



# Sweeping nationwide operation targets ships over ITF compliance

*The All Japan Seamen's Union (JSU) on Sept. 2-4 staged its 95th nationwide campaign against flag-of-convenience (FOC) ships and ports of convenience (POCs) at many ports across Japan*

## Team inspects ships at Chiba, Funabashi

The All Japan Seamen's Union (JSU) on Sept. 2-4 staged its 95th nationwide campaign against flag-of-convenience (FOC) ships and ports of convenience (POCs) at many ports across Japan. A mission from headquarters in Tokyo inspected ships moored at the ports of Chiba and Funabashi on Sept. 3-4.

On Sept. 3, members of the mission—Mr. Shigeru Fujiki, International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) inspector from the National Council of Dockworkers' Union of Japan (Zenkoku Kowan) and three staff members from the JSU's Tokyo head office—inspected two vessels anchored at the ports of Chiba and Funabashi.

At the Port of Chiba, the four inspectors met with the Filipino shipmaster of Hong Kong-flagged



JSU and ITF inspectors meet with ship officers during the union campaign.

full containership *Megah Enam* (9,593 gross tons). They distributed among crewmembers copies of booklets produced by the ITF and looked over a list of crewmembers and other documents. Even when asked questions about their wages, the crewmembers just answered that they get paid higher than the minimum rates set by the ITF, never

mentioning specific figures. As such, the JSU could not learn details of the issue. As the four could not find a certificate of compliance with ITF requirements, they gave a warning statement to the captain and told him to send it by fax to the operator of the containership.

At the Port of Funabashi, the JSU mission visited *Giant Ocean*

(3,935 gross tons), a general cargo freighter registered in Hong Kong, to look at the ship's specifications, a list of crewmembers and other documents.

As for mooring, cargo handling and other onboard equipment, the vessels did not have serious enough defects to require port-state-control (PSC) inspections.

## Important to continue drive with persistence

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The Hokkaido Regional Office of the All Japan Seamen's Union (JSU) on Sept. 2-4 joined the union's 95th nationwide campaign against flag-of-convenience (FOC) ships and ports of convenience (POCs). Mounted at the ports of Muroran and Tomakomai, the three-day movement was conducted by a group of eight members, who were from, among other organizations, the JSU's leadership, the Japanese Confederation of Port and Transport Workers' Unions (Koun Domei) and private enterprises' work committee members.

During the campaign, the eight members inspected a total of five vessels to see whether or not they carried certificates, such as that of compliance with the requirements of the International Labour Organization (ILO)'s Maritime Labour Convention, 2006 (MLC). They also checked whether the ships were outfitted appropriately with rescue, cargo handling and other required equipment.

On Sept. 2, the JSU mission went on board *Grand Muse* and *Alishan Blossom*, both of which were moored at the Port of Muroran. *Grand Muse* was discovered not to carry a certificate of compliance with International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) requirements, the mission issued a warning and urged the ship master to send it to the operating carrier. The inspection on *Alishan Blossom* was made jointly with the JSU's Ehime Branch.

On Sept. 3, *Wen Xiang* and *Sky Phoenix* were inspected at the Port of Tomakomai. As *Wen Xiang* did not have a certificate of compliance with ITF requirements, either, the JSU inspectors took a similar

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## Shipowners gain awareness of employment, labor conditions

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The All Japan Seamen's Union (JSU)'s 95th nationwide campaign against flag-of-convenience (FOC) ships and ports of convenience (POCs) in the Osaka area was staged on Sept. 2-4 at the ports of Osaka and Sakai Senboku. A

team of 38 inspectors—15 from the JSU's leadership, three from work committees and 20 from the Japanese Confederation of Port and Transport Workers' Unions (Koun Domei)—looked into 14 vessels.

During the three-day campaign, the JSU recommended that the owners of eight FOC vessels that were not covered by

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Union members board one of 14 vessels during their drive to confirm agreements.

## Seafarers on inspected vessel confess they need labor union

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The All Japan Seamen's Union

(JSU)'s Tohoku Regional Office on Sept. 2-4 took part in the union's 95th nationwide campaign against flag-of-convenience (FOC) ships and ports of convenience (POCs) at the ports of

Sendai Shiogama, Ishinomaki and Akira.

In the three days, inspections were carried out on board nine vessels by 11 officers from the regional office. Many of the ships

anchored at the ports during the campaign period were deployed by South Korean shipowners that had concluded International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) labor

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## MPHRP attends ASEAN piracy workshop in RP

The Maritime Piracy Humanitarian Response Program (MPHRP) attended and participated in this year's Expanded ASEAN Seafarer Training Counter Piracy Workshop (EAST-CP), Manila, Philippines, September 24-25.

The workshop aimed to tackle and update the current piracy situation around the world and to review a number of recommended actions and arrive at a consensus to improve seafarer welfare and safety.

The training was once again organized by the U.S. Department of Transportation—Maritime Administration (MARAD) and the Maritime Industry Authority (MARINA) of the Philippines, and drew together delegations from different countries in South-east Asia, Australia, New Zealand, Russia and the U.S.

The first day was opened by the Executive Director of the U.S. MARAD, Joel Szabat, and ANGKLA Chairman, Cong. Jesulito Manalo, followed by a keynote address by Sec. Joseph Abaya of the Philippines' Department of Transportation and Communications, on behalf of the Philippine President Benigno Aquino III.

Representatives from the International Maritime Bureau, International Maritime Organization, International Chamber of Shipping & Philippine Transmarine Carriers, Inc., and the MPHRP presented to the delegates.

Assistant Director Cyrus Mody of the IMB represented MPHRP in introducing the Programme and emphasising its primary goal. Mody also set the scene in the second day as he talked about seafarer experiences with armed robbery and piracy.

Discussing MPHRP's programs and services, Welfare Responder Lorenzo Reyes spoke on behalf of Regional Director for Philippines/South-east Asia Rancho Villavicencio, followed by an emotional first hand account on piracy of a guest survivor.

Continuing to observe the workshop's aim, representatives from Holman Fenwick Willan, International Labour Organization, Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia and the Maritime Academy of Asia and the Pacific addressed preventive measures to fight piracy while highlighting the importance of preparation and cooperation during the process. A study of piracy in the South-east Asia region was also delivered by a cadet from the International Maritime College, Kasetsart University in Thailand. (Source: MPHRP- Safety4sea)

# IMO celebrates World Maritime Day

World Maritime Day is celebrated every year, providing an opportunity to focus attention on the importance of shipping safety, maritime security and the marine environment and to emphasize a particular aspect of IMO's work. Individual governments were encouraged to mark the day, on a date of their choosing but usually in the last week of September.

Each World Maritime Day has its own theme, which is reflected in IMO's work throughout the year. In 2014, the attention has centred on the need for ratification, widespread entry into force and effective implementation of IMO conventions, in order to ensure tangible benefits emerge from the often-lengthy process leading to the adoption of an IMO treaty instrument.

In his World Maritime Day message, IMO Secretary-General Koji Sekimizu said that the theme had enabled IMO to make genuine progress towards ratification, entry into force and implementation of all IMO conventions—but

especially those which have yet to be widely accepted.

"For an IMO convention to be properly effective, it needs early entry into force, widespread ratification, effective implementation, stringent oversight of compliance and vigorous enforcement. Even those conventions that command almost universal coverage of the global fleet, such as SOLAS and MARPOL, only have teeth if they are backed up by an effective implementation infrastructure at the national level," Mr. Sekimizu said.

In launching this theme at the beginning of 2014, IMO Secretary-General Koji Sekimizu began by posing a series of rhetorical questions: what is the point of working for months, even for years, to develop and adopt an international convention if that convention doesn't enter into force? What is the point of all the technical work, the debates and discussion, the negotiations and compromises required to create an instrument that can be universally adopted if that instrument does not then become part of the inter-

national legal framework?

The answer, of course, is that there is very little point at all. It is, he remarked, like writing a book that nobody reads, or making a film that nobody sees. It's only half the job—less than half, in fact, when it comes to IMO conventions. For an IMO convention to be properly effective, it needs early entry into force, widespread ratification, effective implementation, stringent oversight of compliance and vigorous enforcement.

IMO has paid particular attention during this year to the Ballast Water Management Convention, the Hong Kong Convention on ship recycling, the Cape Town Agreement of 2012 to implement the Torremolinos Protocol on fishing vessel safety, the 2010 Protocol to the HNS Convention and the Nairobi Convention on wreck removal. There has been welcome success this year in terms of new ratifications, and the Nairobi Convention will enter into force in 2015. However, much remains to be done.

It is the Member States alone

who have the ability to bring instruments into effect, but IMO's extensive technical cooperation program helps support Member States that may lack resources, expertise or both to meet their obligations. The forthcoming mandatory audit scheme for Member States will also be an important tool for assessing Member States' performance in meeting their obligations and responsibilities as flag, port and coastal States under the relevant IMO treaties.

United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon also issued a message for World Maritime Day, recalling the "often unheralded but always vital contribution by international shipping to peoples and communities all over the world".

"At a time when the world is beset by conflict and crisis, it is easy to forget that, day in and day out, the international shipping industry works quietly and efficiently to keep the wheels of global trade in motion and ensure the timely delivery of the goods and commodities," Mr. Ban said. (Source: Safety4sea)

## Danish Maritime Days focus on present and future seafarers

Seafarers play a vital role in the global economy of the future as well as in the global maritime industry. A healthy and safe work environment must secure a continuous stable influx to the industry.

Shipowners are employing people from all over the world in an industry that operates globally and does not know the concept of country borders.

The global nature of the maritime sector puts great demands on the shipping companies to ensure a safe and healthy work environment for all seafarers—no matter where they come from and where they set sail. It is the seafarers on board the ships that ensure the shipping industry's dominance in World trade.

### Seafarers in focus

That is why the United Federation

of Danish Workers; CO-SEA; and the Danish Shipowners' Association in collaboration with the Danish Maritime Authority will be focusing on working conditions in the global maritime industry at the conference "Conference on the Seafarer as part of Global Quality Shipping". The conference was part of Danish Maritime Days and took place on October 6.

"Seafarers play a crucial role in the global economy and in the international shipping industry. We have to ensure that the next generation of seafarers have attractive working conditions at sea. We need to make sure that we have safe and healthy work environments at sea, to make young people choose a maritime career out of passion and in the expecta-

tions that the maritime sector is a place where they can have a fruitful career, which will utilize their full potential," said the organizers behind the event.

### MLC in the real world

An important step towards a more healthy and safe work environment in the global maritime cluster was taken with the ratification of the Maritime Labour Convention (MLC) of 2006.

The MLC entered into force in August 2013; the "Conference on the Seafarer as part of Global Quality Shipping" looked at what has happened in the year that has passed since ratification.

"The ILO-convention regarding the working conditions of the seafarers (MLC 2006) is a unique accomplishment that combines no

less than 37 ILO-conventions and corresponding recommendations in just one set of rules. The MLC-convention was shaped uniquely for the shipping industry, making it the only business sector in the world that has a shared international framework dealing with all aspects of employment," the organizers concluded.

"But the MLC-convention only offered a framework that we jointly have to comply with, realizing the quality objectives that the rules express. It is actual MLC compliance on board of the ships and in the shipping companies that is the heart of the matter," the organizers add and point out that the conference will have the practical implementation of MLC in focus. (Source: Danish Maritime Days)

## Tohoku: 9 cargo ships among those checked for compliance

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agreements with seafarers' unions.

Besides South Koreans, the crewmembers of the ships included those from Myanmar and Vietnam as well. The 11 JSU officers went aboard the nine cargo freighters to see if they had a certificate of compliance with the requirements of the International Labour Organization (ILO)'s Maritime Labour Convention, 2006 (MLC) and other required documents. They also endeavored to gather information on labor

and other onboard conditions.

The crewmembers of *Ark*, which flies the Belizean flag, included eight Russian seafarers. The inspectors exchanged information with them to find out if they were affiliated with the Seafarers Union of Russia (SUR), an organization under the ITF. While talking with them, some of the Russian seafarers revealed that they needed a labor union. The JSU, therefore, gave them its booklet and other materials to ensure the importance of the FOC and POC campaigns was clearly understood.



Russian seafarers on board a Belizean flagged vessel given literature on union efforts during the recent FOC and POC campaign.



VOICES *from* SEAFARERS

**Capt. Evaristo H. Arsenio & Crew of  
MV LOVELAND ISLAND**

The Filipino seafarers' documentations will soon be handled by the Philippine Marina. We are calling on the JSU to find a better solution to meddle directly or indirectly in proposing for smooth processing to avoid cramming and delay of the members' embarkation.



**Capt. Rogelio Macabio Napoles & Crew of  
MV ATLANTIC FAIRY**

The future documentations of Filipino seafarers will come into disarray if there are no proper planning and facilities from the government side. We kindly ask the assistance of our beloved union to take action if possible for the sake of its members' interests.



**Capt. Sesinando S. Villamor Jr. & Crew of  
MV GRAND MARK**

It is a pleasure to hear from the visiting staff of the JSU that the recent re-negotiation of seafarers' wage increase was officially sealed by the ITF and shipowners for another three successive years. Thanks a lot for the job well done.



**Capt. Pablo D. Discaya & Crew of  
MV AYE EVOLUTION**

We have known that the Retirement Pay Plan and the Provident Fund have the same concept, likely they just differ on the agreement of the seafarers' vessel of engagements. Whereas the membership fee is non-refundable as retirement pay, this serves as funds for the operational expenses of the union in helping the members. Thanks to the reliable source of information and regards to all.



**Capt. Mamerto Indico Estampador & Crew of  
MV FRONTIER FALCON**

Over the past decade, the JSU has already done a lot of things in terms of the seafarers' welfare. As for our goodwill, we need a worthy source of communication to connect with our family in real time.



**Capt. Teresito Cabahug Barroga & Crew of  
MV CHERRY ISLAND**

JSU/AMOSUP Mariners' Home management should avoid the congestion of the facility. Members, who are really in need of place to stay must be given priority. We are hoping the JSU would take charge of the ongoing operation in fairness to members' admission aside from non-members.



**Capt. Ernesto T. Chua & Crew of  
MV EMERALD STAR**

Wi-Fi connectivity or broadband Internet has proven to be a dependable communication tool. We call on the JSU's attention to upgrade our existing free e-mail access into this system.



**Capt. Remarte Mongcal Tabaosares & Crew of  
MV DHUN**

On behalf of the crew, we would like to express our appreciation to the staff of the JSU for visiting us at Kawasaki Port. In spite of our hectic schedules and remote location, they had shown their dedication in supporting the cause of seafarers' welfare. God bless and more power to all.



**Capt. Rommel Maralit Sumadsad & Crew of  
MV CAPE ACACIA**

As members of the JSU and AMOSUP, we maintain our relation in harmony and to be in top shape at all times. We will be grateful enough if the JSU could extend assistance to improve our training programs and well-being.



**Capt. Mark Anthony S. Verdillo & Crew of  
MV ROYAL ACCORD**

After knowing that there is a salary increase every year for the next three consecutive years, members are encouraged to staying longer with their company. We appreciate the role of the JSU in ensuring this important welfare of seafarers.



**Officers & Crew of MV IRIS SKY**

The Japanese government's ratification of the MLC 2006 had reminded shipowners of the welfares of seafarers who are sailing into Japanese ports. Japanese PSC and the JSU



**Capt. Rudyard Abello Villaruel & Crew of  
MV KEN KON**

Broadband is gaining more accessibility onboard ships compared to the previously used Telex. Signals are precisely amplified to the desire of the receiver and sender. May we request that the JSU campaign in upgrading "free e-mail access" of the crew to "broadband Internet connection".



# Unpaid wages hit newbies, uninformed hardest

Unpaid wages is a chronic problem for shipping and supply chain workers, according to frontline labour experts.

Ray Barker, head of operations for the International Seafarers Welfare and Assistance Network (ISWAN), told IHS Maritime today that last year 28.5% (451) of the 1,585 problem types raised with ISWAN were to do with unpaid wages: "Often seafarers are not paid for many months," he said, adding that complaints were frequently multi-layered, includ-

ing aggravating factors like the need for repatriation assistance following a ship's abandonment or arrest.

Entry level seafarers: Ratings (seafarers without a certificate of competence), and first level seafarers known as Ordinary Seamen are most badly hit by this problem, said Barker, because "they have fewer recognized skills and so have less bargaining power".

The countries most affected, he said, are the Philippines and India. While high populations offer a potential "demographic dividend"

of youth, at the level of an individual's life, this can translate into a ruthlessly competitive work environment.

In this situation, individuals have to "take what they can get and hope that it will be OK", said Barker. This can mean entrapment in contractual agreements that, once at sea, are broken.

Officers (deck and engineering) face this problem less, said Barker, "because they have more knowledge of their rights, know more about contracts, and have more ability to check on potential em-

ployers". There is also a shortage of higher ranked professionals, giving them greater bargaining power, he added.

Unpaid wages catalyze survival crises, especially in the case of seafarers with dependent families. ISWAN usually refers these cases to the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) or the national union, said Barker, "who will fight to get the salaries paid; however it might take months. In such cases they normally get their back wages."

Last year, ITF supply chain in-

spectors collected US\$38M in unpaid wages across 52 countries and 9,200 inspections. Speaking at the International Chamber of Shipping annual conference in London on September 10, ITF general secretary Stephen Cotton said that the ITF will be expanding its inspections to ports. While praising shipping's "maturity and ability" in the negotiations that led to the Maritime Labour Convention (a first for any industry sector), Cotton conceded: "There are still some areas of the industry where we have work to do." (Source: Sea-web)

# Mandatory electronic information exchange on horizon

The Facilitation Committee (FAL), meeting for its 39th session, approved a revised annex to the Convention on Facilitation of International Maritime Traffic (FAL), 1965, as amended, following a comprehensive five-year review aimed at modernizing the Convention. To be circulated with a view to adoption at the Committee's next session (FAL 40, scheduled for March/April 2016), the revised annex would introduce the mandatory electronic exchange of information on cargo, crew and passengers.

The FAL convention includes, in its annex, "Standards" and "Recommended Practices" on

formalities, documentary requirements and procedures, which should be applied on arrival, stay and departure to the ship itself, and to its crew, passengers, baggage and cargo.

Important proposed changes in the revised Annex include the introduction of a new standard relating to the obligation of public authorities to establish systems for the electronic exchange of information, within a period of three years after the adoption of the amendments. There would be a transitional period of not less than 12 months from the date of the introduction of such systems to make the use of electronic

transmissions mandatory, during which period paper and electronic documents would be allowed.

A further recommended practice encourages the use of the "single window" concept to enable all the information required by public authorities in connection with the arrival, stay and departure of ships, persons and cargo, to be submitted without duplication.

Other revised standards cover shore leave and access to shore-side facilities for crew, including the addition of a paragraph in the standard to say that there should be no discrimination, in respect of shore leave, on grounds of nation-

ality, race, colour, sex, religion, political opinion, or social origin, and irrespective of the flag State of the ship on which seafarers are employed, engaged or work.

Standards and recommended practices relating to stowaways are also updated, to include references to relevant sections of the International Ship and Port Facilities' Security (ISPS) Code. A new standard requires Governments, where appropriate, to incorporate into their national legislation legal grounds to allow prosecution of stowaways, attempted stowaways and any individual or company aiding a stowaway or an attempted stowaway with the intention to

facilitate access to the port area, any ship, cargo or freight containers.

The IMO Standardized Forms (FAL forms), which cover IMO General Declaration; Cargo Declaration; Ship's Stores Declaration; Crew's Effects Declaration; Crew List, Passenger List and Dangerous Goods will be updated.

Definitions will also be revised where needed and references to persons will be made gender neutral ("his/her" instead of "his").

The new revised annex could enter into force 15 months after adoption, under the tacit acceptance procedure. (Source: IMO)



The JSU team boards a suspect vessel for inspection.

## Hokkaido: Goal to get signed agreements

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measure, recommending that the captain forward a warning statement to his employer company. The inspectors joined hands with the JSU's ITF coordinator, as *Sky Phoenix* belongs to the fleet of a Japanese shipowner.

On Sept. 4, the JSU delegation

boarded *Van Star* for a safety check and to confirm if there are certificates of compliance on board. No major problems were found on *Van Star*, as none of the certificates it had expired.

The JSU team held a meeting to sum up its activities during the campaign, exchanging views on points of reflection for future events.

The members agreed that it is important to continue the FOC and POC campaign, and that they will work persistently to have agreements concluded.

When the agreements were reached, the Hokkaido Regional Office's 95th campaign against FOC ships and POCs came to an end.

## Osaka: Seeking to work with local labor unions in future

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the ITF agreements to conclude them with labor unions as soon as possible, issuing warning statements.

As for ships whose owners were in the process of updating their agreements, the inspectors checked to see if they really had implemented them.

Among the ships subject to the onboard inspections, because so many were cooperative that the JSU mission strongly felt that awareness was growing among shipowners of employment and other labor conditions.

In close partnership with other regional offices and branches, the Osaka Branch successfully concluded the International Bargaining Forum (IBF) Framework Total Crew Cost (TCC) Agreement with some of the ships.

In conducting port-state-control (PSC) and related inspections, it was found that even aged vessels were well maintained, having no sanitary problems, thanks partly to the implementation of the

Maritime Labour Convention, 2006 (MLC) by the International Labour Organization (ILO). As such, there were no ships entering the ports during the campaign period that could have been protest targets.

The Osaka Branch ended this year's campaign after deciding to continue cooperation with relevant local labor unions at the next campaign.

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