



JSU launches new leadership with President Yasumi Morita

The All Japan Seamen's Union (JSU) meets in Tokyo for 75th annual national assembly at beginning of November; members agree on action plan for 70th business year

The All-Japan Seamen's Union (JSU) held its 75th annual national assembly at the Hotel Mariners' Court Tokyo on Nov. 4-7.

On the opening day, the assembly deliberated on activity and financial reports for the 69th business year (Aug. 1, 2013 through July 31, 2014). The next day it discussed a proposal of action policies for the 70th business year (Proposal No. 1). And on the third day, the International, Fisheries and Domestic affairs bureaus each gathered separately for their own sectional business. Finally, after exchanging views on Proposal No. 5 on the last day, members held a vote to select their Central Executive Board Committee. With the election of JSU president Mr. Yasumi Morita, new leadership was launched.

The JSU's 75th annual national assembly began at 9:30 a.m. on Nov. 4. At the beginning of the event members joined together in singing the union song, a JSU tradition held before a meeting, and General Director Hiroyuki Tachikawa followed with an opening address to get things started.

Mr. Tsuneo Masuda, head of the Kanto Regional Office was elected to preside over the general assembly, while Mr. Akito Kamogashira and Mr. Taisaku Kanna, heads of the Chu-Shikoku and Kyushu-Kanmon regional offices, respectively, were elected as co-chairs and introduced Assembly Chairman Masuda, who came up on stage to ask for constructive discussions.

In the morning session, 38 foreign guests from various international trade unions attended the congress, including Mr. Stephen Cotton, who assumed the post of ITF general secretary when the federation convened its 43rd congress in August in Sofia, Bulgaria; Mr. Paddy Crumlin, president of the ITF; Ms. Jacqueline Smith, maritime



Yasumi Morita
President

Nurture young people whose burden is the future
Spread the appeal of becoming seafarers
Protect the seas for peace and treasured families



Shinichi Tanaka
Acting President



Mitsuharu Matsuura
Acting President

Forces (SDF) reserves, (2) a resolution calling for the continuation of ferry services between Kurihama and Kanaya, and (3) a resolution calling for the maintenance of inter-regional traffic at sea and actions to protect the employment and lives of JSU members who work on the bridges between Honshu and Shikoku.

On the fourth day, an election was held to select members of the Central Executive Board Committee, accounting auditors and regional executives. Mr. Yasumi Morita was elected to accede the JSU presidency, while Mr. Shinichi Tanaka and Mr. Mitsuharu Matsuura were chosen to become acting presidents. The seats of new general directors were taken by Mr. Yoshiyuki Ikeya, Mr. Kenji Takahashi, Mr. Hidehiko Hiraoka, Mr. Hiroyuki Tachikawa and Mr. Kenji Kamba.



Yoshiyuki Ikeya
General Director,
Int'l Affairs
Bureau



Kenji Takahashi
General Director,
Fisheries Affairs
Bureau



Hidehiko Hiraoka
General Director,
Domestic Affairs
Bureau



Hiroyuki Tachikawa
General Director,
Policy Bureau



Kenji Kamba
General Director,
General Affairs
Bureau

Excerpt of President Yasumi Morita's inaugural address

"My predecessors developed activities, believing they should not subsidize industry-wide labor campaigns. Next year, the JSU will celebrate its 70th anniversary. Carrying on its beliefs, we need to remain as a powerful and stable organization, continuing to take steps forward for another 100, 200 and 300 years.

"I would like to conduct activities together with you so that we can steadily proceed with agreed on activities as much as possible.

"I would also like to address a variety of challenges by having the members of the Central Executive Board Committee consolidate forces, all executives join together and workers and the union work hand in hand.

"I would ask for more support and deeper understanding."

Members to work together to realize action policies

coordinator of the ITF; Mr. David Heindel, chairman of the ITF Seafarers' Section Committee; and Dr. Conrado Oca, president of the Associated Marine Officers' and Seamen's Union of the Philippines (AMOSUP).

On the first day of JSU's 75th annual general assembly, deliberations were conducted on activity and financial reports for the union's 69th business year. As a result of the deliberations,

the both reports were approved by an overwhelming majority. A proposal was made on the second day on action policies for the 70th business year, Proposal No. 1 (a keynote of activities), while discussions were held on the proposal. On the third day, the JSU's International, Fisheries and Domestic affairs bureaus held their respective meetings. On the final day, Proposal No. 5 for the total budget and develop-

ment projects for the 70th year, was laid on the table. After exchanging opinions, the proposal was approved by an absolute majority.

At the JSU's 75th annual general assembly, a decision was made on action policies for the 70th business year. In addition, resolutions were also adopted.

They adopted three resolutions: (1) a resolution against making seafarers Self-Defense

Maritime jobseekers hunt permanent work

Skilled seafarers are available in the job market but may need to be coaxed into the positions on offer through longer-term contracts, according to a new survey.

Worldwide Recruitment Solutions (WRS) analysed 5,300 responses from job seekers and found the maritime industry has plenty of experienced professionals.

In its survey of seafarers seeking work as bridge crew, engineers, deck crew, and divers, WRS

found that 30% of respondents had more than 15 years' experience, and 12% had worked in their field for more than 25 years.

Sam Houghton, head of the company's marine division, said: "It's encouraging to see that 12% of our marine candidates have such a wealth of experience. However, with the well-publicised skills shortage in this industry, it will be interesting to see an equivalent statistic in future years."

WRS marketing manager Emma Mills told IHS Maritime

that the "skills are there" but potential candidates may be unwilling to work in the regions where their skills are in demand.

In her view, the sector needs to "get people to look further afield for recruiting", although a "glut of people with 15-years-plus experience... might not be willing to relocate for long periods of time".

But the survey also suggested seafarers are looking for longer-term employment. About 55% of respondents stated a preference for permanent employment, while

only 20% favored contract work.

The reality for seafarers is the opposite: just 26% of seafarers have permanent positions and nearly 58% are hired on contract.

Higher pay was a top priority for more than 95% of respondents, followed by leave time (90%), and career progression (87%), then benefits and facilities.

But Mills said the main message WRS took from the survey was the need for longer-term roles.

"Within the industry, there is a requirement by candidates for

more permanent opportunities," she said.

"It has made us realise that there is a lot of experience out there and it's just making sure that that is utilised by the industry."

The survey also revealed the sector's low gender diversity – with 99% of respondents being male – behind both mining (94%) and oil and gas (98%) in other WRS surveys.

"These are male-dominated industries," said Mills. (*Source: Sea-web*)

SOLAS rescues catch ships in political crossfire

Recent European agreement on sea rescues of illegal or "irregular" migrants in the Mediterranean has put the shipping industry in a precarious position.

At a meeting of EU home affairs ministers, concerns were expressed that search-and-rescue (SAR) operations in the Mediterranean were acting as "a pull factor" for illegal migration, a statement from the UK's Home Office said, adding that the operations "should be brought to a well-publicised end".

Ships, meeting their obligations under the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS), are playing a key role in rescues, with the Italian coastguard calling on the assistance of 436 ships this year alone. Rescues delay ships usually for a day or more, and put crews at risk of disease and sometimes violence from anxious survivors. There is also the risk of terrorism, with no procedures in place for scanning those who come aboard the ship for weapons.

In Italy, the country's expensive Mare Nostrum SAR program, which has saved the lives of more than 100,000 people, will be scaled down from the end of October. And at the beginning of November, Triton, an initiative of the EU's border management programme, Frontex, was to be launched. However, this will be a far smaller initiative, costing the EU just 2.9M euros per month, and, it will not be an SAR operation as was Mare Nostrum, and will focus on border control.

The International Chamber of Shipping said it is "very concerned" about the scale down and "that search and rescue operations may be reduced in international waters."

"It will clearly be much more difficult for merchant ships to save lives at sea without the adequate provision of search and rescue services by EU Member States," said the ICS.

An EU spokesman said that Triton was formed at the request of the Italian authorities. (*Source: Sea-web*)

NGO shipbreaking platform welcomes new partner initiative

The NGO Shipbreaking Platform, a global coalition of environmental, human rights and labor rights organizations promoting clean and safe ship recycling globally, welcomes the international initiative Human Rights at Sea (HRAS) as a new partner organization. First founded in April 2014 by London-based barrister David Hammond, HRAS' mission is to "explicitly raise awareness, implementation and accountability for human rights protections throughout the maritime industry, especially where they are currently absent and be-

ing abused."

"For close to 10 years now, the NGO Shipbreaking Platform has been voicing concerns about human rights violations in the shipbreaking yards of South Asia. Shipbreaking is only one issue in the maritime industry that needs to be addressed from a human rights perspective," says Patrizia Heidegger, Executive Director of the NGO Shipbreaking Platform. "Human rights at sea do not receive the attention they deserve, neither from governments and international organizations, nor from corporate stakeholders

in the industry. We will support HRAS in raising awareness about the protection of human rights in the maritime industry."

Amongst others, HRAS addresses issues such as saving refugees at sea or the abandonment of seafarers in ports following the detention of vessels by the authorities. The Platform expects that the new initiative will strengthen existing pleas such as the International Transport Workers Federation's (ITF) campaign calling for the enforcement of laws to prevent the exploitation of seafarers, dockers and other employees in

the maritime industry. "An initiative such as HRAS is absolutely essential and we are looking forward to help building up a network of stakeholders promoting human rights at sea," says Patrizia Heidegger.

The NGO Shipbreaking Platform comprises 19 member organisations from 10 countries (including the secretariat in Brussels) and is constantly expanding its network of partner organizations, with whom it cooperates on issues related to environmental protection, human and labour rights. (*Source: From All About Shipping*)

Shortage of skilled seafarers hitting industry once again

The shipping industry is perhaps one of the most obvious examples of a cyclical business – the highs of bumper charter rates driving the building of more ships, which leads to increased competition and a drop of rates – which leads to ships to be scrapped, which leads to a shortage of tonnage and a rising of rates. And on, and on and on we go.

Another side effect of this most merry of merry go rounds is the fact that seafarers are also affected by the knock on effects of the downslides in the cycle. Alas it takes longer to build an experienced seafarer than it does a ship

– and so when the supply is not managed, problems can have a long tail knock on effect.

According to press reports last month, "an acute shortage of skilled seafarers has hit the Indian shipping industry". The problems are not isolated, and while India is waking to the threat today, other nations will feel the pain tomorrow.

This is as predictable as it is depressing. Alas there is no great "pool" of shipping talent. No single point of reference or management. It is a free for all, and when the going is good people become experienced seafarers – but when

times are hard they are let go.

Once "let go", they do not remain seafarers – they move careers, they abandon the sea and lose their skills. They become ex-seafarers, some move from captains of ships to captains of industry, they work as lawyers, they become brokers...and some even write lame newsletters bemoaning the state of the industry.

To this rather depressing backdrop the IMO Secretary-General Koji Sekimizu has spoken out, and based on the fact that half the existing officers will retire by 2030, we need 600,000 officers to be recruited and trained from

now.

The stark truth is laid before us – thousands of seafarers are needed, and young, talented people need to be recruited – but by whom, and who will be responsible for them? Owners only take on for their needs, they poach the skills they need, and damn those who dare to move to other employers. The system is about covering the bare minimum requirements. There is no slack, no give, no joined up thinking – it is a wholly commercial response. There is no insulation from the cold reality that skills are short, and people are lacking. (*Source: Shiptalk*)

Pollution, fuel and ballast proving to be a triple threat

One of the most rapidly evolving concerns facing shipping at the moment is the pressure to comply with environmental legislation, and the raft of new laws and requirements which are set to swamp the industry.

At the recent (and rather saucily named) "Fuels, Lubes & Emissions Technology" Conference a range of lively and thought-provoking discussions and debate were dominated by the imminent deadline for the Marpol Annex VI reduction in permitted sulphur

levels, which falls on January 1, 2015.

Experts reminded delegates that the clock was ticking as the deadline falls closer – now just weeks from entry into force. The question as the calendar counts down to January is whether the industry is ready. The signs are not good.

The UK Club, and other P&I providers have been busily preparing for the imminent arrival of the new sulphur-emission rules. The Club's legal team has

added an addendum to the Legal briefing on Air emissions – the Emission Standards for SOx and NOx. They also stress that Members need to be fully aware of the growing and stricter atmospheric emissions measures being introduced around the world.

Some owners may believe that, as has happened before, they can fudge or fake compliance. Alas for those that are not ready, when it comes to emissions and pollution technology will ensure that there is no hiding place.

Compliance will be measured in many ways, but it seems that even drone technology could come to the fore. A Danish company, called Explicit, has launched "sniffer" drones produced to monitor sulphur emissions from ships.

With new laws entering force, drones sniffing funnels and campaigners pushing hard for change, it seems that the next year could be one of rapid environmental revolution...with all the pain that may bring for owners who are not ready. (*Source: Shiptalk*)

VOICES *from* SEAFARERS



Officers and Crew of MV UNTA
A pleasant greetings to all! We are wishing on the JSU success in bringing up the working conditions and social status of the members. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!



Capt. Margarito Darunday Danila & Crew of MV FAIR OCEAN
The spirit of Christmas is about to be felt. We wish each and everyone may find the right path in searching for a greener pasture in seafaring. Keep on sailing and hope for the best that the next wage negotiation will come up favorable to the members.



C/Engr. Eric J. Alunan & Crew of MV ASIAN BLOSSOM
On this special occasion we'd like to greet you with a "Merry Christmas and a Prosperous New Year".



Capt. Asterio M. Bahan & Crew of MV TOCHO
To our fellow seafarers under the JSU and ITF, we are sharing our expression of cooperation and support to the common goal of the union in upholding the general welfares and working conditions of the members. Our appreciation goes to every staff of the union and Merry Christmas.



Chief Mate Mabe Timban Benagua & Crew of MV MUROTO
At last, the year has ended and left memorable days of fun and sorrow in every seafarer who bravely tackled the challenges of the rough seas. To the JSU/ITF, we'd like to express our utmost greetings of Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!



Capt. Joel L. Aragon & Crew of MV GRAND DUKE
One of the unforgettable moments in every seafarer's life is spending Christmas and New Year at sea. We would be glad if JSU/ITF will show an interest in improving the communication system to our families.



Capt. Levy S. Salivio & Crew of MV CAPE GREEN
Sharing has found no barrier on this yuletide season. We appreciate the initiative of the JSU Staff in giving an advance gift and information from the union. Though our berth is quite remote, they still manage to reach us. Thanks to the efforts you've exerted and more power.



Capt. Joenel P. Macahusay & Crew of MV RYOGA
Celebrating Christmas at sea has its own gesture of laughter. Though the urge of happiness is high, underneath we are still longing to be with our families and love-ones. We would be glad, just for a while on this Christmas Eve if JSU could provide us with a real time connection thru the internet.



Capt. Elvin Regalado Banal & Crew of MV ENERGY GLORY
Being a member of the JSU/ITF has a security in the aspects of seafaring. Our welfares are assured that every member should receive proper welfare services. Thanks in advance and Merry Christmas.

EU extends its counter-piracy mission

Operation Atalanta, the European Union's counter-piracy mission off Somalia, has been extended until December 12, 2016. Total "common" cost from EU Navfor for the two-year deployment is estimated at 14.7M euros (\$18.3M), with additional costs borne by contributing nations.

Atalanta was initiated in December 2008 to protect World

Food Program vessels delivering aid to Somalia. In the past six years it has also played a major role in the suppression of piracy in the Gulf of Aden and Somali Basin, working alongside ships of the US-led Combined Maritime Forces and NATO's Operation Ocean Shield.

According to an EU statement, the Atalanta mission may now be broadened to provide logistical support, expertise and training at

sea for the EU's maritime capacity-building program, EUCAP Nestor.

Only four "suspicious events" and one attempted pirate attack have taken place in the region this year, but, the EU warned, "it is widely recognized that the threat from piracy remains; the pirate business model is fractured but not broken".

The EU's Foreign Affairs Council (FAC) last month said that it

was "deeply concerned by the news of the recent release of a pirate leader, in Mogadishu, and reiterates the urgent need for the Somali authorities to end impunity of piracy network leaders and strengthen the rule of law". The FAC called on the Somali government to establish a legislative framework to ensure effective prosecution of those involved in piracy and maritime crime. (Source: Sea-web)

Seafaring safety must come first

Safety should be inherent to seafaring and more credit should be given to seafarers according to Gerry Docherty, director of technical services at Ardmore Shipping Services.

Speaking at the 4th annual shipping and offshore CSR forum in London this week he said: "The shipping industry has a very negative way of 'dumbing down' seafarers capabilities', saying that they learn safety from day one in training and we should be more proud of them.

"Every company has its guiding principles, and on our 'principles wall', safety is not our first slogan," he told delegates today.

Rather: "Our three guiding principles are professionalism, integrity, and respect.

"When it comes to safety, it is an inherent part of being a seafarer, hence the reason not to 'put it up in lights!'"

Ultimately, instilling values from the top down is where it lies: "When you talk about health and safety within a young company, it all comes down to culture.

"If the company's expectations are not communicated effectively no one really knows what they are supposed to be aiming for," he said.

"It's all very well having processes, but it's imperative that the people on the ground have the culture instilled in them from day one. This is the most important aspect in health and safety," he concluded.

Slightly more concerned on the issues of casualties, Volker Heil, technical director at Lomar Shipping speaking on the best industry practices panel, said: "It is ultimately our responsibility. At the end of the day if you are talking about casualty and accidents, there is a very big human factor involved.

"Therefore, it is important for us to train to the highest standards possible, that will then reduce the number of big accidents or environmental catastrophes." (Source: Sea-web)

ICS stresses duty to rescue all in sea distress

The rescue of all persons in distress at sea including illegal migrants is an obligation under international maritime law, as well as being a long established humanitarian duty, according to the International Chamber of Shipping (ICS).

ICS is the global trade association for commercial ship operators, whose ships are currently involved on a daily basis in the rescue of refugees at sea in the Mediterranean.

Whatever may be decided by policy makers in EU Member States, the legal and humanitarian obligation of merchant ships to provide assistance to anyone

in distress at sea will remain unchanged, said ICS.

Commenting on new reports that some European Union ministers have expressed concerns that search and rescue operations have acted as a 'pull factor' for illegal migration, encouraging people to make dangerous crossings in the expectation of rescue, ICS noted that merchant ships are legally required to rescue persons in distress at sea by the UN International Maritime Organization's Safety of Life at Sea Convention (SOLAS), to which virtually every maritime nation is a party.

Under SOLAS, and the International Convention on Maritime

Search and Rescue, the obligation of the ship master to render assistance is complemented by a corresponding obligation of IMO member-states to co-operate in rescue situations.

This would relieve the ship master of the responsibility to care for survivors and allowing individuals who are rescued at sea in such circumstances to be delivered promptly to a place of safety, said ICS.

The shipping industry has expressed concern by reports that the new EU Frontex operation 'Triton' will have a third of the budget of the current Italian 'Mare Nostrum' operation which

it replaces, that its primary focus will be border control, and that search and rescue operations may be reduced in international waters.

ICS said that it would be more difficult for merchant ships to save lives at sea without the adequate provision of search and rescue services by EU member states. Moreover, whenever a ship performs its legal and humanitarian obligations, it is incumbent on EU member states to ensure that those who are rescued can be readily disembarked at the next port of call, even when they may lack documentation, ICS added. (Source: Manila Bulletin)

Lessons learned: Enclosed spaces claim another victim

The vessel had berthed and commenced discharging, with a shore crane, a load of 72,000 metric tons of steaming coal. When requested by shore personnel to draw samples of the cargo, the duty officer instructed the crew member to do so by entering hold number six through the trunk that housed the Australian Ladder.

After about ten minutes the officer noticed that the crew member had not come up from the hold. When he went to the trunk opening he found the crew member had collapsed and was lying on the Australian Ladder just below the first landing about

Investigation findings

- Enclosed Space Entry checks were not carried out.
- The entry was made without the knowledge of the Master and chief officer.
- The possibility of the carbon monoxide content being higher and/or oxygen content being lower than levels safe for human survival cannot be ruled out.
- The entry was not monitored by the duty officer.
- The crew member was on his first ship with only about 12 months sea time.

three metres below the main deck level. Immediately he mustered assistance; the crew member was brought on the main deck and attended to.

The port ambulance brought the victim to the nearby hospital

but he was declared dead on arrival.

Unfortunately, the atmosphere inside the trunking was only checked some 24 hours after the accident; Oxygen and carbon monoxide levels were found to be

normal.

Even though the victim was relatively new to the trade, it is reasonable to assume that even an experienced hand would have suffered the same fate in this instance due to the lack of procedural rigour. Masters and chief officers must be proactive in ensuring that these procedures are in place and are followed. As many readers may already know, SOLAS has been amended; enclosed space entry drills and training once every two months will become mandatory as of January 2015. Hopefully these additional measures will save lives. (Source: Nautical Institute)

Transport union slams countries barring ships over Ebola fears

Caribbean and Maltese ports have turned away ships amid the scare over Ebola. But turning vessels away goes against law and common humanity, says the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF), which has hit out at those countries that have barred ships because of fears that a crew member was sick with Ebola.

"If someone is infected on a ship then they and the rest of the crew urgently need professional

medical help," the union said.

The ITF is speaking out, following recent incidents in the Caribbean and Malta in which vessels are reported to have been turned away.

In both cases, the suspicions that an Ebola sufferer was on board proved to be incorrect.

The ITF has branded such action "unacceptable and contrary to the traditions of the sea as well as the International Maritime Or-

ganization's Convention on Facilitation of International Maritime Traffic, the World Health Organisation International Health Regulations, the WHO Ship Sanitation Guidelines, the Maritime Labor Convention — and common humanity".

In a statement to Lloyd's List, a spokesperson said the ITF's advice, prepared with the International Maritime Employers' Council and the International Chamber

of Shipping "remains the same for those operators and seafarers who are prepared to call: educate crews about the risks, seriously consider whether shore leave is appropriate, avoid crew changes".

The ITF is "greatly concerned" about recent cases in the Caribbean, and about Malta's behaviour in turning away a vessel wrongly suspected of having an Ebola sufferer on board. (Source: Lloyd's List)

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