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Stranded Crew

Go home

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Slump sparks rise in crew problems

Alarm after rig grounds

A major salvage operation got under way last month after a semi-submersible rig ran aground off the west coast of Scotland.

The Marshall Islands-flagged Transocean Winner grounded on the Isle of Lewis after losing its connection to a Dutch support vessel.

The Maritime & Coastguard Agency (MCA) said a team of experts from Smit Salvage were undertaking damage assessments and transferring fuel oil above the waterline before planning the recovery of the rig.

Hugh Shaw, the secretary of state's representative for maritime salvage and intervention, told BBC Alba that it was likely to be several weeks before any attempt to refloat Transocean Winner is made. The incident has sparked renewed calls for the UK government to reverse its cuts in the nationwide fleet of emergency towing vessels see page 40.

Picture: Andrew Milligan/PA

Inside

Crews for the 21st Century

The first results of a global project to tackle the gender imbalance at sea page 09

Holidays with less harm A Japanese NGO is planning to build the greenest-ever cruiseshiprace page 10

Nautilus has expressed concern at new figures showing a marked increase in seafarer welfare problems - including unpaid wages, bullying and harassment and repatriation and abandonment.

The annual report of the International Seafarers Welfare and Assistance Network (ISWAN) highlights a 17% increase in casework last year — and warns that crews are paying a heavy price for the downturn in the global shipping industry, with a 27% rise in the number of seafarers being assisted.

ISWAN runs the SeafarerHelp service and the Nautilus 24/7 assistance programme and says that both the number of cases and the number of seafarers helped have more than tripled since 2011. Last year, its specialist teams dealt with 2,240 new cases involving a total of 9,786 seafarers of 86 different nationalities.

Part of the growth is the result of increased awareness of the services, ISWAN's report says, and seafarers also seem to be more confident in raising issues following the introduction of the Maritime Labour Convention.

However, it warns, cost-cutting by owners in response to the industry downturn is the main factor fuelling the increase in complaints from crew members. 'Unfortunately the economic outlook for 2016 does not look good for the maritime industry and so we expect that it will be a difficult year for seafarers as well,' it says. Requests for information was the most common reason for contacting SeafarerHelp during 2015 (17% of cases), followed by failure to pay wages (16%), help with seeking employment (15%) and problems with repatriation (10.5%).

ISWAN said that cases of bullying and harassment increased from 2.8% to 3.8% last year, while problems with living conditions onboard rose from 2.5% to 3%. Instances of abandonment of ships and seafarers increased from 0.6% to 0.9% of all casework.

The report notes that while such cases might appear numerically small, they indicate that large parts of the shipping industry had a difficult time last year. 'It seems that some owners and agents tried to keep costs down by cutting corners, and seafarers suffered as a result,' it adds.

The report suggests that reduc-

tions in the number of seafarers reporting health problems, making claims about compensation and reporting unfair dismissal may be a sign that they are reluctant to raise such problems with employers because of worries about job security.

It also notes that while there is now increased attention being paid to problems of social isolation, stress, depression and mental health, seafarers are often reluctant to mention these when seeking help — again reflecting a concern that it might harm their employment prospects.

'If such issues are being hidden, they could result in worse situations for both the seafarer and the company, such as a long-term mental health issue, suicide or poor decision-making that puts

the ship or other seafarers at risk,' the report warns.

Nautilus general secretary Mark Dickinson commented: 'It is worrying to see an increase in the number of problems being experienced by seafarers and ISWAN is right to warn of the links to cost-cutting by operators. There certainly appears to be strong evidence of a rise in abandonments and unpaid wages, not to mention the increased fragility

of the maritime labour market. 'Taken together with the latest port state control statistics showing a sharp increase in the number of ships with deficiencies related to MLC requirements, it's

clear that the support provided by SeafarerHelp and Nautilus 24/7 is more important than ever,'he added.



Our future starts today **Technology** is transforming the way shipping operates — page 10

INTERNATIONAL

shortreports

'PARTY' ROW: the Swedish seafarers' union SEKO is preparing legal action against a ferry company, claiming harassment and bullying of crew members working onboard the Stockholm archipelago ferry Norrskär. They criticised management for calling police to break up what was described as 'a late-night party' onboard the vessel. The 'intruders' were the last passengers leaving the ship and the 'party' consisted of crew members eating an evening meal after their shift.

CRUISE CALL: the United Nations has warned that Venice could be placed on Unesco's list of endangered heritage sites if Italy fails to ban cruiseships and large tankers from transiting the city's lagoon and the Giudecca Canal by February 2017. The world heritage committee has expressed 'extreme concern' at the impact of cruiseships on the environment of the lagoon and the damage being caused to the cultural and historical legacy of the city.

FAKE DOCTOR: a nurse who posed as a doctor and treated more than 1,300 passengers while working on an Aida cruiseship for 10 months has been sent to prison for three years by a German court. Judges said that while the man falsely represented his credentials, he did not appear to have caused any harm to patients and one witness even testified that he was an exemplary ship's doctor.

SPANISH SERVICE: the Italian operator Grimaldi has deployed the 43-year-old ro-pax AF Claudia Prima on its Leghorn-Barcelona route. The 14,975gt vessel has been renamed Caribbean Galaxy. Meanwhile, rival firm Moby Line is considering a service from Italy to Barcelona as the first phase of its plans to expand ferry freight routes outside Italy.

GROUNDING PROBE: authorities

in Norway have launched an investigation after the Maltese-flagged cruiseship Horizon grounded on a sandbank in Geiranger Fjord while entering the port of Stavanger. The 47,427gt vessel was reported to have suffered no damage but had to be re-floated with assistance from two harbour tugs.

ITALIAN APPEAL: the

organisations representing Italian ship masters and officers have made a joint appeal with the national ship managers' association to the government to bring in a special benefits system for seafarers i recognition of the particular demands of the profession.

BOX MERGER: Germany's Hapag-Lloyd and the Dubai-based United Arab Shipping Company SAG (UASC) have confirmed a merger agreement that will create the fifth largest container shipping fleet in the world. The combined company will have 237 ships with a total 1.6m TEU capacity.

MEGA MARSEILLES: the French port of Marseille Fos will be able to handle the largest cruiseships following the completion of a $\in 64m$ expansion project. Last year, more than 170 ships of 300m and above visited the port.

Greece urged to step up training

Report calls for upgrades of nautical colleges as Cyprus opens new centre

seafaring has urged the country's government to boost investment in maritime research found that tourism was of the island's shipping services as more and more of maritime colleges to bring them up to date a far more attractive job prospect sector. with technological developments in the shipping industry.

And the study has also called for the country's shipowners to family (65%) and not wanting to launch a major new programme to combat a lack of interest by young people in careers in the shipping industry.

accountancy firm Ernst & Young, points to evidence that young people have a negative view of maritime employment. Only 6% of 1,000 people aged between 16 and 30 said they would like to work in shipping — even though to keep pace with the reality of 58% were aware of the industry's modern-day operations. economic importance and 47%

A new report on Greek described it as a dynamic sector. unemployment in Greece, the for young people. Reasons for not pursuing a career at sea included long absences from home and

be 'locked up in a boat' (40%). The report said Greek owners should adopt 'best practice'

recruitment policies to promote The report, published by the seafaring and to address negative perceptions of life at sea. It also courses, and during the second urged the government to restore funding to maritime academies, warning that problems of understaffing and outdated infrastructure mean that training is failing

nautical school in a drive to skilled human resources is at the Despite high levels of youth develop its seafaring skills base very core of economic growth to meet the long-term demands

> The first students at the Cyprus Maritime Academy will begin their studies this month following four-year degree programmes in nautical science, nautical engineering, and nautical electric engineering.

It is hoped that up to 40 students will be part of the inaugural year of their studies they will undergo practical training with Cyprus-based shipping companies

Transport minister Marios Demetriades said the academy training cadets and scholarships was 'an important milestone' Cyprus has opened its first for Cyprus. 'The availability of

and employment in the sector activities become knowledge dependent,' he added. 'Therefore, access to high quality maritime education and training should be on top of the national agendas of all maritime nations.'

The minister said students qualifying as junior officers will not struggle to find jobs in the Cyprus-flagged fleet of 1,677 ships and would have good long-term prospects in the maritime cluster ashore

Mr Demetriades said his ministry had approved a €330,000 financial support scheme for totalling€45,000 will be given for shipping-related degrees.

Seafarers

protest at

taxruling

Maritime unions in India have

lodged protests against a

They have condemned the ruling

by a tax tribunal in Kolkata that up

are liable to pay up to 30% of their

income earned from working on

either Indian or foreign vessels.

Although seafarers have

benefited from non-resident tax

that any income received in India

is taxable — except in cases where

there is a double taxation avoidance

India's revenue department has

begun sending out tax demands to

seafarers — and there is a warning

that it may also seek to recover

The Maritime Union of India

arrears dating back six years.

(MUI) and the National Union

of Seafarers of India (NUSI) are

jointly opposing the decision. 'If

this judgment is not challenged,

then it will snatch away the income

thousands of seafarers working on

Indian or foreign flag ships. This will

lead to payment of heavy income tax

on the whole income even when the

on Indian or foreign flag ships,' they

petitions against the judgment and

have also taken the issue up at the

statutory National Shipping Board

meeting in New Delhi.

seafarer is non-resident. whether

The unions have organised

tax benefits presently received by

status for decades, the tribunal ruled

to 100,000 merchant seafarers

tribunal judgment that threatens

to end long-standing income

seafarers.

agreement.

warned.

tax concessions for the country's







Pictured above is the cable-lay vessel Ulisse, which bas been converted from a flat top barge for the Italian energy and telecoms firm Prysmian Group. The €20m conversion project on the 120m vessel was carried out by the PaxOcean shipvard in Singapore and included the installation of an eight-point spread nooring system that will enable Ulisse to operate in a wide range of conditions.

The vessel is capable of transporting 7,000 tonnes of cable in a 30m diameter carousel, and can be equipped with a carousel loading pick-up arm and a stern-mounted cable chute for loading and surface lay operations. The first project to be undertaken by Ulisse will be

part of a €90m contract to supply and install a 22km high voltage alternating current submarine cable system across the Guimaras Strait in the Philippines.

ITF renews call for talks over Panama Canal safety fears

The International Transport Workers' Federation has offered to meet the Panama Canal Authority (ACP) to discuss concerns over safety following reports of a number of incidents in the first month since the expanded waterway opened.

Reports of a containership hitting the wall of the Agua Clara locks and an LPG tanker and another containership striking fenders were dismissed as 'inaccurate' by the authority — but the union representing towage service officers in the canal described the procedures in place as 'trial and error'.

ITF general secretary Steve Cotton told the Telegraph: 'The study of the new Panama Canal locks which we commissioned from the Fundação Homem de Mar Institute revealed a number of potential risks in the infrastructure that could have been and should have been — avoided.

'Workers on the Panama Canal are extremely professional,' he added. 'The idea of bringing in third party tugboats would be no solution. Instead, we believe the Panama Canal Authority must now commission adequate numbers of tugboats

and establish a more coordinated operational procedure that takes into account the immediate emergency actions necessary to mitigate risks when an incident occurs or weather conditions suddenly change.

'The ITF has offered and will continue to offer assistance in order to keep the Panama Canal as one of the safest and more convenient maritime routes,' Mr Cotton stressed. 'We have said all along that it is essential that a constructive and positive dialogue takes place, particularly with all workers and trade unions involved.'



Pictured above is the 192,237gt newbuild containership MSC Sveva, which was christened in the French port of Le Havre at the end of July. The latest in the Mediterranean Shipping Company's Oscar class, the 19,224TEU vessel

was built by Daewoo in South Korea and has been deployed on the Asia-Europe services, with calls including Dalian, Busan, Qingdao, Ningbo, Shanghai, Xiamen, Yantian, Tanjung Pelepas and Le Havre.

The Panama-flagged ship is LNG ready and equipped with a new generation G95 engine, which is said to put MSC Sveva well ahead of the 2025 emission control standards. Picture: Eric Houri

'Whistleblower' awarded US\$1m

Company 'unlawfully retaliated' against master following safety complaints

shipmaster has been awarded more than \$1m damages after a judge ruled that he had been victimised by his company for reporting safety problems to the authorities. The Boston administrative

law court said Horizon Lines had 'unlawfully retaliated' against Captain John Loftus and had constructively discharged him for reporting violations of maritime safety law to the US Coast Guard and the ABS classification society. Describing the company's actions as 'reprehensible', Judge Jonathan Callianos ordered it to pay the master more than \$655,000 plus interest in back pay, as well as \$225,000 punitive damages and around \$200,000

in legal fees and costs. and more than 20 years as a master — was demoted to the rank of rication chief mate by the company after

had 'exercised poor judgement' in sending a crew member onto the deck of the containership Horizon Trader in bad weather to lash down garbage bins during a voyage between New Jersey and

Puerto Rico in March 2013. The ship's chief mate had to be airlifted ashore after being injured when a door swung open and struck him as he started to secure the bins.

The court found, however, that weather conditions at the time of the accident were moderate and the company had made no attempt to verify what they had been like

The judge said Horizon's contention that Capt Loftus's decision-making had highlighted 'an inadequate safety culture' Capt Loftus — who had 42 onboard the ship was 'overrecord' and was rejected as a fab-

'All of the experts in this case that the company had construc- whistleblower context.'

'whistleblowing' US a disciplinary panel ruled that he are unanimous that Loftus was at tively discharged Capt Loftus by the top of his game when it came to safety concerns,' the judgment adds

> The court heard that Capt Loftus — who had served as master of Horizon Trader since 2006 — had filed a series of complaints about the safety of the ship – including repeated power box fires.

Horizon had been fined \$1.5m in 2012 after admitting violations of the MARPOL Convention and the judge said the evidence showed that the complaints made by Capt Loftus had contributed to its decision to discipline him.

The company's 'persistent indifference' to the concerns raised by Capt Loftus was unreasonable, the judge said, and the master had been forced to contact the regulatory authorities 'as a last-ditch effort to bring the years of seagoing experience, whelmingly unsupported by the ship into compliance with regulations'

offering him non-permanent positions as a relief chief mate on completely different runs.

And the court also ordered the company to pay Capt Loftus an additional \$10,000 damages for 'emotional harm' — noting that he had suffered from anxiety, sleeplessness and humiliation as a result of his demotion.

Horizon had exacerbated this humiliation by refusing to allow him to return to the ship to retrieve his personal belongings and to instead order crew members to clear his cabin while he waited on the dock for the packed boxes

The judge described the nature of the company's actions as 'extremely troublesome' and the 48-page ruling concluded by stating: 'The need to deter others from engaging in similar conduct is uniquely critical in the The judge also determined Seaman's Protection Act (SPA)

Italian unions warn of job threat as a result of STCW update delays

Italian seafaring unions have warned of a massive threat to the jobs of their members as a result of the transport ministry's delay in revalidating certificates to the new requirements set down by the STCW 'Manila amendments'.

The Filt-CGIL_Fit-CISL and UIITrasporti unions warn that as many as 15,000 seafarers will have to rush chance of gaining the necessary certification by the 1 January 2017 deadline.

They say that around 50 Italian jobs have already gone from the Carnival Cruise fleet and a further 50 are expected to be lost by the end of the year. Carnival

employs around 1.815 Italian officers, and the unions operators and the government over the fear that other operators may follow suit if the revalidation problems continue.

Italian certificates are issued by harbourmasters' offices and, as in other European countries, are valid for five years. But Italy's certificate renewal decree was not issued until December 2015 — barely a year through the updating procedures if they are to stand a before the January 2017 deadline — and further regulations, including those for seafarers serving on LNG-powered vessels, have not yet been issued by the authorities.

> The problem is particularly acute for Italian cruiseship officers because of a dispute between

interpretation of professional titles that are based on qualifications and not competence. Italian law stipulates that any second officer acting as a first officer loses the second officer qualification, meaning that employers would have to carry out mass promotions or temporary promotions for limited periods

A further problem is that barely one-third of Italy's 64 recognised maritime schools can provide the new courses — and not all at the same time — meaning that seafarers have to attend at least two different colleges.

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INTERNATIONAL

SALARIES SLASHED: Nigerian seafarers serving with Nigerian LNG Ship Management have protested at proposals to slash their salaries by 50%. The company told the seafarers that they would have to accept the pay cuts by 1 September or risk losing their jobs. They accused the company of failing to consult properly and claimed non-Nigerian crews were not being faced with such severe cuts. Unions called for the government to intervene, warning that efforts to increase the employment and training and Nigerian seafarers are at risk

SWEDISH APPEAL: maritime

unions and shipowners in Sweden have made a joint appeal to the European Commission to give the green light to the country's proposed tonnage tax scheme. They have called for urgent approval of the package, so that it can go before the Swedish parliament in September and take effect in January 2017. Sweden is the last maritime nation in the EU to develop such a regime and unions hope the scheme will end years of flagging out.

CABLESHIP RAID: 16 pirates in two skiffs armed with rifles and a rocketpropelled grenade fired upon an un-named cable layer west of Jazirat al Hanish al Kabir island in the Red Sea. Armed guards on the ship fired warning shots at the gunmen before the skiffs moved away, but security experts warn that the incident is a sign of the continued presence of violent criminal groups in the area.

BOX BOOM: the fleet of the French containership operator CMA CGM has risen to 531 vessels of 2.3m TEU — with a further 24 ships of 226,000TEU due for delivery over the next 18 months. The fleet includes 24 ships flying the French reserve flag (RIF) and 47 vessels flying the red ensign.

CAPACITY WARNING: a record 150 containerships are expected to be scrapped in 2016 — but this will not be enough for an industry battling over-capacity, low demand and falling rates, the industry analysts Drewry warned last month.

ETV CALL: the union-backed French environmental group Mor Glaz has urged the government to upgrade its emergency towing vessel provision in the Channel, highlighting concerns over the safety of low-cost shipping operations.

CHANNEL EVACUATION:a

French navy helicopter airlifted a sick seafarer from the Isle of Man-flagged LPG tanker Happy Bear in the Channel last month to enable him to be treated in a hospital in Calais.

TANKER SMASH: a clean-up operation was launched off the coast of Japan last month after a 465dwt oil tanker partially sank following a collision with a 5.025dwt chemical tanker near the port of Kehin.

SALES SLUMP: second hand ship sales have almost halved over the past year, a new report has revealed. Spending totalled US\$1.6bn in July 2016, compared with \$3.1bn at the same time last year.

INTERNATIONAL

shortreports

CREW REVOLT: Ukrainian special forces were deployed to the Turkish-flagged cargoship Mehmet Unlu after the vessel sent a distress call, reporting that the master and three other seafarers had been wounded by two crew members who had cut off the power and taken five of their colleagues hostage. A team from Ukraine's SBU special operations unit was sent to the ship, 11nm off Odessa, and released the crew and arrested the two 'mutineers'. Five injured seafarers were taken to hospital for treatment.

FRENCH INCREASE: the 12

maritime schools in France have reported an increase in new students this year. September's intake totalled 1,916 young people — up from 1,859 last year. Seafaring unions have expressed concern that only 10% of the new recruits are women — a figure which has remained static for years — and owners are in discussions about ways in which more female trainees can be taken on by the industry.

EXPEDITION ORDERS: Hamburg-

based Hapag-Lloyd Cruises has ordered two 16,100gt expedition cruiseships, each with a capacity for 240 passengers and 170 crew. Scheduled for launch in April and October 2019, the vessels will operate polar cruises in the Arctic and Antarctica and to warm water destinations such as the Amazon.

UKRAINE BAN: foreign seafarers serving on ships visiting ports in Crimea face a three-year ban from Ukraine, the country's authorities have warned. Any seafarers found to have visited Crimea in the previous three years face a fine or up to 15 days imprisonment if they are caught trying to enter Ukraine.

SAMSKIP EXPANDS: Rotterdambased Samskip has acquired Norway's Euro Container Line to expand reefer activity and strengthen its presence in Scandinavia. The €2.5m deal is set to increase Samskip's total annual Norwegian volumes from 55,000TEU to 90,000TEU.

BUILDING CUTS: unions have

warned that South Korea's 'big three' shipbuilders — HHI, SHI and DSME — have cut 3.000 jobs so far this year in response to a slump in new orders. It is feared that as many as 6,000 posts will go this year as part of restructuring measures.

ASIAN BOOST: Royal Caribbean International is boosting its capacity in SE Asia by 30% over the next year, with plans to deploy three cruiseships to operate a total of 55 cruises with 200,000 passengers over an eight-month season.

ENGINEERS INJURED: two

engineer officers were airlifted to hospital after an explosion in the engineroom of the Madeira-flagged product tanker Weichselstern off the German port of Hamburg last month.

COMPANY FINED: the South

Korean operator Doorae Shipping has been fined US\$275,000 and given three years' probation for failing to maintain an accurate oil record book onboard its tanker B Pacific.

New MSC Cruises 'megaship' floated out



IMO authority tax rules 'under threat'

Shipowners warn of growing risk of regional regulation

regime for the industry is at increasing risk because of regional challenges to the authority of the International Maritime

Organisation (IMO). Speaking at the annual International Chamber of Shipping (ICS) conference in London last month, the new ICS chairman argued. 'We have to accept that Esben Poulsson said operators society at large now expects far need to respond to the growing threat to the IMO's role in setting est deficiencies will no longer be are taking impractical and politiworldwide rules for the industry. 'Unless we are very careful, IMO could eventually be reduced

to merely rubber-stamping decisions which in reality will have been taken elsewhere, whether in Europe, the United States or by added, but there is a danger that the emerging powers in Asia,' he warned

A Russian chief engineer is facing a manslaughter charge in

Brazil after two Filipino crew members

died in an enclosed space onboard a

German-owned containership in the

had been accused of causing the

death of the two seamen onboard

the Liberian-registered Adrian in June

2013 and could face up to six years in

Prosecutors said Anton Shcherbak

port of Fazendinha.

that the global regulatory of political developments such as environmental concerns and 'zero-tolerance' attitudes towards pollution

> 'We must be proactive in demonstrating that we are doing everything that we can to achieve a zero accident rate and pollutionfree environmental record,' he more from us, and even the smalltolerated.

Mr Poulsson said the IMO's role was important in setting a level playing field for shipping. Its decisions are usually made on the basis of 'technical merits', he measures developed by the European Union and other regional Mr Poulsson said the pressure power blocs will not reflect opera- teaching and information.'

Officer charged with manslaughter

The two seafarers died in a pump

room onboard the 16,799gt vessel

after being overcome by hydrogen

and drowning in water which had

Brazil's Federal Public Ministry

said the deaths were not intentional

investigation showed that the chief

sulphide, losing consciousness

but charges were filed after an

accumulated in the space

prison if found guilty.

Shipowners have warned on the IMO was, in part, the result tional realities and that a failure tions'

> One example of this was the the establishment of a global CO2 data collection system, which the EU is seeking to align with its own regional regime for shipping. Similarly, Mr Poulsson added, nations such as the United States the implementation of the IMO Ballast Water Convention.

must do more to improve the image of the industry. 'Politicians act out of ignorance and simply don't know about our industry,' he said. 'We have a job to do in on the high seas, away from their

engineer had been negligent and

of the atmosphere in the space nor

The ministry says it plans to use

international legal processes to bring

court in Brazil and will also seek oral

testimony from the ship's Ukrainian

the chief engineer to the federal

ventilation being provided.

master.

international safety requirements had

to agree rules at the IMO 'will be playing into the hands of those who advocate short-term solu-

current discussion at IMO about cised positions on issues such as

The ICS leader said owners

built as part of a US\$10bn plan to expand the MSC Cruises fleet by 10 hips over the next decade. Picture: Eric Houri **Unions in**

fight for

Pictured left after being floated

shipyard is the first in a series of new

megaships' being built for the Swiss

based operator MSC Cruises.

delivery in spring 2019.

Due to enter into service in

lune next year, the 167,000 of MSC

Meraviglia will be followed by MSC

Both vessels will be able to carry

ip to 4,500 passengers and are being

Bellissima, which is scheduled for

out at STX France's Saint-Nazaire

Two Indian seafaring unions are making a joint legal challenge to a ruling which threatens to end the long-standing income tax concessions for crew members working outside the country's waters for more than 182 days a year

The Maritime Union of India (MUI) and the National Union of Seafarers of India (NUSI) are taking a High Court case against a judgment by the Kolkata income tax tribunal stating that Indian merchant seafarers had to pay taxes in India.

The two unions have also organised a petition against the loss of the income tax concessions, and say this has been signed by thousands of members.

MUI general secretary Amar Thakur said the unions had hired eminent lawyers and tax consultants to strongly oppose the tribunal's verdict in the interest of the Indian maritime industry

NUSI general secretary Abdulgani Serang said the tribunal's ruling was a 'direct attack on all Indian seafarers working under very difficult conditions families'

Other major maritime nations provide special income tax rules for their seafarers, he pointed out 'Tax-free income has always been an added attraction for the young Indian aspirants choosing a career at sea. The tribunal's decision is a major not been followed, with no monitoring 🕴 disappointment for them,' he added.

Engineers facing jail

Two Filipino engineer officers are facing up to 20 years in prison in the United States after being found guilty of dumping oily waste at sea. Engineer officers Rustico Ignacio

and Cassius Samson were convicted by a federal jury of violating the Act to Prevent Pollution from Ships, obstruction of justice, false statements, witness tampering and conspiracy. The court heard that their vessel, the Panama-flagged general cargoship Ocean Hope, had discharged around 10 tons of oily waste into the Pacific last year.

In a separate case, two Greek seafarers from the Cyprus-flagged bulk carrier Gallia Graeca were sentenced to 10 days in prison after being found guilty of pumping oily sludge and bilge water from their vessel last year.



Pictured left is the 1,036TEU Wes Amelie, which is to become the first containership to convert to LNG, in a project sponsored by the German ministry of transport.

The six-year-old Antiqua හ Barbuda-flagged vessel is owned by the German shipping firm Wessels Reederi and presently has a MAN 8L48/60B engine which will be converted by MAN to a 51/60DF dual-fuel engine. A 500 cu m LNG tank will be located in the fore part of the 10,350gt vessel to limit the loss of cargo capacity,

The conversion work, which will be carried out next year, is being rseen by Bureau Veritas.

INTERNATIONAL

Stranded crew go home

The last of 117 Burmese, Ukrainian and Chinese crew members who were stranded on a cruiseship abandoned in Hong Kong since October last year returned home last month after unions helped to recover unpaid wages when the vessel was finally sold.

The Palau-flagged New Imperial Star had been operating as a floating casino in Hong Kong since 2013, and its crew alerted local unions and the International Transport Workers' Federation to unpaid wages, poor living conditions and shortages in fuel and provisions a year ago. The 36-year-old ship was detained

after failing post state control inspections, and union officials made repeated representations to persuade the Hong Kong-based managers to respond to recurring complaints of

owed wages. In February most of the Chinese casino workers and some of the Ukrainian officers were repatriated with full wages, leaving 46 seafarers on the ship. In April, they began legal action to recover their pay, with help from local unions and the ITF.



The vessel was arrested and sold in August for US\$1.4m and union officials said that once court costs, port fees and other charges were met there was sufficient money remaining to settle the claims of the crew.

During their ordeal onboard the vessel, the crew members were provided with food and essential supplies by the three Hong Kong maritime unions and local welfare agencies

'This is a really a good example showing how ITF inspectors and local unions assist the foreign seafarers in their port,' said Jason Lam Wai Hong, of the Hong Kong Merchant Navy Officers' Guild

NZ urged to end 'shortage' rules

Union wants to make it harder for owners to use foreign masters and officers

restrict the ability of the country's shipowners to bring in foreign masters and officers to serve in the national merchant

fleet.

The NZ Merchant Service said Guild president Captain Rus-Guild is calling for shipmasters sell Petrie. 'There is absolutely and officers to be removed from the immigration department's long-term skills shortage list in response to a 'dramatic rise in unemployment' among NZ seafarers over the past year.

The Guild warns that deregulation of the shipping industry over the NZ merchant fleet fall from 50 based work visas.

New Zealand's govern- workers can be a positive measure submissions in response to those benefit, but just want to be ment is being urged to to supplement the workforce. But arguments, but also calling for the the union says it has 15% of its seagoing membership now sitting at

home waiting for work. 'That's around three times the national unemployment rate,' no shortage of qualified masters and officers in New Zealand at the moment, and there's no way that Immigration NZ should be issuing any work visas for these jobs while there are suitably qualified

unemployed New Zealanders.' The government is reviewing

review process to be more responsive to labour market changes so that removal of occupations is not such a drawn-out process.

The Guild argues that the ease with which owners can bring in foreign masters and officers makes it hard for NZ seafarers to develop their careers and secure promotions. It also removes the incentive for operators to train NZ seafarers, Capt Petrie added.

The union is encouraging outof–work members to register as unemployed so that ship's officthe last three decades has seen the occupations included on the ers and masters can be included the rules would enable some skills shortage list and the Guild in official data for labour market seafarers to continue working in ships to just 13. However, during — has asked for masters and offic- — testing by immigration NZ. How- — certain trades without increasin the past year five foreign masters, ers to be urgently removed from ever, it warns that many members their operating limits. However, 32 engineer officers and 26 deck it. But the NZShipping Federation report difficulties with Work & it warns that any seafarer wantofficers were given special skill- has recently made a submission Income NZ offices trying to turn ing to ring-fence their ticket in in favour of retaining the occu- them away because there is 'no line with the SeaCert framework At times of genuine shortage, pations on the list. The union is category' for them or because must register with the authority the Guild agrees that migrant currently formulating further they are not trying to claim a by1September2017.

included in the official statistics. A final decision on the list is

expected to be made by the immigration minister before the end of this year. Meanwhile, the Guild says it is exploring ways in which it can work together with its Australian counterpart to tackle the issues

New Zealand seafarers have been allowed to 'ring-fence' some 30 different types of old or 'legacy' domestic certificates under a new certification system effective from 30 September this year.

Maritime New Zealand said

with extreme circumstances, he or she usually has no time to take corrective actions,' it adds. 'Also, in some past incidents, when there was time to take corrective action, the operator's lack of system knowledge hindered the need to rapidly change over from autopilot to manual steerage mode

The Coast Guard calls for caution over autopilot use in areas of high traffic density, conditions of restricted visibility, or any other hazardous navigational situations.

It says owners should conduct periodic training to ensure that crews are properly versed in the operations and limitations of the autopilot system.

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WRECK REMOVED: an operation to recover the wreck of the Dutch vessel Flinterstar from Belgian waters has been completed a month ahead of schedule. The 6,577gt general cargoship partially sank on a sandbank close to the approaches to Antwerp and Vlissingen following a collision with the LNG tanker Al-Oraig in October 2015. The salvage work was led by Scaldis, a Belgian maritime consortium, but responsibility for the costs of the operation will not be decided until accident investigations are completed.

GROUNDING CLAIM: the Australian

dovernment is claiming A\$120m (€80m) damages from a Chinese shipowner following an incident in which the bulk carrier Shen Neng 1 ran aground on the Great Barrier Reef in 2010. The vessel's owners and the P&I Club claim the clean-up costs were 'unrealistic' and want damages to be pegged at A\$23m. But the Australian government argues that the bulker severely damaged or destroyed an 115,000 sq m area of the reef.

PONANT JOBS: the French luxury cruiseship operator Ponant is to increase its seafaring workforce from 800 to 1,300 following a decision to build four new 180-passenger 'expedition' vessels. The 10,000gt vessels will operate French flag and the company says around half of the new seafarers it plans to recruit will be French nationals.

LNG DRIVE: three companies — France's Engle, and Mitsubishi and NYK Line of Japan — have launched a joint operation called Gas4Sea to promote the use of LNG as a marine fuel. Gas4Sea begins operations this month with a purpose-built 5,000 cum LNG bunkering vessel to operate at Zeebrugge and other nearby ports.

EMISSION TARGET: Euro-MPs are backing plans to include shipping in the European Union's emissions trading system (ETS) with effect from 2021. Operators would be required to buy ETS allowances or pay an equivalent into new climate funds to support carbon-saving retrofitting and innovative technologies.

INDIAN AID: India's shipping ministry has announced plans to increase coastal shipping services with a package of aid to improve the country's ports. The scheme aims to cut delays for ships through improved berthing facilities, more efficient cargo and passenger handling, and dredging of important channels

SHORE POWER: four Baltic ports — Tallinn in Estonia, Stockholm in Sweden, and Helsinki and Turku in Finland — have signed an agreement to take a common approach to providing onshore power supplies to berthed ferries in a drive to reduce harmful emissions.

ROUTE RE-OPENS: a 'motorway of the sea' linking the French port of Montoir with Gijón in Spain is set to re-open at the end of the year, after the European Union granted a €1m subsidy for the ro-ro service.

BIG SWITCH: the world's biggest ship, the 441,600dwt tanker TI Europe, is switching from the Belgian flag to the French RIF international register.

US Coast Guard cautions against over-reliance upon autopilots

Seafarers have been warned against over-reliance on autopilot cause multiple fatalities and serious systems following a series of accidents in US waters — and evidence that some crew members are using the systems so that they can leave the bridge for extended periods.

A safety alert issued by the US Coast Guard highlights a number of

notably offshore support vessels colliding with rigs or other vessels in the Gulf of Mexico. 'Autopilot systems can reduce

the monotony of steering by freeing up the helmsman to step away from

accidents which had the potential to

environmental damage — most

the helm in order to perform other minor pilot house tasks and gain different navigational viewpoints,' the bulletin notes. But over-use can cause watchkeepers to become engrossed in other tasks, leading to inattentiveness and distraction. it warns.

'It should come as no surprise that when an inattentive operator meets

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TANKER BLOW: French unions expressed concern last month after the 314,249dwt VLCC Samco Redwood was switched from the country's RIF second register to the Hong Kong flag only days after a new law came in to require oil companies to carry more products on national-flagged tankers. Jean-Philippe Chateil, general secretary of the FOMM-CGT officers' union, commented: 'The new law was supposed to increase the number of ships carrying oil to France and we are concerned that this first de-flagging will lead to others, with a consequential loss of jobs for French officers.

AUSTRALIAN TRAFFIC: two

new traffic separation schemes are to come into effect off the SW coast of Western Australia on 1 December this year following approval by the International Maritime Organisation. The two schemes — off Cape Leeuwin and Chatham Island — aim to increase navigational safety by reducing the number of head-on situations and improve environmental protection by keeping ships away from the coastline.

GROUNDING ROW: an investigation has been launched after a 44,183dwt bulk carrier ran aground in Mauritius following reports that it had lost power as a result of a fight between crew members in the engineroom. Efforts to salvage the Liberianflagged Benita and to recover bunkers were said to be progressing well late last month.

TRAINING DEAL: the French ship operators' association AdF and the country's national maritime officers' training academy have signed an ambitious strategic partnership which aims to extend and improve officer training and enhance employability through lifelong training including onboard ship.

PORT PROTESTS: Greek dock workers' unions are stepping up their protests over the privatisation of Piraeus and Thessaloniki (Salonica) ports. They accuse the government of failing to provide acceptable assurances over stable employment and future working conditions.

FLAG CHOICE: Marseilles-based containership operator CMA CGM has announced that four new 3,300TEU vessels ordered from Cosco's Zhoushan yard will fly the French flag. The new vessels are earmarked for delivery between April and September 2018.

FERRY WORK: the Mediterranear ferry firm Corsica Linea has concluded a partnership agreement with the Corsica maritime high school to provide one-week onboard training sessions for its students.

ITALIAN DECLINE: the Italian merchant fleet registered a 3% year-on-

year fall to 16.5m gt during 2015, according to a report from the country's owners' association Confitarma.

BRAZILIAN CUT: the Brazilian tanker firm Transpetro has slashed its long-standing fleet renewal programme by cutting its orderbook from more than 40 new ships to just 27.

Union hits out at NZ ticket change

Consultation over 'legacy' certificate proposals was rushed, says Guild

Service Guild has criticised the country's maritime authority for a 'failed' consultation on proposed changes to the national seafarer certification system

Introduced in 2014, the SeaCert seafarer licensing framework was developed by Maritime NZ in a bid to provide better alignment with STCW Convention requirements, a clearer and more practical entry process, changed operational limits, and to ensure that the final package will be increased international recognition of New Zealand certificates.

However, while the SeaCert the system, there has been a low issued under the regulations which applied before 2000. Maritime NZ therefore devel-

oped a set of proposals which sought to ease the transition to the new scheme. The authority has now com-

pleted a nationwide series of public meetings to discuss the proposals and also received around 350 submissions on the proposed changes to the rules. It is expected agreed by September.

A key issue has been a proposal to allow holders of many older scheme covered new entrants to certificates to continue working without transitioning to the new

New Zealand's Merchant transition rate among seafarers SeaCert system, and Maritime NZ rule changes, and ensure they are with old or 'legacy' certificates said the idea of 'ring-fencing' such certificates as NZ Coastal Master, NZ Offshore Master. and NZ Offshore Watchkeeper had received considerable support.

'A number of issues were raised by the submissions and these are being analysed with a view to finding solutions which maintain the integrity of the certification system, but which also meet the needs of those working in the industry,' said Maritime NZ director Keith Manch

Maritime NZ is urging seafarers with old or legacy certificates to register their tickets, to enable database of those affected by the measure.

kept informed of developments. More than 1,840 seafarers have already registered.

NZ Merchant Service Guild president Captain Russell Petrie said the union believed the MNZ consultation had been rushed and was unsatisfactory.

'One premise of SeaCert at the initial consultation was to finally finish with the myriad of legacy certificates and move them to a single system,' he pointed out. 'It is not clear if this eleventh-hour consultation is a response to a poorly designed process, or if the transition is under-resourced, the agency to build an accurate but either way it has failed this

Maiden UK call for mega-engined ULCS



Pictured left making a maiden call to the UK port of Southampton last month is the 194,308gt Liberian-flagged ultralarge containership MSC Jade. **Built by Daewoo Shipbuilding**

& Marine Engineering in South Korea, the 19,437TEU vessel is the first in a series of six ordered by the **Mediterranean Shipping Company** and it features the largest and most powerful engine ever designed by MAN Diesel & Turbo.

Built by Doosan Engine in Korea, the MAN B&W 11G95ME-C9.5 twostroke type engine is rated at 75,570 kW, or 103,000hp. It has a bore of 950mm and a stroke of 3,460mm.

Picture: Gary Davies/Maritime hotographic

Protests at Argentinian union raid

The International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) has filed complaints to a United Nations agency after the government in Argentina seized control of the country's seafaring union.

The ITF has lodged protests with the International Labour Organisation (ILO) accusing the Argentine government of violating international conventions by putting a politician in charge of the Sindicato de Obreros Maritimos Unidos (SOMU) union.

Police raided SOMU's offices in February and a congresswoman was appointed to head the union after claims that its general secretary, Enrique Suarez, had diverted funds.

Company is fined \$1m for oily water dumps

A German shipping company has 24,516dwt Cornelia arrived in the port been fined US\$1m after pleading guilty to illegally dumping oily waste water from one of its ships into the Great Lakes, and covering it up.

A court in Minneapolis heard that the chief engineer and second engineer of the bulk carrier Cornelia had, on at least 10 occasions between February and October 2015, ordered crew members to dump machinery space bilge water overboard.

The case was brought following a US Coast Guard investigation which began when port state control inspectors were presented with the vessel's oil record book, containing omissions and false entries, when the of Duluth to load grain in November 2015

Investigations revealed that the Liberia-flagged ship had experienced significant leakages of oily waste water and a substantial volume of machinery space bilge water had built up as a result

Officers had instructed engineroom crew to transfer machinery space bilge water from the dirty bilge tank to the clean bilge tank, and then discharge it overboard. None of the transfers and discharges were recorded in the ship's ORB.

Cornelia's owners, German-based MST Shipping, admitted breaking US pollution laws by failing to maintain an accurate shipboard record of the disposal of oil-contaminated waste. The company was fined \$800,000 and ordered to make a \$200,000 community payment to support the protection of Lake Superior, as well as being placed on probation for three years and ordered to implement an environmental compliance plan for all of its vessels that call in the US.

'Today's sentencing should send a clear message to would-be violators that the American people will not allow US environmental laws to be violated, adversely affecting both public health and marine life,' said Jeff Martinez, of the Environmental Protection Agency.

up to six ships.

Picture: Eric Houri

Permits row in Canada

Canada's government has admitted that it illegally issued work permits to enable 11 foreign seafarers to serve on ships operating in the country's cabotage trades. The Seafarers International Union of Canada — which has filed more than 50 lawsuits alleging that the government had been systematically abusing the licensing system — said it believed work permits had been given to foreign crews of hundreds of ships, in contravention of Canada's immigration laws.

'It is outrageous that temporary foreign workers are being granted work permits to crew these oil tankers, while gualified Canadian seafarers are unemployed,' said SIU president Jim Given. 'This is a big win for our members, who are trained and available to crew these oil tankers. The SIU will keep fighting until these flag of convenience vessels shipping

in Canadian waters are crewed by Canadian seafarers.



The ferry firm Corsica Linea has received the official go-ahead to operate as the successor to the bankrupt Marseilles-based operator SNCM.

The move came last month as members of the MCM-Corsica Linea works council dropped their commercial court opposition to the takeover and SNCM's initial

maior shareholder in Corsica Linea's umbrella company A spokesman for the CGT maritime union's Marseilles branch

said an agreement had been found on major policy differences with the operator. He said the unions' aim was to ensure the new company operated on a solid basis.

Linea is operated by a holding company which brings together 120 heads of Corsican enterprises and 15 major shareholders The company runs a fleet of

six ferries, including the 35,760gt Pascal Paoli, pictured above, and employs 870 permanent seagoing and shore-based staff.

Union challenge to FoC rights case

Officers condemn court ruling to deny access to Norwegian labour laws

by Andrew Drape

unions are to challenge a controversial court ruling which threatens to deliver a against social dumping in the

country's coastal trades. Norway's Supreme Court ruled that shipowner Eimskip was entitled to operate an Antigua & Barbuda-flagged vessel with a Norwegian crew in the country's cabotage trades without being subject to Norwegian labour laws. The unions have condemned the ruling and are now pushing

for a change to the law yer with the NSOF officers' union,

unreasonable and unacceptable for all 1,700 seafarers who are Norwegian maritime now referred to laws in Antigua and Barbuda, Liberia, the Marshall Islands and other flags of convenience operating in Norwesevere setback to their campaign gian waters and on the Norwegian shelf with Norwegian seafarers'.

The case involved NSOF member Kjell-Atle Fredheim — a senior officer with Eimskip in Norway whose claim of unfair dismissal was determined to be a matter for the flag state rather than the Norwegian courts.

Mr Fredheim told the NSOF magazine that he now felt without legal protection. 'It's absurd that laws and rules in an inciden-Terje Hernes Pettersen, a law- tal Caribbean state govern my to set aside rights built up over working conditions,'he said.

court that Norwegian law should prevail when work is carried out in the country's waters, both sides are Norwegian and the case is most closely linked to Norway. The union believes such a principle would reflect European Court rulings in similar cases.

But while NSOF contended that jurisdiction should be based on where work was carried out and where an employer conducted its business, lawyers for Eimskip argued that Norwegian law could not apply as the ship was registered outside Norway.

Mr Pettersen said the court's decision had, at the stroke of a pen, enabled a Norwegian employer 100 years. 'Norwegian law gener-The NSOF legal team argued in ally offers greater protection of work international

employees' rights than legislation in an FoC state,' he pointed out. 'In this specific instance, Norwegian law would protect against unfair dismissal. The laws of Antigua & Barbuda would hardly do so to the same degree.

The union says that although it had lost the case, the matter is far from over. Options include inserting clauses in individual employment contracts or collective bargaining agreements stipulating that Norwegian law shall prevail. A third option is to change the law to close the loophole.

Union eyes are on a similar case due to be heard by the Norwegian Supreme Court in September brought against Ryanair over its treatment of cabin crew, who



Italy's Grimaldi Group is set to launch a new maritime training academy in Naples next month that will help to boost Italian seafaring.

The company — which operates a fleet of around 100 owned and chartered ferries, car carriers and containerships — says that the academy aims to train at least two young officers per ship, up from one cadet as prescribed by law.

Grimaldi says it is expecting to create more than 1,000 new iobs in the next few months with the introduction of new ships on services between the Italian mainland and Sardinia and on orthern European routes.

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REGISTRY CALL: Monaco's international shipping community has called for the creation of a Monaco shipping register and a tonnage tax regime. The principality's Chamber of Shipping representing 34 operators, shipbrokers, agents, maritime lawyers and ship managers — says Monaco's shipping sector employs 1,000 people, reports €180m in turnover and accounts for 4% of Monaco's GDP. The fleet managed by Monaco-based companies such as V.Ships and GasLog is in the world's Top 20.

ITALIAN ALARM: Italy's three main maritime unions are concerned about plans to introduce new working conditions for seafarers serving with the former Tirrenia ferry subsidiary Siremar. The fleet was recently taken over by the Sicilian company SNS, which is seeking to impose model contracts formulated by Confitarma, the Italian owners' association, rather than those established by Fedarlinea, the ferry operators' association.

RANDOM WARNING: the US Coast Guard (USCG) has reminded shipowners and operators that they must have a valid random drug testing programme in place for all ships calling at the country's ports. The random tests were introduced in a bid to 'prevent drug misuse as a causative factor in marine casualties', the USCG pointed out, and failure to comply with the rules may result in civil penalties of up to \$7,500 per day, per violation.

FIXING FINE: the Scandinavian shipping operation Wallenius Wilhelmsen Logistics (WWL) has agreed to pay a US\$98.9m fine for its involvement in a conspiracy to fix prices for ro-ro cargo shipments to and from various US ports between 2000 and 2012. WWL is the fourth company to agree to plead guilty in the Department of Justice investigation, which has now secured fines totalling \$230m.

CONTAINER MERGER: the

German container shipping company Hapag-Lloyd is set to merge with the United Arab Shipping Company (UASC) following an agreement on the terms and conditions to combine their operations. If the deal is given the go-ahead, it will create the world's fifth-largest container line, with a fleet of 1.5m TEU.

CHERBOURG BOOST: the French

port of Cherbourg recorded a 10.25% increase in passenger traffic and a 28.4% Increase in freight last year. Passenge traffic with Ireland rose by 7.5% and freight volumes were up by 17.4%, and figures for the first half of 2016 show further growth.

CLEANING AID: the Finnish ferry operator Finnlines has secured a €50m loan from the European Investment Bank to help fund its €100m programme to retrofit its fleet with exhaust gas cleaning systems.

CYPRUS PLAN: a package of 'favourable incentives' to boost the shipping sector has been revealed by Cyprus in an effort to expand the national flag and the associated maritime cluster.



NAUTILUS AT WORK

The crewless future swiftly approaching



More than 120 Nautilus members, students and maritime industry experts attended the latest Netherlands branch symposium to discuss whether 'smart' - autonomous or self-propelled — ships would become a reality in the maritime sector, and what they mean for the future of seafaring.

Opening the meeting, deputy general secretary Marcel van den Broek said the first part of the question had already been answered. 'Autonomous ships are already a reality,' he noted. 'The United States Navy has already tested their autonomous warship, which can operate for months at a time without a crew. It uses AIS to find its bearings and avoid vessels. So the question is not if, but rather when

And possible answers to 'when' were presented by maritime students at of today's seafarers had retired. Rotterdam Mainport University who are undertaking various research projects looking at different aspects of new entrants to the industry should be unmanned shipping operations. Their studies have covered issues including detection. interconnectivity. safety. liability and legislation, propulsion and maintenance, calamities, and organisational structure and manning

The projects will all feed into the EUfunded Maritime Unmanned Navigation through Intelligence in Networks (Munin) project, which aims to develop and verify a concept for an autonomous ship, primarily guided by automated onboard decision systems but controlled by a remote operator in a shore-based to minimise the impact of the many control station.

Christian Drent and Coen van Iersel are researching the organisational includes the future of the seafaring profession.

'There has already been a large amount of research published on the subject of the autonomous ship,' explained Mr Drent. 'But most of it covers the technical issues that might arise There is hardly any research that includes the views of seafarers. We wanted to find out what seafarers had to say about the subject — and they are clearly very interested, as our survey was completed by over 500 people.'

The survey — which was completed by Nautilus members and the wider maritime community — asked seafarers what they thought the impact of autonomous shipping would be, and whether such ships would be a reality in their lifetimes.

Although the students are due to present the complete findings of their research at the end of the year, they gave the Nautilus symposium a preview of the information they had gathered.

The results showed that almost 70% of merchant seafarers are convinced that self-propelled (or minimum-manned) ships would become a reality in the sector, and more than 50% did not think this would be a positive development.

Safety was the main concern of respondents, with 65% saying that

Do seafarers think they will spell the end for maritime professionals? These were some of the questions addressed during an industry symposium organised by the Nautilus International Netherlands branch last month...

safety could not be properly maintained onboard a vessel without trained seafarers — and that this would also impact on the safety of other vessels sailing with a crew on the same routes.

Whilst most respondents did believe that smart ships were an inevitable development, most felt that the impact on their jobs would be low as the ships would be introduced after the majority

However, the results did show that today's seafarers are concerned that properly trained so that they are ready for the jobs of the future. At the same time, many thought that the number of maritime-related jobs available in years to come would be vastly reduced.

The survey asked seafarers what they thought Nautilus could do about the issue, and most believed the Union had a clear role in ensuring that seafarers' voices are a part of the wider discussion — and that it should work with other organisations changes autonomous shipping operations would bring.

'The Union should ensure that seaaspects of autonomous shipping, which | farers' opinions are heard,' one respondent said. 'This is something that always

seems to be forgotten about in the development of new technologies, as we saw with ECDIS

Will 'smart' ships change the face of shipping for ever?

Another argued that while unmanned ships might be good for efficiency purposes, and probably safety, it should be questioned if that was enough. 'What about the need for seafarers to have an income doing something they like? Do we really need all this efficiency? Is it safe to introduce [unmanned ships] without a proper vision on how to employ and feed the world? Without this, the introduction of unmanned shipping is an irresponsible, short-term policy.

One respondent said that the underpinning technology still needs further development before he would trust it to run an entire vessel alone. 'When I see how many faults we already get onboard with the amount of electronics we currently have. I can't begin to imagine how many more there would be in a fully autonomous ship,' he noted.

'Automation is good, but the industry must take its time and do it properly. After all, they have been talking about automatic self-steering cars for years and they are still not ready. It is a false economy to trust in electronic devices too much. Nothing replaces good seamanship and experience, as only seafarers can examine a situation and judge what is the best and safest course of action.'

Most respondents believed that self-propelled ships were at least 10 to 25 years away — a figure that starkly contrasts with the predictions made by Rolls-Royce that smart ships will be in operation in the world merchant fleet by the end of this decade

The students showed the audience a video from Rolls-Royce which shows the company's vision of ship management in 2020 – where the 'seafarers' are all office-based and control the ship remotely. Computer data constantly feeds back information from the vessel and flags up any unusual activity which the 'crew' can then look into. When a problem arises, one staff member dispatches drone helicopters to the vessel to examine it in real time while an engineer plays back a recording of the engine sound. Within minutes the problem is diagnosed as an engine malfunction. All they crew have to do is decide s whether to send more drones with replacement parts (which will presumably self-install) or run the vessel slower using one engine until it arrives safely in port for a large repair.

The video was received with scepticism by most of the audience and many found it simply laughable, especially as



Nautilus deputy general secretary Marcel van den Broek addresses the Netherlands branch symposium Picture: Debbie Cavaldoro

Rolls Royce had predicted this reality would come about in only four years' time. All agreed that this simplistic view of shipping would do nothing to help autonomous ships become a reality. Frank Pot, a work and organisational

sociologist, also spoke at the conference and said that the most important lesson from a hundred years of robotics in the labour market is that they can do a good iob, but not an 'automatic' one — they need directing and guiding, as well as fixing. He said that the skills of the seafarer would be vital in the management of ships, whether they were managed onboard or remotely from an office.

'First you need to understand the human dimension, as it is central to any work application,' he explained. 'Second, you look how you can automate processes through robotics. However, it often happens the other way around.'

Mr Pot said that from a workplace environment point of view the Rolls-Royce view of the future was very strange - almost surreal. 'The employees hardly

ever interact with each other and that's not how most people like to work,' he added. '[Rolls-Royce] seem to have ignored the human factor of work completely, which links in with the research the students did, which found that no one had asked seafarers what they thought about automation. The only thing Rolls-Royce got right was that employees will still drink tea in the future.'

In the open discussion that followed the presentations, one audience member raised the issue of regulation - pointing out that if autonomous ships were to enter the merchant shipping sector then pretty much all the international conventions would have to be re-written. This could mean that autonomous ships will take a very long time to become a reality, he suggested.

Another interesting aspect of the Rolls-Royce simulation was that three olleagues came together to decide what to do about the stricken vessel. 'Does this mean there is no longer a need for a master?' a participant asked. 'The point of the master is that sometimes decisions have to be made quickly; how can that happen if all employees have to come to this "open space" to find a resolution together?'

Closing the seminar, Mr van den Broek assured members that the Union would be keeping a close eye on future developments and would continue to uphold the interests of its members, whether or not full automation takes place.

'Smart ships are likely to mean new and different jobs to the ones we have today,' he concluded. 'But we think there will always be a need for seafaring skills, so we have to make sure our members are equipped to take up the opportunities when they arise.

>>> To watch the Rolls-Royce video shown at the seminar, visit **www.voutube.com** and search for **Rolls-Royce future shore** control centre.

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MARITIME WORKFORCE

Crews for the 21st century

The first results of a global project to tackle the gender imbalance at sea have been presented to the shipping industry. Nautilus members and officials contributed to a debate on the findings...

The shipping industry needs to do more to make sure seafarer trainees are better prepared for their first trips to sea, new research has con-

Initial findings from the Gender, Empowerment and Multicultural Crews Project (GEM) were presented to a conference in London organised by the International Transport Workers' Federation Seafarers' Trust and attended by Nautilus members and offi-

Funded by the Trust and launched last year, the GEM research project is being carried out by universities in the UK, China and Nigeria, and is investigating the welfare needs of seafarers — particularly women. It is due to publish a report and recommendations later this year. Project leader Dr Kate Pike, from Southampton Solent University (SSU), said the study aims to find ways to encourage more women to be seafarers — but the results will also have relevance for the entire industry.

'Our findings also question and high retention rates. whether the industry is doing enough to prepare people adequately for a life at sea,' she should be encouraged to facilitate and adopt as part of the onboard culture.

Women are usually in a small explained, and this could lead to bullying and harassment in some and networks for women seafarers, along with training in genofficers, could go a long way to sue,' she pointed out. ease the problems.

Emma Broadhurst, from SSU, ferences had been highlighted. Communication is a big issue, she abuse and bullying.



affected by factors such as hierar-

chy and isolation. The researchers said there is an onus on shipping companies to make sure that appropriate recruitment is taking place - particularly concerning the placement of cadets and the mix of nationalities onboard.

Owners and masters have a duty of care to create a safe and inclusive onboard culture for all their crew - particularly for minority groups such as women, they conclude.

In a panel discussion on recruitment and awareness of shipping, SeaVision director Ewan Macdonald noted that seafarer training is expensive, and said shipowners should do more to encourage company loyalty

Nautilus member Sarah Stevens told the meeting that it is also important for the industry explained. 'Mentors for cadets to provide some good female case and new recruits have been high- studies to show how women can lighted as extremely valuable in succeed in shipping. 'The highterms of passing on experience est ranking female officer I have and being there to help during sailed with is a second officer, the first phases of sea time. This and while it may be a bit of a is something that the industry cliché, "you can't be if you can't see",' she added. 'There is a dearth of role models to show where I want to be in 10 years' time.'

Nautilus Council member minority onboard ship, Dr Pike Captain Jessica Tyson said women seafarers often felt as if they were 'under a magnifying glass' circumstances. Support groups because of being in a minority. 'You need a certain amount of self-reliance and confidence that der issues for masters and senior this is a career you want to pur-

Caitlin Vaughan, from the International Seafarers Welfare said the UK-based research had and Assistance Network, said shown that while many cadets some 3% of calls to the 24/7 Sealike the idea of working with mul- farers Help hotline were related tinational crews, the importance to abuse and bullying and 10% women seafarers were related to



Morgan said there is sexism, rac- a 'laissez-faire' attitude towards industry — but big strides are need to properly prepare them cedures. being made to improve the situation, with the Union doing a lot to of understanding cultural dif- of the problems experienced by progress policies to combat bullying and harassment.

for their first experiences at sea.

Companies should consider to ships in pairs and should Professor Claire Pekcan said ensure that they work on ships

Mentoring can make a **big difference** to retention Capt Kuba Szymanski

6 Female recruits would benefit from seeing women role models

Sarah Stevens

speak their language, she added. entering into, the shock may careers,' she warned.

Prof Pekcan said there is a need to improve human resources (HR) policies in the industry. 'HR is often an under-valued, lowstatus and low-paid role in shipand qualifications of those in people management roles.'

Captain Kuba Szymanski, from the International Ship Managers' Association, said many companies do have such policies in place and the industry could promote 'best prac-

added, and it could be adversely Nautilus member Rebecca the study had shown evidence of where other crew members can cisely what you need to achieve.' environment.'

Dr Minghua Zhao said the GEM research in China had revealed some of the recruitment difficulties in that country. Although there had been many Chinese women seafarers during the 1960s and 70s, there were no female cadets for much of the 1990s, and even now they account for a small fraction of the new trainees starting each year. Because of problems finding seagoing work, as many as 40% leave the industry for another job, and 'only a handful' of women are currently serving on Chinese merchant ships at present, she added.

Amos Kuje, from the Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency, said 205 of the 4,973 seafarers working in the country's cabotage trades are women. Around 250 female cadets begin training each year and 20% of shore-based maritime personnel are women. Many 'If they don't have a realistic Nigerian women seafarers want understanding of what they are to stay at sea for a long time, but a lot of cadets are not prepared cause them to abandon their adequately for life at sea and senior officers are not adequately informed about gender-related issues, the research had shown.

Helen Buni, from the International Maritime Organisation, said the agency is working with ping,' she pointed out, 'and there the World Maritime University is a key area to improve the status to develop a global strategy to encourage member states to open up their maritime sectors to women.

Kimberly Karlshoej, head of the ITF Seafarers Trust, said the GEM project should help to secure a culture change in the industry. 'As long as discrimiism and ageism in the shipping cadets and their sea time and a tice' by highlighting their pro- natory attitudes are accepted, things will not change,' she Mentoring by senior offic- warned. 'By working together, ers could also make a big differ- companies and unions can whether trainees should be sent ence, he suggested. 'If you fail to make a difference, and gender learn, you learn to fail, but get a variety onboard will make for mentor and you will know pre- a much more natural working

GREENER SHIPPING

Holidays with less harm

A Japanese NGO is planning to build the greenest-ever cruiseship to serve as a flagship for a sustainable shipping industry and to show how operators can transition to a more environmentallyfriendly future...

A Japanese organisation has revealed detailed plans to build a new 'green' cruiseship to spearhead its work to promote sustainable shipping and to operate educational voyages.

The Tokyo-based not-for-profit body Peace Boat has been using ships for more than 30 years to



promote its messages of 'positive social and political change' and best practices in responsible travel. The organisation presently operates one vessel — the 35,265gt Ocean Dream and runs three or four round-the-world voyages every year.

Now it is moving to build its own vessel — a 55,000gt 'Ecoship' that will use cutting-edge technology to minimise its environmental impact and to demonstrate how the shipping industry could transition to a low-carbon future.

Peace Boat has worked with

designers and engineers from around the world to produce detailed plans for the ship, and last month signed a memorandum of understanding with the classification society DNV GL to develop the project.

The organisation says it is currently in a tender process with a number of shipyards and is aiming to start construction early next year. The Ecoship's first world voyage is being scheduled for spring 2020, with plans to visit more than 25 countries over a 91-day period.

'Peace Boat has been sailing

since 1983 on our educational and advocacy voyages for peace and sustainability,' says co-founder and director Yoshioka Tatsuya. 'We have used chartered ships to date and have become increasingly determined to close the gap between our message and the reality of operating a cruiseship.'

The global shipping industry is one of the major contributors to greenhouse gas emissions, he notes. 'While the cruise industry represents only a tiny fraction of world shipping, it must contrib-

Our future starts today Technology is transforming the way shipping operates — and, properly managed, could help to improve seafarers' lives by cutting out tedious paperwork, the head of a major ship equipment firm said last month...



Frank Coles, chief executive with the maritime equipment firm Transas, said there is growing demand for coastal surveillance of shipping movements – and this will develop into ship traffic control, with countries monitoring and managing the passage of all ships through their territorial waters 'Security and safety are issues that have been raised, and the cyber-security and piracy risks are never far from discussion in the safe passage of a ship,' he said. 'Considering this alongside the need for environmental and monitoring, and the reality of a controlled ship traffic becomes a much more strident vision.' Mr Coles — a master mariner who served at sea for 12 years - said shore-based fleet operations centres (FOCs) are growing in number and sophistication, increasing the potential for sharing or removing decision-making from ships.

lers and the ship operators understand the dynamics and limitations, he warned.

'STCW regulations will have to consider the training requirements and the manning regulations to distinguish and consider ships that have an element of FOC control,'he added.

Mr Coles suggested there are still many regulatory, cultural and technological challenges to be resolved before the vision of pany over the past year showed 36% considered that shared operational decision-making would make crews feel more supported, against 20% who thought it might disempower them and 13% who felt it would de-skill them.

Only 4% reckoned that seafarers would never be willing to accept operational decisions from ashore, against 30% who thought they would be willing and 47% who felt they would only accept such decisions in certain circumstances.

Transas chief executive Frank Coles Transas Harmonised Eco System of Integrated Solutions — a data infrastructure package which provides shared access and a practical information flow for users such as navigation and engineer offic-

ers, and port and flag state control authorities. Mr Coles said the system would provide a single point of connectivity for the wealth of data being produced by sensors, alarms and other equipment and would help to deliver 'truly integrated operations that exponentially improve efficiency and safety throughout'. Sharing this data will provide a complete oversight of operating parameters for all equipment onboard a ship, while also sharing knowledge and expertise across fleets and helping to ensure that early action is taken before small issues become large problems.

ers, shore fleet operations, train-

ute to the agenda of solutions and also has the greatest potential to raise awareness and effect change.

'We know that cruising is very visible to the public and it therefore has both great potential and great responsibility to make changes that will accelerate sustainable innovation,' he adds.

'The cruise industry is growing so fast, particularly in East Asia, and the need to mitigate the environmental impact of such expansion is very important,' Mr Tatsuya points out. 'Through its technical characteristics and in the programmes that it carries out, we hope it will encourage a model for "green" cruising and further innovations in the cruise industry.'

Peace Boat says its 'futureproof' vessel will carry up to 5,000 passengers and around 600 crew. The ship will operate educational voyages around the world, as well as hosting exhibitions of green technology in up to 80 ports per year and serving as a floating laboratory to contribute to ocean, climate and green marine technology research.

Key requirements in the Ecoship plans produced by the Spanish naval architects Oliver Design were to develop a high-performance vessel with the lowest possible energy needs, a ship with no generator utility when alongside, and a vessel with better than standard air emissions and zero emissions into water.

The vessel's design was finalised last year after a three-year

Che cruise industry is growing so fast in East Asia that it is very important to mitigate its impact?? power and up to 10% under optimal sailing conditions. Ten retractable wind turbines will deliver some 300kW with wind speed of about 12 m/s — and in good wind conditions, 30% of the in-port hotel services' energy needs could be supplied by wind power.

The ship will have 10 photovoltaic panel-covered sails and a 6,000 sq m top-deck solar farm which will generate more than 750kW of power in low-wind conditions. It is intended that this system will supply 100% of the electricity needed to light passenger cabins and exterior public areas.

There will be 'radical' waste heat recovery systems to recycle around 80% of the energy normally lost in the air and in the water, which aims to halve electricity load. The system will use smoke gas turbo generators, adsorption chiller plants, fresh water generators, domestic water heating and LNG-cooled HVAC chiller water circuits.

A closed-loop water system will purify and re-use water, and the ship will also incorporate kinetic floors and a self-sustained garden that uses recycled garbage and wastewater.

The Ecoship will have a hybrid engine which will use LNG as its main fuel but will also be capable of running on bio-fuels, including methane. The podded vessel will have an optimised cruising speed of 17 knots.

Overall, Peace Boat says the ship will emit 40% less CO2 than conventional vessels, while also eliminating both NOx and SOx emissions.

The organisation says it is presently in negotiation with different shipyards and will decide the builder 'very soon'. As the tender process is underway, finalised costings are not yet available.

'The majority of the building costs will be organised conventionally, with some portion of the finance being also raised through impact investment and sponsorship,' it adds.

'Peace Boat is Japan's largest cruise organisation and has been running social business cruises for over 30 years, whereby passengers buy tickets for the voyages, and those sales cover the costs of running the ship as well as Peace Boat's additional activities. The same proven business model will be used for the Ecoship.'



As FOCs develop further, it is essential that training evolves to ensure that land-based controlcrewless ships becomes a reality. 'We are not yet at a place where today's systems could provide for an autonomous ship in closequarters situations,' he said.

Instead, he argued, technology can be used to make ship operations more efficient and safer using automation to remove 'the monotony of administration' and to provide shore-based oversight and decision-support.

Mr Coles said there is a clear desire within the industry for shared decision-making and to have 'the paper-pushing tedious roles pushed ashore'. Transas research has shown that more than 70% of ship owners, operators and managers believe that it would be helpful to have shared input/operational responsibility between onboard crew and shore-based personnel at all times, he added.

Feedback gathered by the com-

Almost half the owners and managers surveyed considered that a ship traffic control system would probably improve safety at sea, while 29% were unsure and 15% were opposed.

Mr Coles said shipping is now 'awash' with technological innovation, big data and decision-support tools; and there is limitless potential for data sharing. However, he warned, there is a danger of an uncoordinated and fragmented approach to making the most out of 'mega data' such as ECDIS, ship stability, voyage planning, weather forecasts, fuel consumption, engine performance and bridge alarm systems.

In response to these developments, Mr Coles said his company has produced THESIS — the Automating key reporting, regulatory and performance criteria would cut the paperwork burden, Mr Coles promised. 'THESIS was not designed to deskill crew,' he added. 'It helps to return crew focus to the specialist job role functions for which they were training and it gives the crew superior decisionsupport tools to enable them to perform their roles with greater knowledge and skill.'

process, which took a wholesystem integrated design approach on the basis that elements of a system work best when they are specifically designed to complement, rather than to compensate for, each other.

The ship's design utilises what are known as biophilic principles — using nature-based concepts such as a hullform based on the shape of a humpback whale and a non-toxic and anti-fouling hull coating that mimics a fish's skin.

The aerodynamic upper hull has been designed to conserve fuel while sailing, and an air bubble hull lubrication system will be used to reduce the resistance between the hull and seawater.

The vessel will also have 10 masts to harness wind energy, which will produce an average of 4% of the necessary propulsion Mr Tatsuya says Peace Boat has built up more than 30 years' experience of worldwide ship operation and this has fired his vision of building a ship to run as a 'floating planet' to demonstrate the possibility of a sustainable world.

'The success of Ecoship, with its CO2 reductions and renewables use, will provide evidence that viable maritime transitional solutions to decarbonised economies exist,' he added. 'Public outreach — every time Ecoship sails into a port — will result in worldwide awareness of the necessity and financial feasibility of improving shipping's footprint.'