



In the photo on the left, JSU Vice-President Yasumi Morita (standing) delivers a speech during the 1st Working Group on Asian Seafarers' Summit Meeting held at Mariners' Court Tokyo. On the right, members of the 1st Working Group on Asian Seafarers' Summit Meeting.

Asian Seafarers' Summit meets in Tokyo

Working-level group focuses on armed guards, education, J-Crew

he Asian Seafarers' Summit convened its working-level meeting on May 29, 2013 at the Hotel Mariners' Court Tokyo. To kick off the meeting, Vice-

President Yasumi Morita of the All Japan Seamen's Union (JSU) gave an address of solidarity to welcome the 33 attendees from 15 labor unions of 10 Asian economies.

Presided by JSU International

Affairs Bureau General Director Yoshiyuki Ikeya, discussions began after the opening address, focusing on the following topics.

(1) Armed guards on board merchant vessels

After being informed that Japan was permitting armed guards to be on duty aboard merchant vessels, the attendees gave briefings successively on efforts of their respective governments in this area.

Views were exchanged on a variety of topics, including the cost of hiring armed guards, stiffer penalties for acts of piracy and actions to eradicate pirates.

(2) Education and training

Countries that supply seafarers to other countries understood each other's position, while it was agreed that Asia is a globally important region for maritime industries and the seafarer market.

The meeting came up with education, training, employment and others, and agreed to discuss these topics when the Asian Seafarers' Summit holds a plenary session in August in Vladivostok, Russia.

(3) J-Crew Project

The JSU delivered a presentation on a public relations activity titled the J-Crew Project that it is promoting with a partner to help Japanese seafarers keep oceangoing shipping secure and educated.

Voices from

Page 3

seafarers

Various efforts have been made as part of the project, including the creation of lovable mascot characters and enlisting a young actress as its supporting ambassador.

Representatives from other nations expressed great interest in these efforts.

Shipowners try to 'wriggle off hook' on wages

Churchill, is written by the victors - in shipping its the shipincreasing concern that owners in the form of the International Group of P&I Clubs are eagerly claiming that MLC does not require financial security for seafarer wages.

It seems that as the clock ticks down to the launch of MLC, shipowners are desperately looking to wriggle off the hook of responsibility when it comes to abandoned seafarer wages. Disappointingly, the IG is trying to push the agenda that no such requirements are imposed on shipowners, and they are conveniently choosing to interpret the convention as only requiring repatriation in case of insolvency.

History, according Sir Winston Mr. Andrew Bardot of the IG, perhaps unsurprisingly believes there is no requirement in the owners who all too often try to MLC 2006 to provide financial write the "facts", and so it is with security by way of insurance cover for unpaid wages. Talking to Lloyd's List he states that, "unpaid wages are not covered by the MLC and there is no requirement to provide financial security for such unpaid wages."

This seems an incredible claim, and in a prime example of political doublespeak the IG does however accept that MLC has created obligations for states parties which, in turn, would require owners to ensure that seafarers

Perhaps we have missed the point, but surely that means that someone, somewhere, somehow is going to be responsible for picking up the wage tab if a company goes bankrupt - so why not the owners themselves? Surely that is only right, proper and fair?

It feels wholly depressing that the IG does not seemingly believe that shipowners should be required to meet their obligation to pay wages through the provision of financial security. In a time when MLC is seemingly shining a positive light on progress and change in shipping, this feels like a step back to the days of Plimsoll and the Dickensian style owners trying to wriggle off the hook of having to put some money aside to settle the wages of those who work to keep the ships and cargoes moving. When a shipowner goes bust, it is not the fault of the seafarers and so to try and sidestep this most basic of moral imperatives is nothing short of a disgrace.

According to critics the IG has spirit of MLC owners are going the issue of unpaid wages and the the wrong owners. requirement to provide financial security against unpaid wages.

Naturally the IG's viewpoint is shipowner-centric, but the critics claim this entrenched view provides an incomplete picture and adds to the confusion surrounding the issue. The intent of MLC standard A1.4 is to place an obligation on member governments to regulate companies within their territories that supply crew to ships around the world.

There is a clear obligation to protect the seafarer from his or her monetary loss in the event of the shipowner's contractual default, but by trying to deny this or by wriggling around the

its facts wrong, and there are to be faced with more and more many who believe the MLC reputational hits as crews face the clearly and unequivocally covers financial hit of having worked for

Bankruptcies are likely to become an increasing part of shipowner life in the coming couple of years as the market bumps along on the bottom of a freight rate chasm, by trying to claim that owners are not responsible for the wages owed to crews it is unlikely that there will be much sympathy for those who are forced to the wall.

In the PR war you can't win battles by being seen to be short changing seafarer. And that is a fact that some owners should perhaps remember when they look to manipulate the clear purpose and scope of MLC. (Source: Ship-

Port levies and sustainable welfare report published

report published by the International Seafarers' Welfare and Assistance Network (ISWAN) details the best practice in establishing and operating port levies around the world.

The report, "Port levies and sustainable welfare for seafarers", documents how levies make a real difference to welfare organisations and the services that they are able to provide for seafarers, at a time when funding for seafarers' welfare is under pressure.

Port levies and sustainable welfare for seafarers shows that 35% of the 132 participating ports already operate port welfare levies. Voluntary levy payment rates were 75-99% for 10 of these ports, and the average levy rate emerged as US\$58 dollars. While there are often no restrictions on levy expenditure, revenue is almost always used for maintenance of seafarers' centers, operating seafarer transport, and covering staffing costs.

This report is being launched in the run up to the ILO's Maritime Labor Convention, 2006 (MLC, 2006) coming into force on Aug. 20, 2013. The MLC states that "Every seafarer has the right to health protection, medical care, welfare measures and other forms of social protection." (Article IV). And MLC guidelines on financing of welfare facilities include: "levies or other special dues from shipping sources". (Guideline B4.4.4).

As it was stated by Roger Harris, Executive Director of ISWAN, "There is much to be learned from ports with existing levies, including from the challenges faced in setting up and implementing levies. Collaboration and determination play a crucial role in making port levies work. This report can be used as a tool to support more levies being put in place, and improving practice for existing levies. While not a panacea, levies provide a sustainable and predictable way to help shore-based welfare provisions in the MLC be implemented globally.'

Port levies and sustainable welfare for seafarers was to be launched at an ISWAN seminar entitled "How can port levies help deliver welfare provisions in the MLC, 2006?", held on May 21, 2013 at the Baltic Exchange, London. (Source: ISWAN)

ICS presents shipping economic challenges to ministers

At the OECD International Transport Forum in Leipzig, Germany, the annual gathering of the world's transport ministers from more than 50 countries on May 22-24, the views of the global shipping industry were represented by the International Chamber of Shipping (ICS), the principal global trade association for ship-

ICS explained the realities of the very serious economic challenges presently confronting shipping at a special ministerial session on the financing of sustainable maritime transport.

Speaking on behalf of ICS, Stena AB CEO, Carl-Johan Hagman said, "In the current economic climate the shipping industry has to work in close contact with shipping's global regulators, especially the IMO, and make them fully aware of the implications of their actions.

Protection of the environment is of great importance," he confirmed, pointing out the need for balance between the measures taken with the economic impact of these measures.

Mr. Hagman explained to the closed meeting: "Distillate fuels currently cost around 50 percent more than residual fuel and the difference between the two fuels is expected to increase as the use of distillate becomes mandatory. Without significant extra production of distillate fuels, how should ship operators manage these extra fuel costs?"

Questioning how ship operators will manage all the additional costs associated with ecomeasures, Mr. Hagman said the increases "threaten to rise so high that they may have a dramatic impact on world trade or force cargo back onto roads or to other less carbon-efficient modes

"If governments and regulators are serious about the concept of sustainable shipping, then we must give serious consideration to these cost-benefit questions," he concluded. (Source: MarineLink.

IMO's GloBallast project awarded for innovation

IMO's GloBallast Partnerships Project, which assists developing countries and their maritime industries for implementation of the international regulations on ballast water management to prevent the spread of alien invasive species, has won the 6th Marine BizTV International Maritime Award for "Best Innovative Proj-

The award was presented during the 6th Marine BizTV International Maritime Award ceremony, held in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, on May 15, 2013. The jury, in considering the most innovative and creative achievements of global and regional maritime organizations and their initiatives, agreed to award the IMO-UNDP-ĞEF GloBallast Partner-

ships Project the "Best Innovative Project" award for its role in catalyzing the global efforts to find innovative technological solutions for the management of ships' ballast water and its international position as a successful technical co-operation and capacity building project. The Project is executed by IMO with funding support from the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and in partnership with the United Nations Development Program (UNDP).

The award honored GloBallast's global impact in terms of preparing developing countries and their maritime industries for the implementation of the International Convention for the Control and Management of Ships Ballast Water and Sediments, 2004, its role in assisting the maritime industry to overcome technical challenges through its pioneering Global Industry Alliance (GIA) initiative and for catalyzing significant global efforts to address one of the most pressing environmental issues that the maritime industry is currently facing.

"We're delighted and thrilled with this special recognition of our work," said Dr. Jose Matheickal, Chief Technical Adviser of the Project at IMO. "Innovation is firmly anchored in the GloBallast Project's delivery strategy to go beyond the original goals of the Project. We're consistently integrating this cornerstone into all our outreach and partnership strategies. This international award is a true recognition of the

innovative and championing efforts of our lead partnering countries, regional coordination partners, global strategic partners including GEF and UNDP and members of the Programme Coordination Unit at IMO, who all played a key role in making this global project a true success story".

This is the third international award presented to the GloBallast project since its inception in 2000. In 2003, GloBallast won the Queen's Golden Jubilee Medal and in 2007, the awareness-raising video documentary, "Invaders from the Sea", produced by GloBallast jointly with the BBC, won the Gold Award for Best UN Feature Film at the United Nations Documentary Film Festival. (Source: IMO)

MLC not magic bullet in addressing lost wages over abandonment

ping" - with Maritime Labor Convention (MLC) coming, some have seen that abandonments will become a thing of the past - but that is not the way the world works.

MLC isn't some silver bullet that will stop owners going bust, but it should mean that seafarers will be better careed for when they do. However, even in the pages of the convention, there is a lack of substance on how wages will be recovered, and when seafarers are abandoned even if they do get home relatively quickly, it is the struggle to get paid, which adds so much insult to injury.

Abandonments are something that shames the industry, and the

terms it the "sorry underside of ship-shows a sorry litany of disgraceful seafarers and its not up for debate employers default. The MLC is treatment - crews are being left to fend for themselves, and all they can do is cry for help. Thankfully with the support of local charities, communities and the ITF, most eventually at least end with the crew back in the homes...but when entries blithely state, the crew spent "eight months without any payment and 30 months without social security" it barely scratches the surface of the pain, torment, suffering and inhumanity of people huddling together on pariah vessels as the food, fuel and hope drain away.

Seafarers' Rights International executive director Deidre Fitzpatrick said earlier this year that the MLC of 2006, which comes into

Lloyd's List has spoken out on the international Labor Organization's force in August, fails to adequately Seacurus called "CrewSEACURE" address the problem of abandoned which indemnifies seafarers if their within the ILO until 2014.

What this has all meant is currently, short of arresting a ship, there is little recourse to recover crews' unpaid wages but away from the international political talking shops progress has been made. Indeed there has been recent and encouraging progress developing an insurance instrument that would cover seafarers in the event of abandonment and Lloyd's recently amended its risk codes to include a new class of insurance that covers this.

The new classification in effect supports a new form of insurance launched last month by UK-based specialist marine intermediary very clear in the need for seafarer recruitment and manning agencies to have necessary financial protections in place if they supply seafarers to shipowners, and so an insurance product is an ideal win-win solution.

According to Seacurus, CrewS-EACURE is proving popular and the company has received many inquiries from manning and recruitment agents trying to satisfy their MLC obligations. Seacurus managing director Thomas Brown says, "A number of these agents are very concerned about supplying seafarers to vessels without this level of protection in place. (Source: Shiptalk)

Web app to aid owners get MLC ready

In response to the fact that the MLC, 2006 will be enforced worldwide from August 20, 2013, Rood Boven Groen has designed a web application to pave the road through the certification process and slash implementation time considerably. The development of this application took place in close cooperation with flag state author-

This web application – the MLC-2006 Document Generator (www.mlc-2006.nl) offers a fast and simple way for shipowners to create their ship specific DMLC Part II.

The user is guided by leading questions through the 14 compulsory parts of the DMLC Part II.

Apart from showing the Regulations of the MLC-2006 Code, this MLC-2006 Document Generator offers: •The possibility to view flag specific regulations and implement these into the DMLC Part II; •Simple and easy download of all applicable and available forms and documents; •The possibility to send the created DMLC Part II online to Class for review and commenting; •Extensive information in order to prepare for Class inspections and Port State Controls onboard.

The MLC-2006 Document Generator is continuously being updated by the staff of Rood Boven Groen and new flag states are added as and when these have implemented MLC-2006 into their national legislation.

The MLC-2006 Document Generator allows its users to save 80% of their time, and thus money, on researching through all applicable regulations.

After answering all leading questions the user has completed all compulsory parts of the DMLC Part II and the document can be sent to Class for certification. (Source: Shiptalk)

VOICES from **SEAFARERS**



Capt. Taizu Yamamoto and Crew of M/V MIDNIGHT DREAM

The master expressed his sincere concern over the members' welfare. As a former JSU staff who worked at the head office, he emphasized the importance of communication access between the crew and their families. Supporting the introduction of the broadband internet, he wished this could partly solve the members' dream of worthwhile communication.



Capt. Adorencio S. Raquedan and Crew of M/V MALACCA HIGHWAY

We appreciate the explanations of the JSU staff with regards to the members' benefits based on every ship agreement. The rights of the beneficiary to claim insurance as per any given agreement of the ship were clearly discussed. For our clear understanding of the system, they specified the welfare and mutual funds that the beneficiary may receive in case of death to a member.



Capt. Liu Yang and Chinese Crew of M/V KRONOS ISLAND

As a former trainee of the JSU Training Center in Tianjin, China, the master of *Kronos Island* extended his best regards to the whole staff of the JSU. Having trained at the center during his stay for six months, he acquired proficiency in English and wished the JSU could further enhance assistance to other Chinese seafarers.



Capt. Danilo A. Navarrette and Crew of M/V ATLANTIC RUBY

The JSU Filipino staff visited our ship and explained union activities and policy to all non-domiciled special members. Our gratitude to the JSU staff for providing us the latest information and news on board. We hope this union will continue improving the welfare and benefit systems for its members.



C/O Billy James D. Varron and Crew of M/V FRONTIER TRIUMPH

Our great appreciation to the JSU staff who visited our vessel and discussed the latest information regarding the shipping industry. We hope that this union will continue supporting its members by handing out souvenirs and bringing updated news on board.



Capt. Arnaldo M. De Ramas and Crew of M/V SHIN KORYU

My officers and crew were so happy for the visitation by the JSU staff during our stay at JFE OEA port in Kawasaki, Japan. Visiting staff briefly discussed the articles of the CBA and explained the importance of being members of this union. More power to JSU.



Capt. Romel R. Oidem and Crew of M/V MUTSU

We are thankful to the JSU staff for visiting our ship and for bringing us the latest news and information regarding the shipping industry. We wish for this union to continue supporting its members especially on the seafarers' welfare and rights. More power to all staff of JSU and Mabuhay!



Capt. Edgardo L. Alaura and Crew of M/V TOPAZ ACE

JSU's regular ship visitation is so important for us and we strongly support the union's aim of improving welfare and benefits to its members. We are looking forward to meeting you again and thank you very much



Capt. Dang Van Dau and Vietnamese Crew of M/V FORTUNE ACE

We much appreciate the ship visitation by the JSU staff on board. They explained JSU's intention to let all their members understand union activities and policies. Thanks for visiting us and hope to see you again on our next port of call here in Japan.



Capt. Eldon J. Baptist and Crew of M/V SHOHJIN

Visiting JSU staff informed us about the union's latest achievements in members' welfare benefits and the increase of salaries until 2014. Thanks for taking care of us and all non-domiciled special members.



C/O Gumulya and Indonesian crew of M/V TSING MA BRIDGE

On behalf of my fellow Indonesian crew, I am very happy and thankful for the visitation made by the JSU staff while our vessel berthed in Ohi Port, Tokyo. Thank you also for bringing us the latest news and welfare goods on board. We are looking forward to meeting you again.



C/ck Nilo M. Ticar and Crew of M/V FORTUNE WIND

We are happy for the visitation by the JSU staff everytime we are in Japan. Thanks for your untiring support and hope that this union will continue providing the latest information regarding the shipping industry. More power to the staff of All Japan Seamen's Union (AJSU) and God Bless.

Australian spy in sky sweeps for spills

ustralia's maritime regulator AMSA is testing satellites for oil spill detection.

"Satellite-based Synthetic Aperture Radar can identify potential oil spills directly from orbit," the Australian Maritime Safety Authority explained. "These satellite sensors can monitor day and

night, can see through cloud, rain, fog and other weather," it added.

AMSA's maritime boss Jamie Storrie said until now, the regulator relied on other vessels, airlines or the public to report oil spills or other marine pollution.

"By the time a spill is reported, the oil may have already spread to sensitive areas, and the chances of catching the polluter are poor," Storrie said.

Satellites are the most reliable ways of spotting oil spills and the ships that cause them, transmitting information to AMSA within 60 minutes, thereby allowing the regulator to catch polluters red handed

Norway's Kongsberg Satellite

Services will obtain and analyze the satellite data for AMSA. It will focus on areas considered to be at high risk of oil pollution because of heavy shipping movements or offshore oil and gas projects.

Once the trial is completed, AMSA will assess the viability of implementing the system permanently. (Source: Fairplay)

EU Navfor issues new warning on Somali pirates

While Somali pirates have been quieter of late, news comes of a timely warning that a real threat to merchant shipping still exists and news of formal accreditation for one of the private companies charged with escorting bulk freight and container vessels through the hazardous waters of the Gulf of Aden.

Just days ago ESPS Rayo, serving with the EU Naval Force (EU Navafor), spotted a suspect skiff 320 nautical miles from the Somali coastline with a crew of six. A closer inspection revealed the men were not equipped for any form of fishing or trade but

were in possession of the paraphernalia usually associated with pirates who ply these waters.

As has happened before, there was insufficient evidence to charge the men with any offence but the vessel was seized and the men returned to the Somali shores.

The authorities say it is now exactly one year since the last ship, chemical tanker *MV Smyrni*, was seized by armed pirates off the Somali coast. Thankfully *MV Smyrni* and her crew were released two months ago, after 10 months in captivity. However, since May last year, nine more ships have

been attacked and, with two ships and 54 hostages still being held, and pirates once again issuing death threats to hostages if ransoms are not paid, it is clear that there is no room for complacency, something the Combined Naval Forces are all keen to emphasize as Operation Commander of the EU Naval Force, Rear Adm. Bob Tarrant, explained.

"I am very concerned that seafarers and nations will lower their guard and support for counter piracy operations in the belief that the piracy threat is over. It is not; it is merely contained. We should remember that at its height in January 2011, 32 ships were pirated by Somali pirates and 736 hostages were held. It is crucial that we remain vigilant or the number of attacks will once again rise."

While the navies are keen to emphasize that they will prosecute wherever a reasonable chance of conviction occurs, as evidenced by the recent cases of the legal transfers by the European Union of suspect pirates as reported here to Mauritius and The Seychelles authorities, there must be prima facie evidence sufficient to constitute the basis of a case. (Source: Shiptalk)

Seafarers' certification scam uncovered in Panama

Panamanian authorities have begun legal proceedings against those allegedly involved in a seafarers' certification scam. Evidence was uncovered by the UK Marine Accident Investigation Branch when it was investigating a grounding at Bute last year. MAIB found that the bridge of the 258-teu (3,126-gt) box carrier Coastal Isle had been unmanned when it ran aground on the Scottish island early on

July 2, 2012.

Bridge watch alarms had been switched off and the voyage data recorder had been unused for nearly two weeks, found MAIB. It subsequently discovered that its Turkish chief officer, who had left the bridge unmanned, and the Turkish crew member who replaced him after the accident both had false Panamanian certificates of competence that also overstated their qualifications.

MAIB called it "extremely disturbing" that the two had functioned in senior roles for which they were not qualified without being discovered during port and flag-state inspections or internal safety management audits. Told what MAIB had found, the Panama Maritime Authority (AMP) initially put the false certificates down to an "administrative error". Later, however, it confirmed that both the Turkish entities that had

enabled the seafarers to obtain certification were fraudulent. It further discovered that training centres inside Panama were working with AMP employees and fraudulent organizations in Turkey to issue false certificates.

It has now started legal proceedings against its employees involved in the scam and reinforced auditing of recognised training centres in Panama, according to MAIB. (Source: Sea-Web)

Industry seen overcoming manpower shortage in 10 years

The Director General, Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA), Patrick Akpobolokemi, has projected that the maritime industry would overcome the challenge of inadequate manpower in 10 years if the current level of training for workers is sustained, This Day Live reports.

The projection came as workers in the industry lauded the Federal Government and the management of NIMASA for staying focused on training and retraining of personnel towards bridging the human capacity gap in the industry.

Akpobolokemi who spoke in Lagos at the weekend said with the ongoing collaboration between NIMASA and other related maritime bodies, the skills of industry personnel would be upgraded in line with its statutory responsibility.

He noted that thousands had already been trained in various aspects of maritime operations both within and outside the country, to build capacity for the industry

He expressed optimism that if the pace is sustained, which NIMASA intends to, Nigeria, 10 years from now, should not be complaining of lack of inadequate qualified manpower, but should be in position to export maritime experts to other countries. (Source: This Day Live.com)

SEACHOICE products light up navigation requirements

The Coast Guard has recently become aware of the uninspected towing vessel industry using inappropriate navigation lights that fail to meet the criteria for use onboard any vessel; SEACHOICE Products LED Navigation Light, SCP #03201 shown below.

Online research shows many outlets for the sale of this product. It is possible that this product may be in widespread use in the recreational boating industry as well.

The SEACHOICE Products and other catalogs advertise it as a "LED classic navigation light". Packaged individually, the item looks as shown on the left. The package indicates incorrect usage as a "masthead light".

When web-searched the retrieved information presents it as a "masthead" or "navigation" light. Neither of these applications are correct and the fixture should not be used on any vessel in an effort to meet the navigation rules.

Masthead lighting requires an arc of 225 degrees visibility and stern lighting requires an arc 135 degrees visibility, for a total range of 360 degrees visibility. Depending on the type of vessel there are also light, color and range of visibility requirements.

The SEACHOICE product SCP 03201 has an arc of 180 degrees visibility and is not applicable to any requirement.

The Coast Guard strongly recommends that owners / operators of any vessel who installed this particular SEACHOICE product (#03201 only) as a masthead, stern or other type of navigation light to remove it and replace it with a proper light that meets the requirements for the vessel and application.

Recreational boaters who have questions should contact the Coast Guard Auxiliary. Commercial vessel owner/operators who have questions should contact the Coast Guard Sector or Marine Safety Unit (Source: USCG)

IAPH recognizes Montreal for providing free Wi-Fi in port

According to a 2013 research of SIRC (Seafarers accommodation on contemporary cargo ships) cited by ITF "very few seafarers have access to internet. Twelve percent reported free and unlimited internet access. The majority, 61%, reported that they have no internet access available to them on board at all. The remainder, 27%, experience either time restriction or charges or some other kind of restricted access".

However, a handful of ports are able to offer a free internet connection to seafarers. One of these is the

Port of Montreal, which, thanks to this service, has won the International Association of Ports and Harbors' (IAPH) bronze 2013 Port Communications Award. The prize recognizes a project that provides free Wi-Fi on Port of Montreal territory to seafarers whose ships are docked in port. The service allows mariners to connect more easily with family and friends back home.

The IAPH has presented its biennial awards at its 28th World Ports Conference held in Los Angeles from May 6 to 10. Gaétan Vigneault, the port's director of information technology, accepted the award on behalf of the Montreal Port Authority and the team that implemented the project.

"Our secure and multifunctional Wi-Fi system covers the entire Port of Montreal territory," Mr. Vigneault said. "Teamwork was behind its successful implementation, which required a multitude of technologies for infrastructure, Internet connectivity and communications itself,

and security, log-in and firewall software."

The Port of Montreal provides seafarers with a log-in identification and password so that they can connect to the Internet anywhere on port territory, from Cité du Havre to Contrecoeur.

The free Wi-Fi service allows seafarers to connect with their loved ones 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year, via email, Skype and social media without having to leave their ship. (Source: Shiptalk)

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