

## Developing more projects for seafarer training

The Maritime Academy of Asia and the Pacific (MAAP)'s JSU-IMMAJ Campus was completed with much support from interested parties. In order to improve the quality of Filipino seafarers, who are essential to the Japanese commercial fleet, the new facility will provide high-level academic and training programs required for mercantile marine college students.

Attended by many interested parties from the Japanese and Filipino maritime industries, including representatives from the All Japan Seamen's Union (JSU), the International Mariners Management Association of Japan (IMMAJ), and the Associated Marine Officers' & Seamen's Union of the Philippines (AMO-SUP), an entrance ceremony was held June 8 on the JSU-IMMAJ Campus for 250 freshmen, who will receive financial support under the JSU/IMMAJ scholarship program.

It is expected that the campus will produce 250 Filipino mariners every year for the Japanese merchant fleet.

### Dalian CSU/JSU training center

On July 20, representatives from the JSU, the CSU (Chinese Seafarers Union), the IMMAJ and DIMSCO (Dalian International Maritime Service Co. Ltd.) confirmed matters concerning the establishment and registration of a CSU/JSU comprehensive training and education



From left to right: Zhang Yong Heng, president of Dalian Int'l Maritime Services Co. Ltd.; Li Tieqiao, president of the National Committee of the Chinese Seamen & Construction Workers' Union; Yoji Fujisawa, president of the All Japan Seamen's union.

center in Dalian. The remodeling work, including the installation of simulators, will be completed in late October.

The People's Liberalization Army, which owns the land, decided during a meeting on May 8 that the Dalian site would be leased out to provide training and education for securing Chinese seafarers to meet the demands of

the Japanese merchant fleet.

### Second IBF bargaining session

On July 6-8, the International Bargaining Forum (IBF) held the second round of its central bargaining sessions for the current fiscal year in Singapore.

Prior to the negotiations, the labor side had convened internal

meetings, classifying the items requested by both sides, other than those relating to wages, into the following categories – Contractual Clause, IBF Administration, and Mechanism of Resolving Disputes in accordance with the confirmations made at the first-round sessions.

smoothly with the negotiations, the labor forum ensured that the groups comprised both leaders and members of the working committees representing the labor side.

However, in respect to the proposal made by the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) for the revised IBF methodology for a new wage system, the Joint Negotiating Group (JNG) – in particular, the IMMAJ, which demanded reductions of 10 percent from the ongoing wage standards – strongly opposed the IBF methodology.

As such, it was impossible to hold working group meetings or a general meeting, and the second round of the negotiations reached a stalemate.

Therefore, executive meetings were held intermittently to break the deadlock, but it was finally decided that the negotiations would be carried over to high-level meetings between labor and management to be convened on Sept. 8-9.

### Ceremonies for VSUP students

On June 4, the 42nd meeting of the Vietnam Seafarers Upgrading Project (VSUP) management committee was convened in Hanoi, during which representatives of both Japan and Vietnam gave addresses.

At a time when the Vietnamese

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## JSU awarded citation by Philippine President

BY: ISS NOEL CRISTOBAL

The Philippine President, Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, conferred a presidential citation to the JSU during her meeting with the Filipino community during the 111th Independence Day celebration on June 19, which was held at the JSU-owned Hotel Mariners Court Tokyo.

The citation was given to four distinguished Japanese institutions in recognition of their outstanding contributions in promoting the close relationship between the Filipino and Japanese people, and for their invaluable support to the welfare of the Filipino communities in Japan.

The JSU President, Yoji Fujisawa, received the prestigious award on behalf of the union. Presently, there are approximately 51,000 non-domiciled members, of which 35,000 are Filipinos working aboard Japanese owned and operated vessels.

Arroyo, in her speech, thanked the JSU for being generous and supportive of the Filipino com-

munities. The JSU has often allowed Filipino communities to use Hotel Mariners' Court Tokyo for gatherings such as the Independence Day celebration.

She also mentioned that in an earlier meeting with the JSU and the Japanese Shipowners' Association (JSA), they discussed the effect of the global economic crisis on both countries, as well as the welfare of Filipino seafarers manning Japanese vessels, including the dangers they face of pirate attacks in the Gulf of Aden off the coast of Somalia.

Arroyo said she was relieved that the earlier idea of completely banning Filipino seafarers to work on vessels transiting pirate-infested areas was not implemented, as that would create a negative effect on the Japanese shipping industry, which also translates to lost job opportunities for seafarers.

The Japanese Minister of Transport and the Prime Minister himself, Taro Aso, told the Philippine president that the Diet had just approved a law allowing the Japanese Self-Defense

Forces (sea and aircraft) to protect and defend not just Japanese-flagged vessels, but all vessels plying the pirate-infested area, which will provide a great boost to the safety of Filipino seafarers.

Arroyo commended the Japanese government, the Japanese shipping industry and the JSU for answering the call to protect Filipino seafarers onboard vessels plying this dangerous corridor of world trade.

This shows that Japan is committed to be a strong and reliable partner of the Philippines and to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) region as a whole, she said.

With the present global economic crises continuing to send shivers and creating challenges for the entire world economy, there is no better time than now to strengthen the partnership between the Philippines and Japan, Arroyo concluded.

An excerpt of the citation is as follows:

To the All Japan Seamen's Union for its unrelenting support



JSU President Yoji Fujisawa receives the citation from Philippine President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo.

and outstanding contribution to the personal well being of Filipino seafarers, as well as for its strong partnership with the Associated Marine Officers' and Seamen's Union of the Philippines (AMOSUP), which resulted in the establishment of the JSU-AMO-SUP Mariners' Home in Malate, Manila and prominent maritime school and training centers in the Philippines.

For its dynamic partnership with the Philippine Seafarers'

Union (PSU) in building the seven-story, JSU-PSU Mariners' Court Cebu, which has contributed to harvesting the skills training and development of seafarers.

Given this 19th day of June in the year of our Lord 2009 in the City of Tokyo, Japan.

Signed,

Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo  
President of the Philippines



# U.S., Philippines team up to fight piracy

The United States will soon train Filipino maritime personnel as well as seafarers on how to combat piracy on the high seas. The governments of the Philippines and the United States forged a pact to promote cooperation in the field of education and training of maritime personnel to counter piracy off the Somali coast and other dangerous seaways.

On the last day of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's working tour in the United States, press secretary Cerge Remonde said the memorandum of cooperation on maritime counter-piracy training and education sought to promote

efficient and safe transport policies and practices. The accord also cited the importance of promoting a healthy maritime transport sector and its contribution in strengthening trade relations.

"The problem of international piracy has been a serious cause of concern. The signing of the agreement between the Philippines and the United States hopes to send the message to the international pirates that the U.S. is solidly backing the Philippines and its seafarers in this case," Remonde said.

"The salient provision of the agreement is involving training for self-defense of Filipino seamen,

training of some Navy Seal-type operation for certain elements of the Philippine navy to enable our Armed Forces deal better with piracy in our part of the world," he said.

During their meeting at the White House, Arroyo and U.S. President Barack Obama agreed to forge closer cooperation in fighting terrorism and other security threats.

Under the counter-piracy agreement, the areas of cooperation include exchanges of information on best practices with respect to the enhancement of vessel security against threats of pirate attacks;

piracy and armed attacks as elements of current security threats and patterns; international conventions, legislation, and regulations concerned with piracy; execution of response plans for pirate attacks; drills and exercises to better respond to piracy; and exploring other avenues of exchange between maritime students and faculty on mutually accepted terms.

The cooperation accord will tap the resources and facilities of the United States Merchant Marine Academy, as well as the maritime personnel training institutions of the Philippines. *(Source: Shiptalk)*

## Crew abandonment cases increasing

Crew abandonment cases are once again becoming commonplace, with more and more seafarers stranded on account of the global economic downturn, according to the ITF.

The problem has been a pronounced feature during shipping sector-specific slumps and global recessions in the past, and has never been entirely absent, even during periods of prosperity.

As such, unions and employers have worked together more closely in recent years, in the hope of avoiding reruns of situations that generated unfavorable publicity for the industry as a whole.

However, a spokesman for the ITF, a trade union umbrella group, said that the general trend in recent months has sharply increased, with new cases coming in so thick and fast that up-to-date figures are difficult to calculate.

A case in point is Apostleship of the Sea (AoS), which is providing food to the crew of a ship alongside in the U.K. port of Hull in the wake of the collapse of Eastwind Maritime Inc.

The Catholic seafarer welfare concern said it had previously predicted an upturn in the number of seafarers stranded in ports around the world, and has been increasingly concerned that its prediction is now a reality.

According to a statement from AoS, its chaplain in Hull, Anne McLaren, has been onboard to visit the crew of the Liberia-flag, 6,368-dw/t, 1984-built reefer *EW Snowden*, made up of 22 Russian nationals.

"She has made sure that the crew have food, and will continue to support the crew in any way she can until the port agents and the shipowners reach an agreement," it said.

In early March, the International Shipping Federation and ITF reached agreement on the principles of a mandatory solution to claims for abandonment of seafarers, and also claims regarding death and personal injury.

Details have yet to be finalized and the agreement is subject to approval at the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and International Labour Organization, which will amend the new Maritime Labour Convention accordingly. *(Source: Lloyd's List)*

# U.S. visa regulations causing trouble for chemical carrier, lightering operations

A time limit on seafarer stays mandated by their visas is causing operational difficulties to chemical carrier and lightering companies operating in the U.S. Gulf and off the U.S. West Coast.

The problem is being exacerbated by private terminals that deny visiting seafarers access to shore, which compels the crew to stay onboard until they are at a more favorable port before conducting routine personnel changes.

A major international chemical carrier company that requested anonymity confirmed that a crew switch could not be completed last week in Houston because of the restrictions.

Five crewmembers that had traveled to Houston to join the ship were flown back to India by the company and are to be flown to Brazil to join the vessel at its next port of call.

The departing crew onboard could not leave the ship to catch flights home because they had been in the United States for two to three days beyond the 29 days allowed by their visas. Had they gone to the airport, they would have been allowed to leave the United States, but would have been banned from re-entering for 10 years.

The company said the crew switch could have been done a

few days earlier at the Mississippi River, but a private terminal there had a policy prohibiting shore access even to seafarers with visas. The 29-day limit had expired by the time the ship was in Houston.

At least four other chemical transport companies trading in the U.S. Gulf have experienced problems involving the 29-day limit, sources said.

The problem lies in a provision in the D-1 visa category for merchant seafarers, which limits one contiguous stay in the United States to 29 days. Seafarers who exceed the limit can stay on the ship in a U.S. port, but cannot go ashore. No provision exists for D-1 stays to be extended.

Sources close to the Houston incident said chemical carriers of this kind arrive at a U.S. northeast port, and progress towards the U.S. Gulf. In Houston alone, they might load at several berths, which could take up to three weeks.

Lightering ships face a similar situation. Since their job is to shuttle back and forth between the lightering area and a shore-side facility, foreign seafarers these vessels are not deemed to have left the United States, and run up against the 29-day limit.

U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) in Houston is

understood to take a lenient view of lightering crews, and is known to issue paroles that enable crews to keep working lightering ships beyond 29 days.

Sources elsewhere claim that lightering companies active off Los Angeles and Mississippi have conventionally had to work within the 29-day rule.

Ships that arrive on the West Coast of the United States and go on to Houston via the Panama Canal have also been cited as facing D-1 problems. This is because canal transit is not deemed a foreign stop and the total time taken for the journey and loading could exceed 29 days.

Under strict interpretation of U.S. immigration law, even if a visa holder physically leaves the United States, he or she is not deemed to have left until touching down at a foreign port.

The West Gulf Maritime Association (WGMA) is fronting the industry reaction around Houston.

WGMA director for maritime affairs Niels Lyngso said, "We are concerned about the negative effects added security measures have on the welfare of seafarers. In this case, we are working with CBP to mitigate the stringent effects of the 29-day rule." *(Source: Lloyd's List)*

## Cloudy skies for trade conditions

Trade conditions now are even worse than in the 1930s, a senior shipping industry official said recently, with weak global demand and fleet oversupply set to dampen recovery prospects for the seaborne transport sector.

Around 90 percent of the world's traded goods by volume are transported by sea, with many hoping for a world economic recovery via resurgence in freight activity. But a reduction in demand for raw materials, manufactured goods and consumer products has hit the shipping sector hard since last October.

The Baltic Dry Index – which gauges the cost of shipping resources including iron ore, cement, grain, coal and fertilizer – collapsed to a record low last December of 663 points and has remained volatile since then.

The index hit a more than eight-month high on June 3 of 4,291 points, driven by Chinese demand for raw materials, especially iron ore, which helped boost freight rates. Average earnings for Capesize vessels – the largest class of dry bulk ships – dropped to US\$60,490 a day from their peak of \$233,988 a day in June 2008.

Worries have been growing over the number of vessels expected to hit the shipping market in the coming years. Shipbroker Simpson Spence & Young (SSY) forecast new dry bulk vessels being delivered this year would total 47 million dw/t versus 24 million dw/t entering the fleet in 2008. A further 7.5 million dw/t is expected to hit the dry bulk market in 2009 from ships converted from oil tankers, it said. *(Source: Reuters)*

# AMOSUP to lobby for job retention, not wage increases

A Filipino seafarers' labor group said it would not ask for an increase on behalf of its members during their collective bargaining agreement (CBA) talks with shipowning employers in September, but that it will lobby for the retention of jobs even in times of crisis.

Gregorio Oca, chairman of the AMOSUP, said his group cannot ask for an increase at a time when the global shipping industry is facing such a crisis. "We just want our seafarers to keep their jobs; what we're after here now is for their security of employment," he said.

However, Oca said that his group will not accept an earlier

proposal by the employers for a 10 percent to 15 percent wage decrease.

"Some ship owners relayed to us that they want to reduce the salary, so as not to lay off seafarers. We said no...of course we don't want that," he said.

During their last CBA discussions with the International Maritime Employers' Committee Ltd. (IMEC), which comprised mostly European shipowners, they have agreed on an increase of salary of about 7 percent.

Oca said that due to the shortage of competent officers, many employers have pirated some crewmembers by offering them

salaries "beyond" what was agreed upon during the AMOSUP-IMEC CBA discussions. At the moment, there are 500 ships already laid off all over the world, but Oca said employers are still keeping their workforce intact in hopes that the crisis will turn for the better.

September's meeting between AMOSUP and IMEC will cover collective bargaining agreements for 2010 to 2012.

The last CBA discussion was held in November 2007.

Giles Heimann, the IMEC secretary-general designate, did not comment on employers' request to reduce salaries. "We vowed to maintain all our crew and we have

no plans to lay off workers at this point despite the crisis," he said.

IMEC currently sponsors AMOSUP's cadetship program at the MAAP to ensure continued support of quality seafarers to IMEC members and to the industry, with the IMEC occupying a seat on the board at the MAAP.

The group is the world's largest employers of Filipino seafarers with approximately 52,000 Filipino ratings and 14,000 Filipino officers serving aboard members' ships. IMEC is comprised of 130 member-companies and operates 6,500 ships and employs a total of 157,000 seafarers of various nationalities.



# Challenge your brain regularly for increased mental fitness

Brain fitness has basic principles: variety and curiosity. When anything you do becomes second nature, you need to make a change.

If you can do the crossword puzzle in your sleep, it's time for you to move on to a new challenge in order to get the best workout for your brain.

Curiosity about the world around you, how it works and how you can understand it will keep your brain working fast and efficiently. Use the ideas below to help attain your quest for mental fitness.

Play Games

Brain fitness programs and games are a wonderful way to tease and challenge your brain. Suduko, crosswords and electronic games can all improve your brain's speed and memory.

These games rely on logic, word skills, as well as math and more, and are also fun to do. You'll benefit more by doing these games a little bit every day – spend 15 minutes or so, not hours.

## Making simple changes, meditating, will help you to stay young

Meditation

Daily meditation is perhaps the single greatest thing you can do for your mind and body health. It not only relaxes you, it gives your brain a workout. By creating a different mental state, you engage your brain in new and interesting ways while increasing your brain fitness.

Eat for your brain

Your brain needs you to eat healthy fats. Focus on fish oils from wild salmon, nuts such as walnuts, seeds such as flax seed and olive oil. Eat more of these foods and less saturated fats. Eliminate trans-fats completely from your diet.

Tell good stories

Stories are a way that we solidify memories, interpret events and share moments. Practice telling your stories, both new and

old, so that they are interesting, compelling and fun.

A few basic storytelling techniques will go quite a long way in keeping people's interest both in you and in what you have to say.

Turn off your television

The average person watches more than four hours of television everyday. Television can stand in the way of relationships, life and more. So turn off your TV and spend more time living and exercising your mind and body.

Exercise your body to exercise your brain

Physical exercise is great brain exercise too. By moving your body, your brain has to learn new muscle skills, estimate distance and practice balance. Choose a variety of exercises to challenge your brain.

Read something different

Books are portable, free from libraries and filled with infinite interesting characters, information and facts. Branch out from familiar reading topics. If you usually read history books, try a contemporary novel. Read foreign authors, the classics and random books.

Not only will your brain get a workout by imagining different time periods, cultures and peoples, you will also have interesting stories to tell about your reading, what it makes you think of and the connections you draw between modern life and the words.

Learn a new skill

Learning a new skill works multiple areas of the brain. Your memory comes into play, you learn new movements and you associate things differently. Reading Shakespeare, learning to cook and building an airplane out of

toothpicks all will challenge your brain and give you something to think about.

Make simple changes

We love our routines. We have hobbies and pastimes that we could do for hours on end. But the more something is "second nature," the less our brains have to work to do it. To really help your brain stay young, challenge it. Change routes to the grocery store, use your opposite hand to open doors and eat dessert first. All this will force your brain to wake up from habits and pay attention again.

Train your brain

Brain training is becoming a trend. There are formal courses, Web sites and books with programs on how to train your brain to work better and faster. There is some research behind these programs, but the basic principles are memory, visualization and reasoning. Work on these three concepts everyday and your brain will be ready for anything.

## VOICES from SEAFARERS



Capt. Manuel Luis M. Kierulf with crew of **M/V SIRIUS LEADER**

Thanks to the JSU staff for the regular visitations and the welfare goods we regularly receive.



Capt. Dionisio R. Dandan and officers of **M/V KAMO**

We do appreciate your concern and support to us. Please continue to communicate with us by visiting us regularly.




Crew of **M/V HOEGH SYDNEY** posing with JSU staff

This is the first time that we were visited by JSU staff and we learned a lot about the union. Please visit us regularly.

Capt. Rodrigo C. Cansancio and C/O Evaristo G. De Guzman of **M/V POLAR QUEEN**

While we thank the JSU for the facilities it helped build in our country, we wish the union to negotiate for more increases in the present rate of food allowance for members.



Congratulations to Capt. Roberto C. Satiada of **M/V United Spirit** for being awarded by the Japan Meteorological Agency and by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, USA for his distinguished achievement and contribution to both agencies.

All Japan Seamen's Union

### JOKE CORNER

**Seamen's Sins**

I. A seaman was drinking beer while watching TV. His wife was getting the table ready for dinner.

He said to her, "I never want to live in a vegetative state, depending on some machines and fluids from a bottle. If that ever happens, just pull the plug."

The wife stopped what she was doing, unplugged the TV and threw out his beer.

II. A dying seaman whispers to his wife who is keeping vigil by his bedside.

Seaman: Before I die I have something to confess to you...

Wife: Shhh, not now.

Seaman: But I need to tell you that I cheated on you...

Wife: Yes, I know.

Seaman: I need to clear my conscience before I die...

Wife: Just lie back and let the poison work.

**By ISS John Canto**

*You take the shore party, I'll stay with my ship.*

– Capt. Jack Sparrow –



# Anti-piracy mission off Somalia warns of more attacks as weather changes

The British commander of the European Union (EU)'s anti-piracy operation off the coast of Somalia warned that there could be a significant increase in pirate attacks on merchant ships following the end of the monsoon season.

Rear Adm. Peter Hudson, the senior British officer commanding the EU anti-piracy mission, said the current monsoon season – with waves rising up to four meters – had led to a drop in the seizing of merchant ships in the region.

But as the weather changes in the next few months, pirate activity could pick up sharply, Hudson told the U.K.-based *Financial Times*.

"There's a possibility that pirates will come out in force in the autumn," he said. "As the

commander, I have to work with colleagues in NATO and other coalition forces to make sure we put our ships in the best place to counter that."

At present, the large anti-piracy patrol operation involving 34 naval ships has led to a marked decline in successful pirate attacks on merchant shipping. Six months ago, one in three pirate attacks in the region were successful. Today, it is one in nine, an official from Operation Atalanta said. However, with 25,000 merchant ships passing through the Gulf of Aden each year, the scale of the challenge is huge.

Hudson warned already merchant shipping that a significant number of attacks might take place in the Gulf of Aden in September in

spite of increased surveillance operations by national navies off Somalia. Since the EU task force was launched a year ago, it has been in the vanguard of the international anti-piracy drive.

The EU coalition has some 12 ships on patrol in the region, NATO has five, and the U.S.-led "combined maritime force" four. National navies, including Russia, China, India and Japan, have a total of 13 ships on anti-piracy patrol.

Hudson said there was far more pressure on pirates because of the large number of forces in the area. But the scale of ocean that needed to be patrolled – 2 million square kilometers – made anti-piracy operations difficult. (*Source: Shiptalk*)

## MSDS tanker requirement moves forward

The U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) announced that it submitted a Federal Register notice to the marine community containing guidance on new IMO measures.

These new measures require that all tank ships subject to the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS) Convention carrying Annex I cargoes and all ships using Annex I marine fuels to have Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) aboard.

The SOLAS convention requirement will become effective Jan. 1, 2011. It does not apply to inland barges or any other ship not subject to the SOLAS convention.

After Jan. 1, 2011, nations party to the SOLAS can be expected to verify that ships subject to the convention have MSDS as required. After that date, all U.S.-flagged vessels under the SOLAS convention traveling overseas should expect foreign administrations to ask for MSDS for each Annex I cargo and marine oil fuel on board.

Also after that date, all foreign-flagged vessels under the SOLAS convention at U.S. ports should expect the USCG to ask for MSDS in fulfillment of the United States' duties as a party to the SOLAS convention.

The USCG expects that ship's personnel receive MSDS in a working language or languages understood by them, and also expects that occupational exposure limits referenced in a MSDS be based on an internationally recognized standard.

The IMO has recommended a format for the MSDS and the USCG encourages the use of this recommended format and content, which is set out in the notice.

Some nations party to the SOLAS convention may require MSDS to follow the IMO recommendations for format and content.

In most cases, vessels will already have MSDS for all cargoes that usually will contain the recommended information. In some cases, certain recommended data may not apply to the bulk liquid in question (data not applicable should be so noted). However, some member nations may require all of the recommended information.

The notice is available at the Office of the Federal Register Public Inspection Desk at [www.federalregister.gov](http://www.federalregister.gov). After publication, it will be available in the Federal Register and at [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov), docket number: USCG-2009-0553.

## New report looks at causes of propulsion loss when switching fuels

Ships switch fuel oil from residual fuels to distillate fuels in order to reduce emissions.

The U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) expects ships will switch fuel more frequently to comply with new emission reduction regulations. When switching fuel oil, some ships have experienced propulsion losses linked to procedural errors or fuel oil incompatibility.

American Petroleum Institute (API) developed a paper titled "Technical Considerations of Fuel Switching Practices" that discusses problems that lead to propulsion loss while switching fuel.

The document is available at

<http://marineinvestigations.us> and may be useful to vessel owners, operators, and engineers interested in preventing fuel system failures and propulsion casualties, while meeting current and future exhaust emission control requirements.

In order to prevent casualties associated with fuel oil switching, the USCG strongly recommends that owner and operators do the following:

- Consult engine and boiler manufacturers for fuel switching guidance
- Consult fuel suppliers for proper fuel selection
- Exercise tight control when

possible over the quality of the fuel oils received

- Consult manufacturers to determine if system modifications or additional safeguards are necessary for intended fuels
- Develop detailed fuel switching procedures
- Establish a fuel system inspection and maintenance schedule
- Ensure system pressure and temperature alarms, flow indicators, filter differential pressure transmitters, etc. are all operational
- Ensure system purifiers, filters and strainers are maintained
- Ensure system seals, gaskets,

flanges, fittings, brackets and supports are maintained

- Ensure a detailed system diagram is available
- Conduct initial and periodic crew training
- Complete fuel switching well offshore prior to entering restricted waters or traffic lanes

This safety alert is provided for informational purposes only and does not relieve any domestic or international safety, operational or material requirement. Developed by the Office of Design and Engineering Standards and Office of Investigations and Analysis, USCG Headquarters, Washington, DC.

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economy is growing rapidly, highly skilled local seamen to underpin Vietnam's maritime society are necessary. As such, Vietnam said it was grateful to the JSU for working on the VSUP training and education programs, which have contributed to developing Vietnamese seamen.

As for a vocational college in Vinh, located in central Vietnam, which is under discussion for the purpose of securing workers for marine, transport and port industries, Vietnam stated that it would recruit teachers and develop curricula. It also said that it would like to begin designing and constructing the school during the third quarter.

Graduation and entrance ceremonies were held for fifty-two 21-year and fifty 22nd-year students, respectively, in Ho Chi Minh City on June 5 and Hai Phong on June 6, witnessing the attendance of many guests from Japanese and Vietnamese maritime industries.

The ceremonies were all successful, with most of the guests saying that they were grateful to the JSU for contributing to the development of Vietnamese seamen.

#### ITF East Asia FOC/POC campaign

On June 14-16, the ITF East

Asia Flag of Convenience/Port of Convenience (FOC/POC) campaign was carried out at 38 ports in 15 regions across Japan. The JSU worked together with the National Council of Dockworkers' Unions of Japan and the Japanese Confederation of Port and Harbor Transport Workers' Unions, as well as seafarer and dockworker unions of South Korea, Taiwan and Russia.

From South Korea, the head of the Korea Special Seafarers' Union (KSSU) and the director general of the union's international bureau joined the campaign. They participated in the protest in front of Kotoku Kaiun's head office and the inspections at the Port of Yokohama.

The JSU made exchanges with the KSSU in order to enhance its international cooperation with other countries.

Working toward safety and the conclusion of the ITF agreements, the JSU-led party conducted protest rallies and activities (appeal activities) against Kotoku Kaiun's FOC fleet, Hong Kong-flagged unorganized FOC ships, Singapore-flagged unorganized FOC ships, other unorganized ships, and others to beware of, based on the councils by seafarers and dockworkers to address the FOC/POC issues, which had been established across Japan.

It was also confirmed that the activities had advanced steadily in Japan, Russia, South Korea, and Taiwan.

Campaign activities included the following:

- (a) The JSU visited 121 ships to conduct onboard inspections.
- (b) The JSU supported crewmembers of four ships to settle their complaints.
- (c) 10 vessels agreed to sign the ITF agreements.
- (d) Negotiations began for signing the ITF agreements with eight vessels.
- (e) 15 ships were requested to undergo port state control (PSC) inspections and/or receive instruction for improvements.
- (f) One ship was found to have a problem with its side ladder; one ship was pointed out to have a problem with its manning standards; and 13 ships were found to lift their side ladders in unsafe manners and/or violate seafarers' rights of organization.

Activities for the ITF agreements to be signed included the following:

- (a) Protest in front of the head office of Kotoku Kaiun in Imabari, Ehime prefecture

On July 14, a group of 42, consisting mainly of seamen and dockworkers in the Chugoku and Shikoku regions, as well as representatives from the JSU headquarters, made a protest march to the head office of Kotoku Kaiun.

As the company dealt with the protestors dishonestly, saying that it never ordered crewmembers of its vessel to reject others from embarking, the group read a letter of protest, yelled and voiced

their discontents, and distributed fliers in front of the head office.

(b) The campaign staged protest rallies against six vessels owned by Kotoku Kaiun.

(c) The campaign conducted protest and appeal activities against seven vessels owned by Kotoku Kaiun.

#### Background

Kotoku Kaiun is an Imabari-based midsize shipping company that owns approximately 30 FOC ships. As it has not signed any appropriate ITF labor agreements that meet international standards, we, seafarer and dockworker unions, have been recommending the company to sign them for several years now.

However, Kotoku Kaiun has never intended to hold negotiations with us, and intercepts conversations that we try to make with crewmembers of its ships by asking them to close walkways and lift up side ladders.

These acts are strictly prohibited and are malicious illegal behaviors according to international laws and the Constitution of Japan.

Therefore, we are carrying out international campaigns to make Kotoku Kaiun sign the ITF agreements, which clarifies seafarers' rights and to ensure that dockworkers are responsible for cargo handling activities, both of which are minimum international and social requirements.

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