure prompt implementation of the project. "DepEd also undertakes to provide proper management, maintenance and care for the improvement due the beneficiary schools through the

school heads or principals," they said.

The SPEAR initiative entails the construction initially of five two-classroom school buildings with toilets and chalkboards, and furnished with teachers' tables, chairs, armchairs and ceiling fans. Two classrooms will be used for computers, multimedia projectors with screens; printers, air conditioners, computer tables and chairs.

AMOSUP and JSU which funded the project, entitled them to engage the services of "licensed" architect and engineer to prepare the plans, designs and other specifications for the school buildings, and enter into contract of construction with "licensed" contractors under the MOA, which likewise tasks AMOSUP to

administer the efficient and effective implementation of the project, including coordination and execution of the deed of donation of the buildings.

During the MOA signing, Secretary Luistro said the JSU and AMOSUP group joins a long tradition of 'partnership' of the Philippines with Japan through their contribution by providing classrooms that would be built better than those schools devastated by typhoons. "I think these new classrooms are built to last beyond another super typhoon". What is important is the "friendship built between the two countries", he said, adding, "It is a friendship of common experience in dealing with many disasters such as earthquakes and typhoons." (*Source: Manila Bulletin*)

# 'Chaplaincy' app for better seafarer welfare support

*Software program for Android smartphones created with support from Augustea Group and MarineTraffic to help charity deliver improved service and better measure impact of its work*

Sailors' Society, one of the largest seafarer support charities operating internationally, has developed a smartphone app called Chaplaincy which will enable port chaplains and ship visitors to deliver more effective care to the world's 1.5 million seafarers.

Developed with the support of Augustea Group, Chaplaincy enables real-time activity reporting and maintains a history of ship visits and support provided to seafarers. Data can then be accessed by chaplains in other ports and subject to confidentiality and data protection policies, can be used to provide ongoing care and assistance as ship and crew continue their voyage.

The app is the first of its kind and is made possible by access to global ship tracking data from MarineTraffic, which helps chaplains see which vessels are in port

and those due to arrive. The result is more effective use of time and improved coordination with other welfare organisations.

Sailors' Society Chief Executive Stuart Rivers says Chaplaincy is an important enabler of its Wellness at Sea program, launched earlier this year.

"Chaplaincy revolutionizes the way that our chaplains work with seafarers, allowing them to respond more quickly and follow up with a seafarer's friends and family even after the ship has sailed. With better communication, we hope to identify faster some of the issues that affect seafarers such as stress, poor mental health and fatigue and so reduce the risks to safety, as well as increasing efficiency and retention rates for shipowners."

The app is live and being used by Sailors' Society chaplains and ship visitors around the world. In

the second development phase, the charity is working to make it available to other welfare agencies to provide an even better level of support and care to seafarers. In addition, it is developing a version for seafarers, enabling them to make contact in advance of arrival at port in order to access welfare services.

Demitris Memos, Managing Director of MarineTraffic said, "We are delighted to be powering the Chaplaincy app with MarineTraffic data. Seafarers' welfare should be a high priority for the maritime sector and data can undoubtedly better enable those who provide direct care. The ability that technology has given us to track ships at sea and in port increases transparency and efficiency, in this case with positive outcomes for seafarers' welfare."

Initially available for the An-

droid operating system, Chaplaincy guides the user through the visit – including check-in, status update and statistical reports. An admin dashboard informs support staff and management, in realtime, of the location and status of the ship visitor, as well as compiling narrative and accurate statistical data which is then stored for reporting and analysis.

Stuart Rivers adds, "We are deeply grateful for the support we have received from Augustea in developing Chaplaincy and the technical input of MarineTraffic which helped to make this a true industry project. By gathering real-time information on the impact of our services, the App will also enable trend analysis of issues affecting seafarers which will inform our support provision and the industry at large." (*Source: Maritime Professional*)



## VOICES *from* SEAFARERS



**Capt. Duan Fengoi & Crew of  
M/V GLOBE EXPLORER**

Our gratitude goes to the JSU Staff who visited and informed us of our rights as non-domiciled special members of the Union. Let us hope for an enduring welfare services that will be beneficial to all seafarers.



**1/AE Manolo Cruz Maza & Crew of  
M/V MELODIA**

The Provident Fund of the JSU and AMOSUP had greatly contributed to the retired seafarers' welfares. We wish our beloved Unions should improve the system of its collection and distribution of retirement fund.



**Capt. Reynaldo O. Santos & Crew of  
M/V CORONA DYNAMIC**

Having a spare time in sport and exercise had kept us diligent of the routines on board.

The JSU should create a health care program for its members' well-being. Thanks in advance and keep up the best approach that you've been making.



**Capt. Zaldy Sarol Nadugo & Crew of  
M/V AZUL INTEGRA**

We wish the JSU's help in improving the trainings and proper documentations of the present members including the incoming members.



**Capt. Allan P. Vendiola, C/Engr. Generoso P. Celis,  
Officers & Crew of M/V GLOBAL ECHO**

We are so grateful to the JSU staff in spending their spare time to visit our good vessel while she was docked in Japan ports. We have been given sufficient attention for our concerns and queries regarding our privileges and benefits offered by them. The T-shirts that they have given us symbolizes their unwavering support for their members to maintain the strong link between JSU staff and seafarers. Thank you for letting our VOICES to be heard. More power and God bless!



**Capt. Nelson Nufable Morgal & Crew of  
M/V ENERGY GLORY**

The documentations of the Filipino seafarers by the government agency have been very chaotic and problematic for us, the seafarers. Both members and non-members wish the JSU and the other unions assist the government in this matter for the benefit of the seafarers.



**Capt. Danilo R. Alcantara & Crew of  
M/V JP MAGENTA**

Retirement system for seafarers has encouraged the members to continue working under the JSU. It is our hope the JSU should revise and improve the retirement regulation suited for the members' retirement ages.



**Capt. Mario Romeo S. Lenares & Crew of  
M/V GLOBAL INNOVATOR**

We wish the coverage of the Retirement Pay Plan to be shortened. This will enable the members to have an advanced plan of their hard earned fortunes.



**Capt. Marcelo Legaspi Paderes & Crew of  
M/V BRIGHT RAINBOW**

We wish the JSU could give support to improve our training courses in line with the amended STCW Courses. Any assistance would be appreciated. Thanks!!!



**Capt. Virgilio T. Sabit & Crew of  
M/V JP CORAL**

It's a pleasure to hear that the JSU is in the process of constructing an annex building to accommodate the number of its members.

Thanks a lot for the continued progress of the welfares you provide to the members.



**Chief Cook Ricky Javier Jaro & Crew of  
M/V ANTARES LEADER**

Salary increase under the IBF CA and CBA have encouraged the members to stay loyal to the company. We hope this wage increase will continue to the satisfaction of all seafarers.



**2nd Mate Ritche Alvar Caballes, 3rd Mate Arsenio  
Bautista Dulos Jr. & Crew of  
M/V TRANS LEADER**

The JSU policy on the members' welfares had inspired other seafarers to join the Union as non-domiciled special members. We suggest that the JSU add more beneficial programs for the members.



# AMSA announces new, revised service charges

The Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) has announced that new and revised charges for its services has come into effect as of October 1, 2015. These charges will replace those which have been in effect since July 4, 2011.

Details of new and revised charges can be found in AMSA

Fees Determination 2015 at <[www.comlaw.gov.au/Details/F2015L01477](http://www.comlaw.gov.au/Details/F2015L01477)>

Charges have been set for a range of services including:

- inspection of vessels and equipment;
- processing determinations, declarations, exemptions or ap-

provals;

- assessing applications from seafarers, pilots, pilotage providers, recognised training organisations and providers of vessel traffic services; and

- matters related to the registration of ships.

The Determination has been

updated to reflect current cost structures and revised processes for service delivery following consultation with industry stakeholders.

AMSA says that whilst there is an increase in the hourly rate for services provided by its inspectors (port marine surveyors), the charges for some fixed-fee services

have been reduced.

A Cost Recovery Implementation Statement providing further details about AMSA's overall cost recovery approach for both services and levy-funded activities has been published at <[www.amsa.gov.au/vessels/levies-fees-charges/](http://www.amsa.gov.au/vessels/levies-fees-charges/)> (Source: AMSA)

## Call for global reporting of piracy, robbery

An international meeting on global piracy, armed robbery and maritime security has called for a common worldwide information-sharing approach to reporting the growing number of attacks on shipping, to enable naval and law enforcement forces to respond quickly enough to protect seafarers and arrest the perpetrators.

More than 200 delegates from 30 countries took part in the meeting in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia on 14 and 15 September, organised by the ICC International Maritime Bureau (IMB) and co-hosted by the Malaysian Maritime Enforcement Agency, Interpol and the Royal Malaysian Police.

As well as piracy and armed robbery, the meeting also considered the threats created by organised crime, people smuggling and acts of terrorism. Delegates also addressed the impact of piracy and armed robbery on seafarers and their families.

Pottengal Mukundan, director of the IMB, said its piracy reporting centre (PRC) played a crucial role liaising between merchant ships and coastal authorities and navies, and was prepared to further enhance the effectiveness of these joint efforts.

Recent incidents reported to the IMB PRC include the following:

- A robber boarded a container-ship around 6.4 nautical miles off Pulau Karimun Kecil, Indonesia on Sept. 9, bound, gagged and injured the duty engineer, and escaped with stolen ship's spares.

- Robbers were spotted on board a bulk carrier around 1.8 nautical miles off Pulau Karimun Kecil, Indonesia on Sept. 8. The alarm was raised, all deck lights switched on and the crew mustered; nothing was reported stolen.

- Four robbers boarded a tanker anchored in the Singapore Straits on Sept. 6, broke into the engine room, stole engine spares and escaped.

All attacks and suspicious sightings should be reported to the IMB Piracy Reporting Center, tel: +603 2031 0014 (24 hours), email: [imbkl@icc-ccs.org](mailto:imbkl@icc-ccs.org) (Source: *ITF Seafarers*)

## USCG detains another ship for safety deficiencies

The U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) detained another vessel due to safety deficiencies in Port of Tacoma in September. Earlier this month, the USCG detained car carrier *Pegasus Highway* because there wasn't a properly functioning fire detection system onboard.

The previous week, the USCG detained the car carrier *Rena* due to improper pressurization of the crew's self-contained breathing apparatuses.

*Rena* will be required to remain in port until the deficiencies are rectified, according to the USCG.

A Port State Control exam team from Coast Guard Sector Puget Sound conducted a routine Port State and International Ship and Port Facility Security exam aboard *Rena*, a 751-foot, Bahamian-flagged vessel. While aboard, the Coast Guard discovered multiple areas that did not meet regulations set forth in the International Maritime Organization's Safety of Life at Sea Convention.

The most severe deficiency involved improper pressurization of the crew's self-contained breathing apparatuses. Malfunctioning

SCBAs would prevent the crew from safely responding to a fire aboard the vessel.

"Coast Guard examiners determined that key safety procedures were inadequate and the crew did not have the necessary equipment to safely respond to an onboard emergency," Cmdr. Matt Edwards, Chief of Prevention at Sector Puget Sound, said. "We will continue to work with the vessel's crew and the appropriate authorities to ensure that the issues found are corrected before the vessel resumes operations."

During a Port State Control exam, the Coast Guard conducts an extensive inspection of systems, including fire protection, life saving, machinery, navigation, and pollution control systems as well as assess the crew's ability to respond to on-board emergencies. A vessel that is determined to be substandard is subject to a detention and must remain in port until it can proceed to sea without presenting a danger to persons on board or without presenting an unreasonable threat of harm to the marine environment. (Source: USCG)

## Port captain uses drone with camera to speed cargo hold inspections

Jan Andersen, one of Danish shipowner DS Norden's three U.S.-based port captains, has started using a drone fitted with a small video camera to speed up cargo hold inspections.

The cargo holds on Norden's dry cargo ships are gigantic, and the remnants of previous cargoes can lie concealed in a myriad nooks and crannies. However, all of these remnants must be removed before the next cargo can be loaded, so a cargo hold inspection leaves no stone unturned. Normally, ladders or even hoists are required to establish that the cargo holds have been adequately cleaned, a process that is arduous, time-consuming, costly and sometimes also dangerous. However, says a story in the latest issue of *Norden News*, the drone cheaply and safely speeds up the search for cargo remnants and thus the overall cargo hold inspection time before the next loading.

Port captains often only have a time window from late afternoon to early next morning to examine a cargo hold, so time is of the essence and Jan Andersen has found that his drone can cut that time in half.

It takes the drone 20 seconds to access any part of the cargo hold, while rigging a ladder or a hoist takes a long time.

"I have used the drone particularly for examining cargo holds before loading grain in Canada," says Capt. Andersen.

In such cases, it is quite normal for the customers' inspectors, who must also check the actual cleanliness of the hold, to arrive with long ladders and climbing equipment. It takes time and can be dangerous.

"The inspectors are enthusiastic about my drone and its tour of the cargo holds, because afterwards they can see the hold surfaces in close detail on their phone," says Capt. Andersen. "So although a few inspectors were initially skeptical about my drone—some even laughed at me—they have now realized

that a drone with a video camera is an effective way of examining a hold on a dry cargo ship."

Norden has nine port captains in various locations worldwide. Working closely with operators at Norden's Hellerup head office and overseas, as well with ship crews, their job is to ensure that things run smoothly when one of company's roughly 200 dry cargo ships calls at a port. Their responsibilities include the cleaning and examining of cargo holds and handling matters such as documents, defective loading or discharging equipment, incorrect port bookings and cultural differences—or some other issue entirely.

Norden says that experience shows that the port captains can handle anything, including the unforeseen, which is how they help create value for Norden—usually following the motto: The time best spent is time spent on preventing problems.

Capt. Andersen says he got the idea of using a drone to examine cargo holds for old cargo remains because it is a cheap, fast and effective inspection method. Previously, he had experimented with a small remote-controlled helicopter, but its rotor blades collided all too easily with the sides of the cargo hold, resulting in crashes. The drone is a different story, because, with its small protected rotor blades, it can fly close to the cargo hold sides without mishap.

"Our customers' inspectors are so excited about my drone that some are actually disappointed if I do not bring it to inspect the holds. I take that as approval of my idea," says Capt. Andersen.

"Jan has had a really good idea that is basically tailor made for the type of inspections he carries out in his geographic area," says Vice President Jens Christensen, Head of Operations at Norden's head office, adding that Norden is currently investigating whether other port captains can benefit from the idea. (Source: *MarineLog*)

## RP editions of ICS training books released

In co-operation with the International Chamber of Shipping (ICS), the Filipino Shipowners Association and the Maritime Industry Authority of the Philippines have launched a special new Philippines edition of the widely used ICS/ISF Training Record Books.

The four existing books (for deck officer cadets, engine officer cadets, deck rating trainees and engine rating trainees) have been fully updated to match the competencies required under the "Manila" amendments to the IMO Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers.

Copies of the Philippines edition of the ICS/ISF Training Record Books may be purchased at the FSA Secretariat. (Source: ICS)

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