

JSU aids in typhoon recovery

Joins IMMAJ, to launch program to help schools, hospitals

The All Japan Seamen's Union (JSU) recently launched a new reconstruction assistance program for the Philippines jointly with the International Mariners Management Association of Japan (IMMAJ).

The new program is designed to help Manila in aiding in recovery efforts of Visayas and other municipalities in the Southeast Asian nation from the damage caused by typhoon Yolanda that swept through the areas last November.

In February this year, labor and management agreed to set up an assistance program at a meeting of the committee for managing their foundation for the welfare of overseas seafarers.

Financed from the foundation, the new program will be instituted primarily to help local elementary and junior high schools as well as medical facilities get back on their feet. The program is scheduled to be in place for a period of three years to five years, which is the estimated time needed to complete the required reconstruction projects. The Associated Marine Officers' and Seamen's Union of the Philippines (AMOSUP) and the Philippine Seafarers' Union (PSU) are responsible for damage assessment in the region. Reconstruction projects will be carried out in accordance with requests to be made by the two local unions.

In 2014, the initial year for the JSU-IMMAJ reconstruction support program, a total sum of 75 million yen will be offered by the foundation for the welfare of overseas seafarers. The AMOSUP and the PSU will spend 25 million pesos and 10 million pesos, respectively, to develop a request plan.

Typhoon Yolanda, which is also known as Haiyan, completely and partially destroyed approximately 5,900 and 15,000 classrooms of public schools in Visayas and



The Philippine government estimates that some 21,000 classrooms in Visayas and other municipalities were either partially or completely destroyed by typhoon Yolanda in November 2013. The recovery assistance program is aimed at helping schools and hospitals in those areas.

other municipalities, respectively, according to the country's Department of Education (DepEd). Meanwhile, the Department of Health (DOH) unveiled that facilities had been damaged at about 450 medical facilities.

JSU Acting President Yasumi Morita gave a briefing on the background of the launching of the new reconstruction assistance program, saying, "Visayas is one of the leading areas from where many seamen are recruited. As many schools were damaged by this typhoon, I fear that there will be various negative impact in the future. In particular, if primary education at elementary and junior high schools is hindered, the situation could have a harmful ef-



fect on the Philippines' supply of seafarers."

In respect to the commencement of the program for supporting reconstruction efforts in Visayas and other afflicted areas, AMOSUP President Conrad Oca extended his gratitude on March

27 by sending a message of appreciation to the JSU. The AMOSUP is ready to begin a new project together with the JSU to help the most devastated areas with reconstruction efforts, he said in his letter. The union is now thinking carefully what support will be

most appropriate and most beneficial, he added.

The president also indicated that the AMOSUP had already kicked off rebuilding measures in stricken areas, commenting that assessments are being made on damaged buildings.

IMO weighs progress on security training for seafarers

The IMO Sub-Committee on Human Element, Training and Watch-keeping (HTW) at its first session on February 17-21, 2014, reviewed progress with the implementation of certification requirements related to security-awareness training and training for seafarers with designated security duties, in accordance with the STCW Convention and the STCW Code by Parties.

The Sub-Committee noted that for those seafarers who commenced an approved seagoing service prior to January 1, 2012 ended on January 1, 2014. The Sub-Committee was concerned that, after the end of the

transitional period there may be practical difficulties for seafarers to obtain necessary security certification required in accordance with regulation VI/6 of the STCW Convention and section A-VI/6, paragraphs 4 and 6 of the STCW Code.

The Sub-Committee was particularly concerned that large numbers of seafarers were reportedly unable to have access to approved training courses or unable to be issued certification of security related training. It further noted the current difficulties faced by the shipping community in implementing the amended provisions of the regulation.

Therefore, it urged all con-

cerned, in particular STCW Parties and Administrations, to do their utmost to ensure that certificates on security awareness training and training for seafarers with designated security duties are issued as soon as possible.

The Sub-Committee recognized that seafarers on board ships may not yet hold certification in security awareness training or training on designated security duties, and agreed that until July 1, 2015, in cases where a seafarer does not hold certification in security awareness training or training on designated security duties, it would be sufficient to accept compliance with section 13 of the International

Ship and Port Facility Security (ISPS) Code.

The Sub-Committee urged Port State Control (PSC) authorities to take the above factors into consideration when exercising control procedures in article X and regulation I/4 of the STCW Convention.

In this context, it recommended that administrations should inform their PSC authorities that, until July 1, 2015, even if a seafarer's certification with regard to the security awareness training or training for seafarers with designated security duties is not in accordance with the STCW Convention, as amended, it would be sufficient to accept compliance

with section 13 of the ISPS Code.

The Sub-Committee further recommended that administrations should also inform recognized organizations and recognized security organizations issuing ISM Code and ISPS Code certification under International Convention of Safety of Life at Sea, 1974 (SOLAS), as amended, that, until July 1, 2015, if a seafarer's certification is not in accordance with regulation VI/6 of the STCW Convention, as amended, and section A-VI/6, paragraphs 4 and 6 of the STCW Code, it would be sufficient to accept compliance with section 13 of the ISPS Code. (Source: SAFETY4SEA)

RP law puts agency at helm of deployment

The recent signing of Republic Act 10635 by Philippines President Benigno S. Aquino III is a significant development for the nation's maritime industry, which contributes over 225 billion pesos to the country's economy annually, Malacañang has said.

The act designated the Maritime Industry Authority (MARINA) as the country's lone agency responsible for oversight in the implementation of the 1978 International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (STCW), as amended, and other international agreements or covenants related thereto.

According to Presidential Communications Operations Office Secretary Herminio Coloma, Jr., who previously served at the Department of Transportation and Communications (DOTC), this law would finally address the concerns of international maritime organizations, particularly those based in Europe that employ thousands of seafarers from the Philippines.

Coloma said over 30 outfits are involved in the deployment of Filipino seafarers that the European community finds bothersome as it was not clear which agency holds the primary responsibility over them.

The law gives MARINA the authority to "assume all powers and functions of the Professional Regulation Commission, the Commission on Higher Education, the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority, the Department of Health and the National Telecommunications Commission relative to the issuance, validation, verification, correction, revocation or cancellation of certificates of competency, endorsement, proficiency and documentary evidence required of all seafarers and all such other matters pertaining to the implementation of the oversight in the implementation of the 1978 International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers." (PCOO/PND/hdc)

EU commits 'zero zero target' against piracy

The European Community Ship-owners' Associations (ECSA) has welcomed a commitment to maintaining naval security off the coast of Somalia.

Its decision was clarified to shipping industry representatives at a meeting in Brussels recently between the shipping industry and Maciej Popowski, chair of the Contact Group on Piracy off the Coast of Somalia and deputy secretary general of the European External Action Service (EEAS).

"The meeting made it clear what the priority is for the EU, and that is essentially that they

want a 'zero zero target', which means they want zero hostages and zero ships being kept by Somali pirates," said ECSA secretary general Patrick Verhoeven speaking to *IHS Maritime* this morning.

Asked about European Union concerns about the expense of the operation, Verhoeven said the EU currently believed vigilance was needed in the region and that the operation would aim to be "as effective as possible and see how they can reach results by the best possible means".

"I think it is clear for east Africa

that the commitment stays. I don't think they are loosening their guard or relaxing what is going on there," he told *IHS Maritime*. He added that "all the indications are there" that the EU Naval Force Operation Atalanta will be continued through to 2016, but that this was yet to receive approval by the European Council.

Europe will take an equally calculated approach to tackling maritime crime in west Africa, he said, noting that the priority demand of European policy makers was for "reliable data on the traffic in the region" and that

Europe would look at lessons learned from antipiracy work in Somalia to see if they could be applied in west Africa.

The next steps for the industry will be to gather and map information about shipping trade in west Africa, to facilitate an information reporting system to track incidents, and to raise awareness of the industry's security concerns. "We need to use every occasion possible to bring this to political attention, because there are a lot of things going on there," Verhoeven said. (Source: Sea-web)

ITF picks top 10 frequent deficiencies in MLC inspections

The International Transport Federation has provided a list of the top 10 most frequent deficiencies found on vessels under requirements of the Maritime Labour Convention 2006 (MLC). The vessels were examined from March to June 2013 by ICS Class inspectors by an ILO MLC inspector.

A great deal has been said about Seafarer Recruitment and Placement Services (SRPSs) under the MLC – this topic was discussed at length at our Superyacht Management Meeting; MLC, Careers and Recruitment, in Palma last April, following which the UK actually changed its legislation on the matter.

However, these three months of inspections revealed that a great deal of SRPSs were operating without the necessary licenses or certificates, highlighting that perhaps captains need to play a bigger role in ensuring the SRPS they choose to use is MLC certified.

One particularly interesting finding was that of Seafarer Employment Agreement (SEA) not being signed by both seafarer and shipowner. The signing of the SEA is arguably the most important Standard of the MLC in ensuring crewmembers receive sufficient rights as employees.

Another Standard that are concerned with is that of hours of work and rest. In discussing these regulations with SuperyachtNews, Captain David Slee of motoryacht Seaflower declared: "Yachts will either falsify hours-of-rest forms

or complete them correctly and fall short of the standard." And this seems to be the view of others, as improper records on board found itself in the top 10 deficiencies.

Financial security was another problem revealed, with death, long-term disability (due to an occupational injury, illness or hazard) and repatriation of seafarers found improperly (or not at all) documented.

With just over a month until the deadline of the Convention's implementation, which begins on 20 August, 2013, this is a very useful reminder to seafarers of the areas that are lacking but also of the fact that all the above and below mentioned areas are being checked upon with a great deal of scrutiny.

SuperyachtNews put this outcome to Garry Elliott, senior national secretary and head of membership and recruitment at maritime union Nautilus, who commented: "Some of the deficiencies outlined in the inspection of vessels whilst disappointing are not a surprise as owners, agents, employers and owner representatives on board come to grips with the requirements that are fast approaching on the MLC. Nautilus was involved directly with ensuring that key provisions of the MLC were applied to relevant vessels in the large yacht sector. An integral part of this is to ensure that the administrative procedures are in place for contractual

arrangements, work and rest hours, health and safety, crew accommodation, catering standards and an on-board complaints procedure. Obviously from this report via an MLC inspector it seems evident that some will fall short of providing these requirements.

"The industry and the yacht sector need to apply and create a level playing field for seafarer employment and in addition to giving yacht crew significant rights, should also come with responsibilities, especially for captains and officers, and ensure they know their role on board in ensuring that their vessel complies and does not run the risk of detention due to an administrative oversight."

When this information is noted alongside that surrounding the ports most likely to detain yachts, as discussed at our Port State Control and Security Superyacht Management Meeting in June, yacht managers, owners, captain and crew can have a better idea of what they can expect to happen, where they can expect this to happen and what they can expect to have inspected – a useful tool with just over a month to go until implementation of the MLC.

The top 10 deficiencies under the MLC

1. Name and address of "Shipowner" included in MLC certificate and Declaration of Maritime Labour Compliance (DMLC)

Part II are not according to the correct definition of "Shipowner" established by article II 1.(j) of MLC.

2. Medical certificates issued by medical personnel not recognized by the Panama Maritime Authority (Standard A1.2.4)

3. SRPS without license or certificate to operate (Standard A1.4.2; A1.4.3)

4. SEA not signed between seafarer and shipowner (Standard A2.1(a))

5. Manning agreement between shipowner and representative of shipowner (where SEA is signed by representative of shipowner) not available on board (Standard A2.1.1(a))

6. SEA not available in English language (Standard A2.1.2)

7. Records of daily hours of rest for use on board the ship not properly completed (Standard A2.3.12)

8. Documented evidence of shipowners' financial security to assure compensation in case of seafarer's death or long-term disability due to an occupational injury, illness or hazard not found on-board (Standard A4.2.1(b))

9. Documented evidence of shipowners' financial security for repatriation of seafarers not found on-board (Regulation 2.5.2)

10. Complaint procedures not found on board and personnel not familiarised with these procedures (Standard A5.1.5.2 and Guideline B5.1.5.1) (Source: SuperyachtNews.com)

VOICES from SEAFARERS



**Capt. Benedicto G. Aquino and Crew of
TRANS FUTURE 11**

We appreciate your visitation to give us important maritime information, various maritime updates and new trends in seafaring jobs. On behalf of my officers and crew, I wish the JSU more power to uphold seafarers' working conditions and welfare.



**Capt. Fernando C. Mesina and Crew of
M/V KEN EI**

MLC 2006 was felt by every member of the shipping communities with flying colors. These had focused on seafarers' welfare in particular which requires all parties concerned to comply. We perceived that the JSU staff had shown its strong dedication to the success of the implementation by their ship visitations. Thanks and keep up the good work.



**Capt. Rodolfo Magbanua and Crew of
MV MIHO**

We are so grateful to the souvenirs given to us by the JSU staff during their ship visitation. We are hoping that the JSU will strongly support the implementation of the Free Internet Access on board. God bless and good luck.



**C/E Wenmar Joseph R. De Villa and Crew of
MV IWAMI**

Thanks to the update of the JSU CBA copy, whose content were likely implemented onboard. We hope, with the introduction of the MLC 2006 will further improve the welfare services of the JSU to our fellow seafarers.



**Capt. Sherwin B. Sajonia and Crew of
M/V CAPE EMERALD**

As brothers in profession, the JSU staff had shown devotion in serving the cause and welfare of their fellow seafarers. During their ship visitation, we were delighted to know more about the MLC 2006 with their guidance and help. Rest assured of our support and cooperation in reaching your goals.



**Officers and Vietnamese crew of
MV ORIENTAL TOPAZ**

Conducting routine emergency drills is an essential task of seafarers' precaution against imminent risks of life at sea. We thank the JSU for the supply of life saving equipments (i.e. AED, water maker/purifier) and for its generous support of our welfare.



**C/O Thet Ko Ko and Crew of
MV SHIN KENRYU**

On behalf of the crew, I am glad and appreciative of the JSU staff's visitation of our vessel. We hope that this visitation will go on as mandated to safeguard our working condition and welfare in particular.



**Capt. Aristeo G. Jocson and Crew of
M/V EOS VICTORY**

We express gratitude to the JSU staff for their service and information rendered to all crew, and hopefully our union will push through to implement the installation of Wi-Fi internet connection onboard.



**C/E Edwin P. Suello and Crew of
MV BELLE MASUKA**

E-mail access for the crew has its own success, similarly may we request to improve and change this system into broadband Internet. It's a pleasure to take note, we were visited by the JSU staff.



**Capt. Arnel R. Daruca and Crew of
M/V ORIENTE CHALLENGER**

We heard from the JSU staff that the free e-mail access for the crew might be replaced by the broadband Internet in the future. We hope the JSU will push through with this kind of project to benefit their members in a quest for better communication.



**C/E Felix R. Galacgac and Crew of
AUSTRALIA MARU**

The dissemination of important updates about the CBA by the JSU staff had contributed a lot to our knowledge. We've known that welfare services and benefits were rendered to JSU members in various ways. We are hoping, after the implementation of the MLC 2006, our wages and living conditions should go fairly to everybody.



**Capt. Eric S. Villavicencio and Crew of
MV TANIKAZE**

The trend regarding broadband Internet is increasing and every seafarer is wishing to have at least one on board. This kind of system could lighten the lives of seafarers and further lessen the burden of communication with their families. We hope the JSU will support the introduction of this system.

ILO agrees on minimum wage for Able Seafarer

Maritime Employer representatives, coordinated by the International Shipping Federation (ISF), recently met with International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) counterparts at the International Labor Organization to review the ILO recommended minimum wage for the Able Seafarer. It was agreed that from January 1, 2015, the ILO minimum monthly basic wage for an AB is increased to US\$592 and from January 1, 2016, the basic wage is increased to \$614.

ISF spokesperson Arthur Bowring led the Shipowner Group in the discussions held on February 26-27, 2014 in Geneva. In his opening statement, Bowring reflected that the current figure of \$585 came into effect on December 31, 2013 and noted that the purpose of the meeting was to ensure the maintenance of a safety net for seafarers particularly from developing countries. He also referred to publications from UN bodies such as UNCTAD that underlined uncertainty in the global economy and challenges facing world trade and particularly oversupply of tonnage in the shipping industry. Bowring commented, "We believe the decision taken is an appropriate one that gives shipowners adequate notice to be prepared for the impact of agreed changes going forward to 2016." (Source: *Maritime Professional*)

New customs rules for Japan in place

The pre-departure Filing Rules require all vessel operators and NVOCC's to electronically submit more detailed cargo information on all containerized cargoes due to be unloaded

at a Japanese port no later than 24 hours before the vessel's departure from the port of loading.

The previous rules (the pre-arrival filing) only required vessel operators to submit less

detailed cargo information to customs 24 hours prior to the vessel's arrival at a Japanese port for unloading.

Empty containers, cargoes loaded on platform containers and

transit cargoes are exempted from the new pre-departure rules for the time being.

More information may be found at the UK P&I Club's website. (Source: *SAFETY4SEA*)

Communications could affect hiring, retention

When we think about retention at sea, there are some positives for the life of a seafarer. According to a new survey, good pay, independence, love for the sea, travel and local/family tradition have been cited as the most important factors in choosing the maritime profession.

So far so good. But this has been tempered with concerns that poor communication with friends and family, social isolation, separation from family, poor living conditions and insufficient rest hours are the most likely reasons for seafarers to switch to work ashore.

Yes, poor onboard internet access has emerged as one of the most important factors for seafar-

ers determining whether to remain working at sea, a new study had found.

Limited access to proper communications to shore was the most common reason for feeling discriminated. Indeed more than 97% said the provision of adequate facilities was crucial for the wellbeing of crew members, with almost half stating that they communicate with their families at least once a day.

The survey also showed the current patchy level of onboard communications provision for seafarers. Just 36.6% had access to the internet, 50.7% had access to emails and 67.9% had access to sat phones for crew calling, and

more than one-quarter (27.7%) had no email access at all.

Almost one-third said they spend between 10% to 20% of their monthly salary on communicating while at sea – and 10% spend more than 20% of their salaries.

The survey also showed links between ship type and the standards of onboard communications. "The more specialized the ship, the less the percentage of those with no access to free communication," the report notes. "Onboard general cargoships and bulk carriers almost half the crew have no access."

The report, based on a survey of more than 500 seafarers of 24 dif-

ferent nationalities, was produced by researchers taking part in the "KnowMe project". This is a three-year, 1.5 million euro EU-funded initiative to investigate ways of improving the image of the shipping industry and to enhance the attractiveness of maritime careers.

The study concludes that, combined with a "more coherent and visionary approach" to human resources in shipping, the provision of improved communications facilities onboard would deliver a substantial increase in the seafarer retention rate...so get your satellite domes polished, no Internet could equal no seafarers! (Source: *Shiptalk*)

Lloyd's Register, UK P&I Club develop apps for MLC checklist

Ship crews will be able to check whether they are meeting legislation through the new ISM & ISPS pocket checklist app from Lloyd's Register and UK P&I Club.

The groups have also updated the popular ILO MLC smartphone app. Both apps are free and are available for iPhone, iPad, and Android devices.

"In a fully paperless operation, the apps enable ships' crews and

their managers to view necessary legislative and regulatory requirements, save multiple checklists, check off completed activities, add essential notes and send the completed checklists via email," the companies said.

In developing the apps, Lloyd's Register and UK P&I Club analyzed port state control-reported ISM, ISPS and ILO MLC deficiencies. The software was then

designed to help counter the risk of detentions by helping companies to comply with legislative and regulatory requirements, protecting their fleet reputation and getting the most out of company resources.

UK Club loss prevention director Karl Lumbers explained: "Just as the MLC 2006 convention aimed to rationalize the complex previous legislation relating to seafarers, we thought it made sense to

simplify the compliance process as much as possible via the guidance of a checklist.

"Both these smartphone apps should empower the master and senior officers to make their ships compliant, guiding them through the necessary steps and providing an immediate note of what has been implemented and what remains outstanding." (Source: *Seaweb*)

Rolls-Royce designs unmanned cargo ship

First came Google's driverless cars, and then Amazon's drone-delivery experiment. Now Rolls-Royce is going much, much bigger on the unmanned front with the design of remote-controlled cargo ships.

Via a \$4.8 million grant from the European Union to the Maritime Unmanned Navigation project, Rolls-Royce's Blue Ocean development team designed a remote-controlled cargo ship to help "solve some of the problems of

crowded European waters and increasing environmental requirements," Mashable reports. The unmanned ships are also a big cost-saver for obvious reasons—no staff to be paid, and no creature comforts like air conditioning and sewage needed, which can cost up to \$3,000 a day.

Oskar Levander, Rolls-Royce's vice president of innovation, engineering and technology, said the new ships will also be safer than cargo ships of the past

and create less pollution. While that's all well and great, there's one big problem with the innovation: Simon Bennett, a spokesman for the International Chamber of Shipping, told *Bloomberg* that the boats can't leave port because current international law forbids unmanned ships.

The International Transport Workers' Federation, which represents around 600,000 ship workers, is unsurprisingly against the shipping innovation. "It can-

not and will never replace the eyes, ears and thought processes of professional seafarers," Dave Heindel, chairman of the ITF's seafarers' section in London, told *Bloomberg*.

"The human element is one of the first lines of defense in the event of machinery failure and the kind of unexpected and sudden changes of conditions in which the world's seas specialize." (Source: *Globalperspectives*)

Skuld warns of savvy fraudsters Shipping skills crunch ahead

As part of their new initiative against maritime fraud, Skuld P&I Club has highlighted the fact that fraudsters are also involved in schemes against seafarers.

The club notes that fraudsters are becoming more and more ingenious in their design and execution of scheme, including the use of modern technology, such as computer hacking, but sometimes tried and tested "old school" methods, such as document fraud, work just as well.

Fraudsters will avail themselves of any opportunity that modern technology may provide to assist with

their criminal designs. Constant vigilance, and understanding of modern media and IT, plus the willingness to follow through are essential to combat such attempts at fraud.

Another type of fraud, fake job fraud, targets seafarers. Fraudsters create fake websites and employment agencies that promise jobs to seafarers, and these may come with alleged connections to major shipping companies and technical managers. Indeed if someone wants money in return for a job, it is a scam, so be careful! (Source: *Shiptalk*)

Shipping companies do not regard investing in employee skill levels as a priority, despite widespread concern over the shortage of suitably skilled employees across the transport sector, a survey has found.

The Way Ahead survey, conducted by London-headquartered law firm Norton Rose Fulbright, found that only 6% of respondents believed that investing in their workforce would be the best way of growing their business, even though 13% said a lack of qualified people was hampering the future efficiency of the sector.

Other areas picked out as significant were overcapacity and changes to sourcing finance for new assets.

Harry Theochari, Norton Rose Fulbright global head of transport, said the \$170 billion available from all sources for investment in shipping/offshore in 2007 had dwindled to \$110 billion in 2012.

And while China was narrowly ahead of western Europe and North America as the most popular market for investment opportunity, "the rest of the BRICs have fallen out of favor", Theochari said. (Source: *Seaweb*)

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Publisher: Hiroyuki Tachikawa

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