

Number 74, March 2024

# IF SMA

## NEWSLETTER

The Shipmasters' International Voice

### Posing Penguin

An Adélie penguin stands in front of the US Coast Guard cutter Polar Star near the Ross Ice Shelf in Antarctica, Feb. 3, 2024.

Photo By: Coast Guard Petty Officer 2nd Class Ryan Graves.



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Readers are reminded that the opinions expressed in the IFSMA Newsletter are those of the various authors and providers of news and are not necessarily in accord with IFSMA policy.

## Secretary General's Message

The beginning of February saw us attend the IMO Sub-Committee on Human Element, Training and Watchkeeping (HTW) with a disappointing agenda although some progress was made on the Comprehensive Review of the STCW Convention.

We have got off to a slow start, but have agreed the list of specific areas for the comprehensive review.

It was also agreed there would be a two-phase approach for the review, with Phase 1 being for identification of gaps and should cover whole parts of the Convention and Code, including the articles, to ensure it is truly comprehensive. This will be followed by Phase 2, the actual Revision.

There will be further discussions for the document to be defined at a later stage after Phase 1. For full details please see my report on the website.

Wednesday 21 February saw us holding EXCO in London and we were delighted that a good proportion of the vice presidents were able to attend in person.

We therefore took the opportunity to hold a small, but formal dinner with a few of our honorary members and guests to celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the formation of IFSMA.

We were delighted that our guest of honour was the new Secretary General of IMO, Mr Arsenio Dominguez, and he also accepted our invitation to become an Honorary Member as was requested by those attending the BGA in Tokyo.

It was a wonderful occasion with twenty of us sitting down in the beautiful Court Room at Trinity House in London. It was a fitting way to raise a toast to IFSMA's continued success and another fifty years to strive ahead for the benefit of the world's shipmasters. You can find all the details and photographs on our website. The only sad news was that our president became unwell with a nasty flu virus during the day and had to spend the night in his hotel room. Fortunately, Captain Willi Wittig was on hand to make the speech.

You will all have seen the news of the continuing problems of indiscriminate attacks on innocent merchant ships in the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden by the Houthi terrorist organisation. This continues to force many shipping companies to reroute ships around the Cape adding anything up to two weeks additional passage time. More nations are now taking part in the coalition of forces in an attempt to deter these attacks and keep you safe.

On that note I will close by saying keep safe and keep alert wherever you are in our increasingly troubled and dangerous world.

My best wishes to you all,  
Jim Scorer  
Secretary General

### IFSMA at fifty

On 21 February following an Executive Committee meeting in London and at a time when IMO was in session members and guests dined at Trinity House by kind permission of the Deputy Master, Captain Ian McNaught who has since been superseded by Rear Admiral Ian Lower CB.

A speech was prepared for delivery by our President. Unfortunately, he was indisposed and our Deputy President, Captain Willi Wittig, made the address we are happy to reproduce below.

*'Secretary General, guests, honorary members, colleagues, thank you for joining me here tonight at Trinity House to celebrate IFSMA's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and to welcome Mr Arsenio Dominguez, Secretary General of IMO, as an Honorary Member. I would like to thank the Corporation of Trinity House for allowing us to hold this dinner here in their Court Room tonight and I have to say that I feel a little humbled when I did a bit of research into their history.*

*'As we sit here celebrating our 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, Trinity House can trace theirs back to the very early 13<sup>th</sup> century when Archbishop Stephen Langton of Canterbury, the English Cardinal to the Pope, is believed to have set up this Guild of Sea-Samaritans, a Corporation of Masters and Fellows of Trinity Guild to provide assistance and support from the dangers of the sea, all those who were set upon the coasts of England to feed them when hungry and thirsty, to bind their wounds and build and light proper beacons for the guidance of mariners. Two hundred years later this was then formalised when Trinity House was given a Royal Charter in 1514 by Henry VIII so that they might regulate the pilotage of ships in the King's streams and then fifty years later, Elizabeth 1, gave the Corporation powers to erect seamarks, grant licences to pilots and examine Masters of the Royal Navy.*

*'Fast forward to 1840 and Trinity House drew up a set of collision regulations which were enacted by the English Parliament in 1846 and lights for steam ships were included 1848 and these were also used for use in US waters. These Regulations were adopted with minor changes at the 1910 Brussels Maritime Conference and at the 1929 International Conference on Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS) and were informally agreed by all maritime nations in 1935.*

*'IFSMA was formed in 1974 when eight National Shipmasters' Associations from Belgium, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Netherlands, Norway and South Africa, got together with the sole aim of uniting the world's serving Shipmasters into a single professional co-ordinated body. I am delighted to say that Julian Parker as the then Secretary of The Nautical Institute, is here with us tonight. He was very supportive of the initiative to form IFSMA and was an active member of the founding committee led by the Netherlands Shipmasters' Association now known as NVKK. He recalls fondly of those days and his many long conversations, helped with glasses of jenever*

*with Captain Willem Morzer- Bruins, in the run up to the forming of the Federation.*

*'Today we are in a totally different world, but we remain true to our founding charter being a non-profit making, apolitical organisation dedicated solely to the interests of the serving Shipmaster and to uphold International Standards of Professional Competence of Seafarers commensurate with the need to ensure Safe Operational Practices, Preservation from Human Injury, Protection of the Marine Environment and Safety of Life and Property at Sea. Our key focus is at the IMO where we were granted Consultative Status in 1975. Julian, we all owe you a huge debt for the legacy you have given us and I hope we are living up to your expectations.*



*Delegates and guests at Trinity House on 21 February, from front row, left to right: Guy Platten (ICS), Willi Wittig (IFSMA Deputy President), Arsenio Dominguez (IMO S-G), Mark Dickinson (Nautilus International);*

*Ken Pound (Insurance Broker), Shinja Nakamura (IFSMA Vice President, Japan), Branko Berlan (ITF), Birol Bayrakdar (IFSMA Vice President, Türkiye);*

*Oleg Grogotyuk (IFSMA Vice President, Ukraine), Rodger MacDonald (former IFSMA SG, Hon Mem), David Appleton (Nautilus International);*

*Paul Owen (IFSMA Assistant SG), Martin Bjorkell (IFSMA Vice President, Finland),*

*Julian Parker (former Secretary Nautical Institute, Hon Mem), Nils Brandenburg (IFSMA Vice President, Sweden), Christer Lindvall (former IFSMA President, Hon Mem, Sweden), Andrew Higgs (Maritime Lawyer)*

*Jim Scorer (IFSMA SG), Chris Oliver (ICS).*

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*'I am delighted that we also have guests from the ICS and ITF and I would like to take this opportunity to thank Guy Platten and Stephen Cotton for the outstanding leadership they gave the industry during COVID and persuaded the nations into ensuring the flow of goods and latterly arranging crew changes around the world. They put our mariners and the well-being at the forefront of all they did. Whilst Steve Cotton could not be here tonight I am delighted that Branko Berlin is representing him. Guy and Branko,*

on Stephen's behalf, thank you for all you did and continue to do for our Shipmasters and seafarers.

*'IF SMA strongly believes that when the ship owners, unions and shipmasters come together with one voice, this sends a very powerful message to all at the IMO and the industry and this is so important today as we continue to battle for the fair treatment for our seafarers and their unjust criminalisation. In this regard I have to say that I am extremely proud of our recent joint project with ICS which was the production of the Masters' Practical Guide to Maritime Law and published in November last year. I would particularly like to thank Chris Oliver for all the help he gave Jim Scorer and Paul Owen in ensuring its relevance to today's Shipmaster.'*

*'The IMO is at the core of our operation and so I will conclude this speech by turning our attention to you Secretary General Arsenio Dominguez. We all know your long and distinguished history at the IMO and I am sure I can speak for all of us when I say that we were all delighted when you were elected as the new Secretary General for a four year term starting in January this year. There is no doubt that in the very short time you have been at the helm we have already seen a wind of change, not only in the structure, but how you want that structure to work for the industry.'*

*'You have much in your in-tray, but I hope, as you briefed the National Delegations and International Organisations three weeks ago that Seafarers will be at the forefront of your thoughts and we are looking forward to hearing from you in a few moments.'*

*'On that note I would like to conclude by thanking you for accepting our invitation to become an Honorary Member of IF SMA and I am delighted to now present you with your Certificate of Membership.'*

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## The IMO Digest

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A summary of some of the news received with grateful thanks from the excellent IMO Media service in recent weeks.

Illustrations per [www.imo.org](http://www.imo.org) ©

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## Fresh agenda for maritime

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### IMO Secretary-General's brief

IMO Secretary-General Arsenio Dominguez has shared the Organization's plans and focus areas for the next four years, with the aim of ensuring safer, more secure and environmentally friendly shipping.

Speaking at a press conference at IMO HQ in London on 2 February, Mr. Dominguez outlined four strategic priorities:

1. IMO's work to regulate international shipping.
2. Its support to Member States – particularly Small Island Developing States and Least Developed Countries.
3. Enhancing public awareness and image.
4. Relations with people and stakeholders.

He commented: *'As a global industry that is responsible for transporting over 80% of trade around the world, shipping is indispensable. One thing I am very focused on is to make this organization a more diverse, inclusive and transparent institution.'*

### Seafarer safety and Red Sea attacks

The Secretary-General touched on various challenges and opportunities for the maritime sector.

Highlighting the ongoing attacks on international shipping in the Red Sea, he condemned the attacks and underscored the paramount importance of protecting seafarers' lives. He continued to call for the de-escalation of tensions and the freedom of navigation of ships in the area.



Trade volume going through the Suez Canal has fallen by 42% over the last two months, according to estimates by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD).

The Secretary-General underscored the resilience of shipping in the face of global challenges and confirmed that IMO is in actively dialogue with countries, industry partners and the international community to find solutions.

### GHG emissions

The Secretary-General provided an update on IMO work towards decarbonising shipping by or around 2050. This makes it the first UN agency and first sector to define a global strategy to cut greenhouse gas emissions, including mandatory measures to deliver on targets.

A timeline has been set, following IMO processes:

- March 2024 – Advance discussions of 'mid-term measures' to support emissions reduction in the medium term. These measures include a global marine fuel standard and pricing mechanism. An interim report of the impact assessment that these measures will have on countries will be considered by the Marine Environment Protection Committee\* at its 81<sup>st</sup> session (MEPC 81).
- October 2024 – Finalization of impact assessment (MEPC 82).
- Spring 2025 – Approval of measures (MEPC 83).

- Autumn 2025 – Adoption of measures (six months after MEPC 83).

## Supporting transparency, diversity and inclusion

The Secretary-General stressed his commitment to encouraging a culture of transparency, diversity and inclusion in the work of the IMO.

In December 2023, the Organization trialed the livestreaming of the most recent meeting of the Assembly – the highest decision-making body of the Organization, including all 175 Member States. Meetings of the Committees and Sub-Committees are also open to media.

Since taking office on 1 January 2024, the Secretary-General has appointed a gender-balanced senior management team, enhanced multilingualism in IMO processes, and set a policy of participating only in public events or panels with gender representation.

\* <http://tinyurl.com/4r7f5c34>

## Maritime Single Window - advancing digitalization in shipping

**This year 2024 marks a milestone in the acceleration of digitalization in shipping – the mandatory Maritime Single Window**

The requirement under the Convention on Facilitation of International Maritime Traffic (FAL), requires Governments to use a single digital platform or Maritime Single Window (MSW) to share and exchange information with ships when they call at ports. This was introduced around the globe on 1 January 2024 and will streamline procedures to clear the arrival, stay and departure of ships and greatly enhance the efficiency of shipping worldwide.

Of the inauguration IMO Secretary-General Arsenio Dominguez commented: *'Digitalization is critical for greater efficiency in shipping. The Maritime Single Window delivers information between ships, ports and government agencies quickly, reliably and smoothly.'*

More than 4.6 million port calls <sup>1</sup> were recorded globally in 2022. Typically, ships spend at least one full day in port <sup>2</sup> (more or less depending on the ship type).

### The IMO MSW video

Readers are invited to see the IMO MSW video here: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p44\\_1-sYryY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p44_1-sYryY)

IMO has supported countries to implement the Maritime Single Window. In November 2023, a generic Maritime Single Window (MSW) platform was handed over to the Port of Lobito <sup>3</sup> in Angola, following a Single Window for Facilitation of Trade (the SWiFT) project which was supported by the Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore (MPA) and IMO.

This initiative built upon an earlier successful project coordinated by IMO that saw excellent delivery in

2019 of a Maritime Single Window system in Antigua and Barbuda <sup>4</sup>.

## Guidelines

The Facilitation Committee of IMO has issued guidelines to assist Member States to implement the MSW, including the revised guidelines for setting up a maritime single window <sup>5</sup> and the guidelines on authentication, integrity and confidentiality of information exchanges by way of maritime single windows and related services <sup>6</sup>.

## IMO Facilitation Convention

The IMO Facilitation Convention was adopted in 1965 and contains Standards and Recommended Practices with rules and procedures for simplifying formalities, documentary requirements and procedures on ships' arrival, stay and departure. The Convention has been updated continuously, embracing digitalization and automation for procedures. (To read more see footnote <sup>7</sup>).



The annex to the Convention makes it mandatory for public authorities to establish, maintain and use single window systems for the electronic exchange of information required on arrival, stay and departure of ships in ports. In addition, public authorities will have to combine or coordinate the electronic transmission of the data to ensure that information is submitted or provided only once and reused to the maximum extent possible.

## Corruption prevention

Other amendments to the Facilitation Convention, which entered into force on 1 January 2024, include those addressing lessons learnt from the Covid-19 pandemic and new and amended Recommended Practices to prevent corruption and illicit activities in the maritime sector.

## Lessons learned from the Covid-19 pandemic; seafarers as key workers

Contracting Governments and their relevant public authorities are required to allow ships and ports to remain fully operational during a public health emergency of international concern (a PHEIC), in order to maintain complete functionality of global supply chains to the greatest extent possible. Public authorities are also required to designate port workers and ships' crew as key workers (or equivalent), regardless of their nationality or the flag of their ship, when in their territory.

## Importance of ease of crew movement

Best practice recommendations aim to prevent obstacles to crew movement for repatriation, crew change and travel, and encourage dissemination of information about public health matters and expected protection measures by ship operators.

The amendments concerning arrival and departure of persons require public authorities to inform passengers about vaccination requirements sufficiently in advance of departure and vaccinators to use the International Certificate of Vaccination or Prophylaxis in order to assure uniform acceptance.

## Tackling maritime corruption

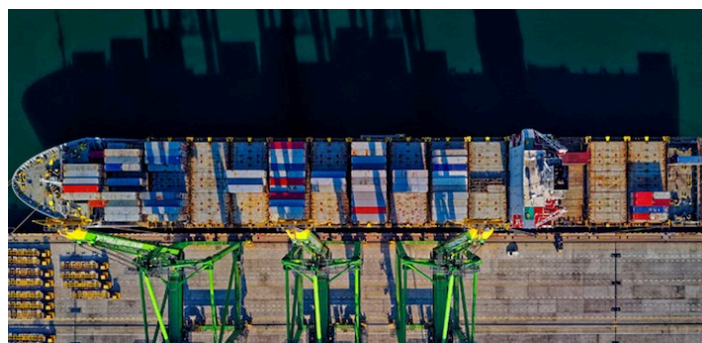
Updates to the FAL Convention take a systemic approach to addressing the issue of corruption associated with the ship-shore interface in ports. Contracting Governments are now required to encourage public authorities to assess the risks of corruption and address them by developing and implementing preventive measures to strengthen integrity, transparency and accountability. Public authorities are required to coordinate efforts to detect, investigate and sanction corruption related to ships calls in the port, including through national and international cooperation.

- <sup>1</sup> <http://tinyurl.com/5n7c8bjf>
- <sup>2</sup> <http://tinyurl.com/4rejv72a>
- <sup>3</sup> <http://tinyurl.com/22m5889f>
- <sup>4</sup> <http://tinyurl.com/3n8eubyt>
- <sup>5</sup> <http://tinyurl.com/5bfanht8>
- <sup>6</sup> <http://tinyurl.com/n3u8z4fb>
- <sup>7</sup> <http://tinyurl.com/4wzypys55>

## Mauritius Port facility security assessments

### Training underway

The latest in a series of IMO maritime security workshops took place in Port Louis, Mauritius, from 5-8 February under the EU-funded project\* on Port Security and Safety of Navigation in Eastern and Southern Africa and the Indian Ocean.



This workshop focused on Port Facility Security Assessments (PFSAs) – assisting representatives of the Designated Authority on how to divide the port into independent port facilities and conduct a port security assessment through identification of gaps. The gaps may include physical security, structural integrity,

personnel protection systems, procedural policies, telecommunications systems, relevant infrastructure, utilities and other areas posing a risk to persons, property or operations within the port facility.



Thirty participants from the Prime Minister's Office, Mauritius Police Force/National Coast Guard, Mauritius Ports Authority and shipping division and private operators took part, it was reported.

Under the port security project, IMO aims to assist nine participating countries to enhance maritime security and safety within the region in line with the 2050 Africa's Integrated Maritime Strategy. The States are: Angola, Comoros, Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles and Tanzania.

\* <http://tinyurl.com/2p8bk47n>

## IMO S-G meets the EU

### Key maritime issues flagged

On 13 February IMO Secretary-General Arsenio Dominguez set out key issues on the IMO agenda in a series of meetings in Brussels with the presidency of the EU Council, Members of the European Parliament and the European Commission.

The meeting with Belgium's Director General for Shipping, Mr Peter Claeysens, in charge of the EU Council Presidency, provided an opportunity to raise the situation in the Red Sea, and the Secretary-General reiterated his priorities with regard to the protection of seafarers, freedom of navigation and de-escalation in the region.

Topics including the implementation of the 2023 IMO Strategy to Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions from Shipping<sup>1</sup> and safety and security issues were discussed with Ms Magda Kopczynska, Director General of the Directorate-General for Mobility and Transport (DG MOVE)<sup>2</sup> at the European Commission.

Further, the delegations discussed the forthcoming entry into force in June 2025 of the Hong Kong International Convention for the Safe and Environmentally Sound Recycling of Ships.

Mr Dominguez thanked the European Commission and European Union for their ongoing financial support to IMO-executed projects, including the Global Maritime Technology Cooperation Centres Network (GMN) project<sup>3</sup> and the EU-funded Regional Programme for Maritime Security in the Red Sea Region<sup>4</sup>.

Earlier, Secretary-General Dominguez addressed Members of the European Parliament (MEPS), including participants from the Committee on Transport and Tourism and the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety.



The meeting in the presence of Mrs Karima Delli and Mr Bas Eickhout provided an opportunity for an exchange of views on matters on the EU and IMO agenda in maritime, and in particular the importance of aligning European GHG reduction measures with IMO instruments following the adoption of mid-term measures by the Organization. The members of the European Parliament welcomed the adoption of the revised strategy, which is now a reference in the transport sector.

The Secretary General thanked the Chair of the Transport Committee for her invitation to attend a formal session of the Committee in the autumn.

<sup>1</sup> <http://tinyurl.com/2xcxr2x2>

<sup>2</sup> <http://tinyurl.com/ejsbumb3>

<sup>3</sup> <http://tinyurl.com/2p9eft4f>

<sup>4</sup> <http://tinyurl.com/yt2e2m78>

## Tanzania, Enhancing maritime security

### Training in control and compliance

On 15 February IMO reported on a workshop under way in Zanzibar, where the United Republic of Tanzania aimed to develop the capacity of national authorities to carry out effective control and compliance measures on ships in the enhancement of maritime security.

### EU funding

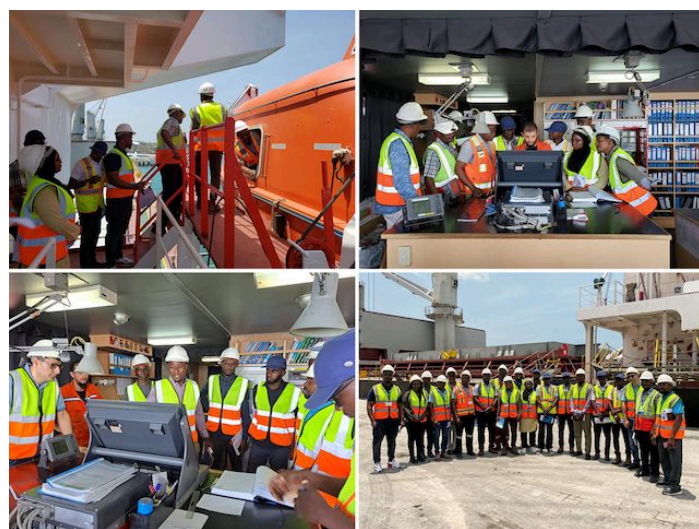
Running from 12 to 16 February, the event was the latest in a series of IMO maritime security workshops on control and compliance, delivered under the EU-

funded project<sup>1</sup> on Port Security and Safety of Navigation in Eastern and Southern Africa and the Indian Ocean.

Duly authorized Officers from both Tanzania mainland and Zanzibar took part in the workshop, including nine participants from the Zanzibar Maritime Authority (ZMA).

### SOLAS measures

The aim has been to increase their organisational capability and knowledge of the application of control and compliance measures under the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS)<sup>2</sup>, specifically Chapter XI-2 on special measures to enhance maritime security (SOLAS XI-2).



The national workshop encouraged knowledge sharing and exchange of best practices to promote proper understanding of what an effective and adequately staffed control and compliance regime entails.

Under the port security project, IMO aims to assist nine participating countries, including the United Republic of Tanzania, to enhance maritime security and safety within the region, in line with the 2050 Africa's Integrated Maritime Strategy<sup>3</sup> of the African Union (AU).

<sup>1</sup> <http://tinyurl.com/2p8bk47n>

<sup>2</sup> <http://tinyurl.com/mryd93vf>

<sup>3</sup> <http://tinyurl.com/ybp9fvt4>

## IMO PPR-11

### Comment from the S-G

On 19 February at the commencement of the eleventh meeting of the IMO Sub-Committee on Pollution Prevention and Response (PPR 11) IMO Secretary-General Arsenio Dominguez delivered an address of which his opening remarks are worthy of record. The meeting ran to 23 February and had a busy agenda.

He commented: *'In view of the situation in the Red Sea, I want to urge for the immediate release of the Galaxy Leader and its crew.'*

*'The first impact of this crisis is on seafarers, before it has an impact on trade. It is the responsibility of this Organization and its Member States to protect all seafarers.'*

*'I reiterated my firm belief that the exercise of navigational rights and freedom by merchant vessels must be respected. I join the calls for caution and restraint to avoid further escalation of the situation.'*

*'IMO will continue to contribute to enhancing the safety of seafarers and transit of vessels of all States through the Red Sea and will closely monitor the situation, in collaboration with Member States and partners from the industry.'*

*'In light of the ongoing oil pollution incident in Trinidad and Tobago, I extend my deepest sympathies and support to all those affected. While there remain many details that require confirmation as to the casualty and how this incident has occurred, I take this opportunity to convey my heartfelt appreciation to those working tirelessly on the response.'*

*'As many of you are already aware, this year's World Maritime Day theme is: "Navigating the future: safety first!"'*

*'There is a critical link between ensuring the safety of navigation and preventing marine pollution, setting the stage for this session's agenda.'*

### Plastic pellets

On the agenda one item for consideration was the prevention of ship-source spills of plastic pellets. The urgency of this issue was underscored once again by the recent spill of plastic pellets in December of last year along the coast of north-western Spain, which led to significant pollution.



The S-G went on to urge delegates to prioritize the finalization of recommendations for the carriage of plastic pellets by sea in freight containers and draft guidelines on clean-up of plastic pellets from ship-source spills.

### Other topics

Other topics on the PPR-11 agenda included:

- Development of guidance on matters relating to

in-water cleaning.

- Reduction of the impact on the Arctic of Black Carbon emissions from international shipping.
- Evaluation and harmonization of rules and guidance on the discharge of discharge water from exhaust gas cleaning systems into the marine environment, including conditions and areas.
- Revision of MARPOL Annex IV and associated guidance to improve the lifetime performance of sewage treatment plants.

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## IMO statement on Red Sea

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### The Red Sea crisis and Rubymar

Shortly after noon on 4 March IMO announced that it was working with partners to provide assistance to the Government of Yemen following recent sinking of the vessel *Rubymar* in the Red Sea area.

Speaking at the opening of the tenth session of the IMO's Sub-Committee on Ship Systems and Equipment (SSE 10) that day at IMO HQ in London, the Secretary-General, Mr. Arsenio Dominguez said: *'In view of the situation in the Red Sea, I want to urge for the immediate release of the Galaxy Leader and its crew.'*

*'The first impact of this crisis, before it has an impact on trade, falls on seafarers. It is the responsibility of this Organization and its Member States to protect all seafarers.'*



*'I reiterate my firm belief that the exercise of navigational rights and freedom by merchant vessels must be respected. I join the calls for caution and restraint to avoid further escalation of the situation.'*

*'The recent sinking of the vessel Rubymar represents an additional risk for the environment and maritime security. We are in contact with the Government of Yemen and other UN organizations to provide necessary assistance.'*

*'IMO will continue to contribute to enhancing the safety of seafarers and transit of vessels of all States through the Red Sea and will closely monitor the situation, in collaboration with Member States and partners from the industry.'*



## Fire safety and life-saving appliances

In the week ahead the IMO Sub-Committee on Ship Systems and Equipment will discuss a wide range of technical issues, with a focus on life-saving equipment and appliances, as well as fire detection and extinguishing systems.

This includes fire safety on container ships and ships that carry electric vehicles.

Key agenda items include:

- Evaluation of adequacy of fire safety provisions of vehicle, special category and ro-ro spaces in relation to fire risk of ships carrying new energy vehicles.
- Development of amendments to SOLAS chapter II-2 (Fire protection/detection/extinction) and the FSS Code (requirements for fire safety systems) concerning detection and control of fires on containerships.
- Revision of SOLAS chapter III and the LSA Code on life-saving appliances.
- Comprehensive review of the requirements for maintenance, examination and testing of life boats and rescue boats and their launching appliances.

## Westwood Shipping Lines to rebrand as Swire Shipping

On 1 February from Singapore Swire Shipping announced that Westwood Shipping Lines (Westwood), a niche vessel operator specialising in the trade between the Pacific Northwest and Northeast Asia, will change its name to Swire Shipping with immediate effect. Swire Shipping acquired Westwood in June 2022 as part of a growth strategy to expand its liner network in North America.

### Pacific NW and NE Asia

The rebranding builds on Westwood's deep legacy in the Pacific Northwest and Northeast Asia, and enables a more seamless customer experience, leveraging synergies and capabilities in containers, networks, and projects across the global Swire Shipping network to better serve customers throughout North America, Japan, South Korea, and China.

Ben Pike, Chief Operating Officer, Swire Shipping, commented: *'The integration of Westwood Shipping Lines reflects our continued investment and expansion in the North Pacific. With our shared values of safety, operational excellence, sustainability, and reliability, we are poised to elevate our services and provide an even stronger value proposition for our customers.'*

### Expanded global network

Swire Shipping will continue to operate its Puyallup (Washington State) office as the regional hub for its North America operations. Seven vessels from the Swire Shipping owned fleet will operate on the Westwood service within the expanded global network, with four vessels retaining their existing

Westwood name and green hulls in a nod to its 130-year legacy.

Harry Stones, newly appointed President of Swire Shipping North America, added: *'With its reputation for reliability and quality, Westwood has built a loyal following among customers and service partners in North America and North Asia.'*

*'This marks the start of an exciting new chapter, as we look to expand our capabilities and further establish ourselves within the region as a leading provider of innovative global shipping and logistics solutions. The Westwood service will complement Swire Shipping's other services in North America with the Sun Chief Express Ocean Service and the US West Coast – Pacific Islands service.'*

### Tokyo office

In recognition of the strong ties with Japanese customers and their supply chains, as well as to strengthen its transpacific reach, Swire Shipping also announced the establishment of a new office in Tokyo bringing representation in-house and enabling more direct engagement with customers.



Illustration per: <https://na.swireshipping.com/Services/OurFleet>

To conclude Chris Robertson, General Manager, Asia and Northern Hemisphere, Swire Shipping, added: *'Swire Shipping has a long-standing presence in Japan and South Korea. The rebranding of Westwood Shipping Lines further strengthens our position in these important markets.'*

*'Moreover, in a move that sets us apart in the Japanese market, we have transferred our representation in Tokyo to our own branch office, reflecting our commitment to customers and our confidence in the region's growth potential.'*

### Consolidating agency representation

This move allows Swire Shipping to consolidate its agency representations in Japan by bringing agency representations previously held by Ben Line Agencies (Japan) Ltd and Senwa Maritime Agency Ltd in-house. To maintain strong customer relationships and ensure continuity, staff from Ben Line Agencies and Senwa Maritime will be transferred to the new Swire Shipping branch office.

## About Swire Shipping

Swire Shipping is the wholly owned, deep-sea ship owning and operating arm of the multinational Swire group.

Headquartered in Singapore, Swire Shipping is dedicated to facilitating and growing trade in regions where it operates. Connecting over 400 ports, Swire Shipping provides several high frequency liner shipping services in the Asia Pacific markets; integrated logistics solutions in the Pacific; transpacific services between North Asia and the Pacific Northwest; and specialist shipping services to the global project logistics market under the brand name, Swire Projects.

It specialises in providing a wide range of specialist customer solutions for project, heavy lift, refrigerated, breakbulk and mini-bulk cargoes.

Swire Shipping maintains a worldwide agency network in addition to its own representative offices across the Asia-Pacific, Pacific Islands, North America, and Europe, providing customers with dedicated service and expert market knowledge.

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## Fire aboard tank vessel *S-Trust*

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### Lithium-ion battery thermal runaway

Towards the end of last year the US National Transportation Safety Board highlighted potential fire risks of lithium-ion batteries.



Figure 1. *S-Trust* at anchor following the casualty. (Source: US Coast Guard)

Thermal runaway of a cell within a handheld radio's lithium-ion battery led to a fire on an oil tanker the previous year while docked in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. The fire resulted in \$3 million in damage to the vessel.

The oil tanker *S-Trust* was docked at the Genesis Port Allen Terminal on 13 November 2022, when a fire started on the bridge. The fire was caused by one of the cells in a lithium-ion battery for an ultra-high-frequency handheld radio exploding. The batteries and chargers for the handheld radios were located on the communications table on the bridge. The vessel's crew extinguished the fire. *S-Trust's* navigation, communication and alarm systems were damaged beyond use. No injuries were reported.



Figure 5. Photos from the bridge closed-circuit camera showing (1) a second explosion, (2) an object on fire propelled into the air (circled in red), and (3) the object, still on fire, landing on the floor (circled in red). (Background source: Stalwart Management Ltd)



Figure 3. The damage to the bridge. (Source: Coast Guard)

Lithium-ion battery cell explosions are typically caused by a thermal runaway, a chemical reaction that can cause the cell to ignite and explode. A lithium-ion battery cell can spontaneously experience a thermal runaway if damaged, shorted, overheated, defective or overcharged.

Crews can help to prevent thermal runaways and ensuing fires by:

- Following manufacturers' instructions for the care and maintenance of lithium-ion batteries.
- Properly disposing of damaged batteries.
- Avoiding unsupervised charging.
- Keeping batteries and chargers away from heat sources and flammable materials.

*'Companies should ensure that lithium-ion batteries and devices that use lithium-ion battery packs are certified by Underwriters Laboratory or another recognized organization,'* the report said.

If a lithium-ion battery fire occurs, crews can attempt to extinguish the fire with water, foam, CO<sub>2</sub>, or other

dry chemical or powdered agents designed for use on Class A (combustible) fires.



**Figure 6.** A Motorola DP4400e radio and lithium-ion battery used on the bridge of the *S-Trust*.



**Figure 8.** The nickel-metal hydride battery's cells (left) and remains of the lithium-ion battery cells and components (right) found on the communications table. (Source: ATF)

If the battery fire cannot be extinguished, personnel should attempt to allow the pack to burn in a controlled manner, including by watching for nearby cells that may also experience thermal runaway and extinguishing other combustibles that may catch on fire.

NTSB Marine Investigation Report 23-23 of this incident is available here: <http://tinyurl.com/ftrn6rj7>

Pictures Source: US Coast Guard ©.

## Nexans' new cable-laying vessel

### ABB hybrid power system

On 14 February ABB announced that it had secured an order with Norwegian shipyard Ulstein Verft to supply an advanced power and propulsion system for a forthcoming cable-laying vessel (CLV) of Nexans, a global player in energy transition with HQ in Paris.

It is understood that on delivery in 2026, the vessel will join *Nexans Skagerrak* and sister ship *Nexans Aurora* – also equipped with ABB technology – as the third and most advanced CLV in the Nexans fleet.



To be named, Nexans cable-laying vessel currently under construction.

Image credit Skipsteknisk AS ©.

Furthermore, it was reported that an integrated system comprising main power generation and distribution, energy storage, and electric propulsion will allow the new CLV to execute its cable-laying, -recovery, and -repair tasks in a safe and efficient manner.

### DP operations

With a closed-ring configuration providing high fault tolerance and optimal engine use in dynamic-positioning (DP) operations, the system will minimize the risk of power loss for enhanced safety and reliability while maximizing operational flexibility and fuel efficiency.

The onboard energy storage system (ESS) will also reduce engine running hours to keep engine wear and tear to a minimum. In addition, the ESS will provide spinning reserve and peak-shaving capabilities, acting as a back-up power source in case of engine failure and supporting the vessel's more energy-intensive operations.

### Remote diagnostic system

Alongside main system components – generator, switchboards, transformers, frequency converters, motors, DC switchboard for batteries, and the ESS – ABB's scope of supply includes the Remote Diagnostic System (RDS) for propulsion, thruster inverters, and rectifiers as well as cyber security configuration for the RDS.

By providing precise and timely fault detection and continuously monitoring equipment health status, the RDS improves system performance and minimizes the need for on-site service, it is reported.

Nexans informative corporate video showing cable-laying operations is to be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/mspbm2zs>

# Malaysia, Kuala Linggi International Port

## Groundbreaking Ceremony

In late January it was reported from Malaysia that Kuala Linggi International Port (KLIP) on the Malacca Straits had commenced construction for its groundbreaking advanced port facility, signifying a monumental leap towards becoming a pivotal hub for international trade and commerce.

## Economic growth

The groundbreaking ceremony, held on 23 January, was officiated by Most Hon Datuk Seri Utama Ab. Rauf Bin Yusoh, Chief Minister of Malacca and graced by distinguished dignitaries, government officials, industry leaders, and stakeholders. This event underscores KLIP's unwavering commitment to fostering economic growth, enhancing regional connectivity, and positioning Malaysia as a key player in the global maritime landscape.



Ceremony of 23 January to inaugurate the Kuala Linggi International Port.

Illustration per: [www.klip.my](http://www.klip.my) ©.

Scheduled for completion in 42 months, it was reported that KLIP's vision is to transform Kuala Sungai Linggi into a Green Global Industrial Hub for Energy Source, Port and Maritime Services. Its development plan includes the construction of tank storage, a shipyard, heavy industry fabrication yard, hard standing cargo handling area, wharfs, and warehousing facilities, with an estimated cost of RM15 billion\*.

## China contract

KLIP has also announced the commencement of the contract awarded to China Harbour Engineering Co Limited (CHEC) with a value of RM 760 million. The total reclamation cost of this project is RM1.39 billion on the 620 acres island.

With a Gross Development Cost (GDC) estimated at RM15 billion and a Gross Development Value (GDV) projected to be worth RM100 billion, KLIP is poised to generate a substantial Gross National Income (GNI) from foreign exchange earnings of foreign projects

and Gross Domestic Product (GDP) from local industries.

KLIP, as a private port aims to redefine port facility standards by incorporating advanced technology, sustainable practices, and efficient logistics solutions. The strategic location along the Straits of Malacca places KLIP at the crossroads of major shipping routes, establishing a crucial link for international trade between Asia, Europe, and the Middle East.

## Commitment

In his keynote address, Tan Sri Datuk Seri Dr Noormustafa Kamal Yahya, Executive Chairman of KLIP, expressed gratitude for the unwavering support from the Federal and State Government of Malaysia, local communities, and business partners. He emphasized KLIP's commitment to the highest standards of environmental conservation initiatives and sustainability, aligning with global efforts to reduce the carbon footprint of maritime operations.

He commented: *'The groundbreaking ceremony is a historic milestone for Kuala Linggi International Port—a significant step forward in our mission to become a world-class maritime hub. We are not just building a port; we are constructing a symbol of progress, collaboration, and innovation in the maritime ecosystem that stimulates economic development and creates opportunities for future generations.'*

## Liquid bulk cargoes + LPG + LNG

The state-of-the-art facilities will be designed to cater for tank storage in handling liquid bulk cargoes, LPG and LNG, as well as dedicated areas for ship Maintenance Repair and Overhaul (MRO). The port is set to implement advanced technologies such as green energy, smart logistics systems, and real-time tracking to optimize operational efficiency and reduce turnaround times.

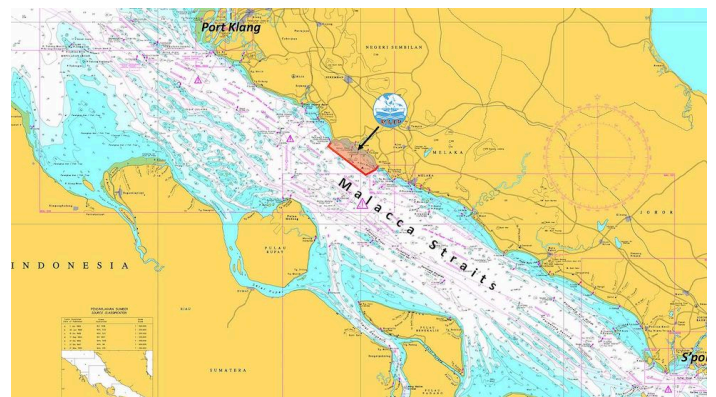


Chart extract showing Kuala Linggi International Port. Illustration per: [www.klip.my](http://www.klip.my) ©.

This project will create up to 10,000 skilled job opportunities and contribute towards social community development. Upon completion by 2027, KLIP's construction phase is poised to become a catalyst for economic growth, trade expansion, and technological innovation in the region.

\*RM = Malaysian Ringgit or Malaysian dollar where on 14 February 2024 £1.00 = RM6.00

## Cape Morgan Lighthouse South Africa

### Sixty years of service

In the first week of February it was reported from Cape Town by Transnet National Ports Authority that Cape Morgan Lighthouse was marking 60 years of service. It is said to be the second youngest of ten lighthouses along the Eastern Cape coast.

It was first lit on the night of 5 February 1964.

Cape Morgan Lighthouse is situated three kilometres west of the Great Kei River mouth. The 12-metre aluminium lattice tower has a square daymark and a red lantern house. It is fitted with an LED lantern with a character of two flashes every 10 seconds.

### Unmanned operation

The lighthouse is automated and is not manned. Scheduled maintenance is carried out by teams from Transnet National Ports Authority (TNPA) in East London.

During scheduled maintenance visits, TNPA employees check and service the light, the lantern house glazing, the lattice tower, and the standby diesel engine.



Before the electrification of the light in May 1980, the lighthouse was powered by diesel generators that ran

24 hours a day, seven days a week. The lighthouse still has one diesel generator on site, that is used as back-up.

Other lighthouses in the Eastern Cape with their dates of establishment are: Deal (1973), South Sand Bluff (1931), Mbashe (1926), Cape Hermes (1904), Great Fish Point (1898), Hood Point (1895), Seal Point (1878), Bird Island (1852) and Cape Recife (1851).

### TNPA responsibilities

TNPA is mandated by the National Ports Act, 2005 (Act No. 12 of 2005) to provide, operate and maintain lighthouses and other marine aids to navigation (AtoNs) to assist the navigation of vessels within commercial port limits and along the coast of South Africa.



On a matter of nomenclature a marine AtoN is defined as: 'A device, system or service, external to vessels, designed and operated to enhance safe and efficient navigation of individual vessels and/or vessel traffic.'

As our Members know lighthouses, beacons, and buoys are the most common types of visual AtoNs.

### Virtual aids to navigation

Virtual AtoNs using current technology employ digital signals to warn of dangers in specific locations, without the need for physical buoys or lighthouses.

The digital signals are transmitted from Automatic Identification System (AIS) stations and are received by AIS units onboard vessels. Large vessels – such as container ships and passenger ships – are required to carry AIS under IMO mandate. Smaller vessels do not have to carry AIS and therefore, visual marine AtoNs are retained in service.

### International standards

TNPA AtoNs conform to the standards set by the International Association of Marine Aids to Navigation and Lighthouse Authorities (IALA). South Africa, represented at IALA by TNPA, and is a founder member of IALA in 1957.

### About Transnet National Ports Authority

The National Ports Authority is responsible for the safe, effective, and efficient economic functioning of the South African national port system, which it manages in a landlord capacity.

It provides port infrastructure and marine services at the eight commercial seaports in South Africa: Richards Bay, Durban, Saldanha, Cape Town, Port Elizabeth, East London, Mossel Bay and Ngqura.

It operates within a legislative and regulatory environment and is governed by the National Ports Act (Act No. 12 of 2005).

Photos: TNPA

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## ITF and the Joint Negotiating Group

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### Joint statement

On 16 February the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) indicated in a statement that the International Bargaining Forum (IBF) social partners are increasingly concerned about the actions taken by Houthi forces that are threatening the safety of transiting seafarers and vessels.

### Red Sea, Gulf of Aden

Following continued incidents in the Southern Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden, the IBF Warlike Operations Area Committee (WOAC) convened on 7 February and agreed additional measures to support seafarers' safety and welfare.

Since the previous joint statement, sadly the conflict in the region has escalated, with further attacks on commercial vessels that are increasingly more sophisticated.

### Expanding the High Risk Area

In response to these attacks, the IBF WOAC have agreed to expand the High Risk Area to include the Gulf of Aden and surrounding waters, please see the latest updated IBF list of designated risk areas for more detailed information here: <http://tinyurl.com/4zz258x8>

Additionally, the IBF WOAC agreed to include into the existing conditions for the designated IBF High Risk Area for the Southern Red Sea and Gulf of Aden, the seafarers' right to refuse to sail into the area with repatriation at company's cost and compensation equal to two months basic wage.

### Compensation applicable

The two months basic pay compensation shall not be applicable if the seafarer is transferred to another vessel belonging or related to the same owner/manager, on the same rank and wages and all other terms. There shall be no loss of earnings or entitlements during the transfer and the company shall be liable for all costs and subsistence during the transfer.



MV *Galaxy Leader* anchored off Yemen

The decision to include seafarers' right to refuse to sail was not a step taken lightly as this could negatively impact global trade, but the safety of the seafarers is paramount.

### Broad collaboration

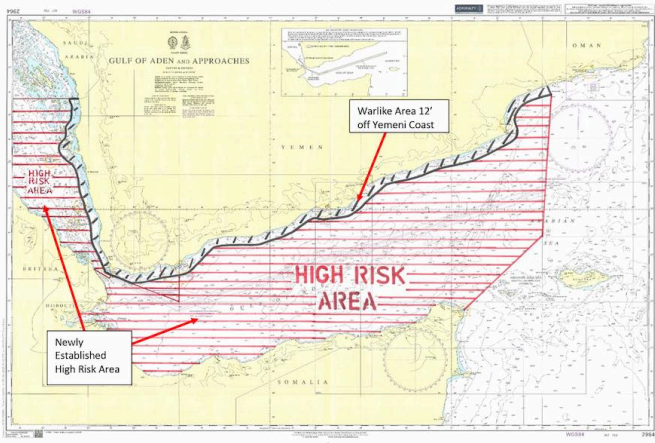
Collaboration between local and international governments, flag states, ports and airports will be crucial for seafarers to be repatriated safely and expeditiously, should they request it. Seafarers must give seven days' notice prior to entering the area, given the logistical constraints of passage and the difficulty to facilitate disembarkation in a safe port and mobilise repatriation in the area.

Seafarers who are onboard vessels within the High Risk Area or are due to transit into the High Risk Area within the seven-day window from the initial date of publication, will not be able to exercise their right to repatriation.

In the event that a vessel which was not scheduled to sail through the High Risk Area but has received instructions to cross within the seven-day notice period, seafarers will have the right to refuse to sail in the area, be repatriated at the company's cost and receive compensation equal to two months basic pay.

## Global responsibility requiring global solutions

Regardless of what is agreed between the social partners, the safety and security of seafarers is a global responsibility that requires global solutions. Therefore, the IBF WOAC urges the international community to collaborate with local governments in the area to support international shipping and to ensure the safety of seafarers so that vessels can transit free from threat and aggression, as is their right under international law.



In addition, the IBF WOAC strongly condemns the actions of the Houthi forces that hijacked the car carrier *Galaxy Leader* on 19 November 2023, the crew of which are still being held hostage. The social partners urge all governments that have an interest in international shipping to do whatever they can to secure the immediate release of the *Galaxy Leader* and its crew, and for the Houthis to immediately cease further hostile activities.



## About the ITF

The International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) is a democratic, affiliate-led federation recognised as the world's leading transport authority. We fight passionately to improve working lives; connecting trade unions from 147 countries to secure rights,

equality and justice for their members. We are the voice for nearly 20 million working women and men in the transport industry across the world.

## About the JNG

The Joint Negotiating Group (JNG) allows for the coordination of the views of employers from across the world in the maritime industry. The JNG today consists of the International Maritime Employers' Council (IMEC), the International Mariners' Management Association of Japan (IMMAJ), the Korean Shipowners' Association (KSA) and Taiwan-based company Evergreen.

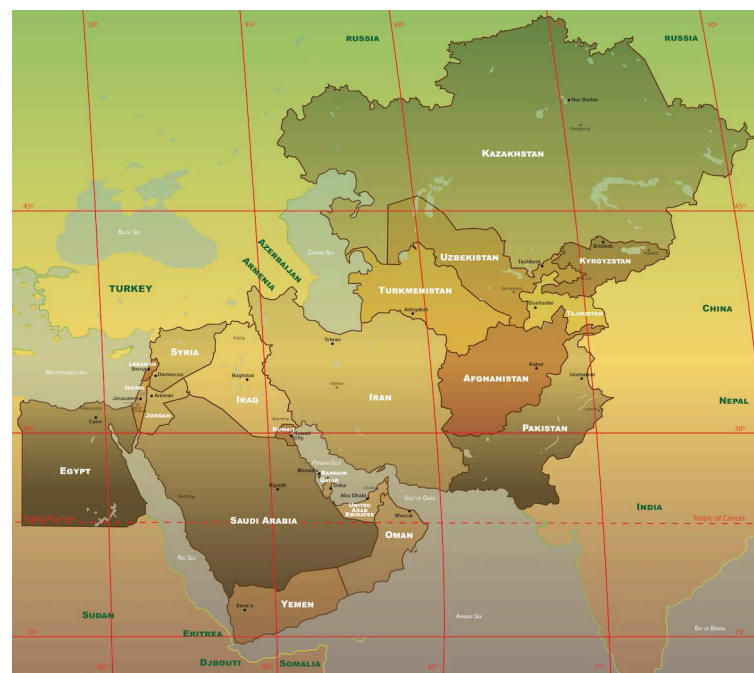
## About the IBF

The International Bargaining Forum (IBF) is the forum that brings together the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) and the international maritime employers that make up the Joint Negotiating Group (JNG). IBF negotiations include both central negotiations and local negotiations which allow for development of core principles which can then be incorporated into specific local arrangements. This unique approach to pay negotiations is the only example of international collective bargaining.

## US CENTCOM

### Interception of Iranian weapons shipment intended for Houthis

From Tampa, Florida, on 15 February the US Department of Defense by way of CENTCOM reported that the US Coast Guard Sentinel-class fast-response cutter USCGC *Clarence Suthin Jr* (**pictured on next page**) had seized advanced conventional weapons and other lethal aid originating in Iran and bound to Houthi-controlled Yemen from a vessel in the Arabian Sea on 28 January.



The boarding team discovered over 200 packages that contained medium-range ballistic missile

components, explosives, unmanned underwater/surface vehicle (UUV/USV) components, military-grade communication and network equipment, anti-tank guided missile launcher assemblies, and other military components (**also pictured**).



CENTCOM is committed to working with its allies and partners to counter the flow of Iranian lethal aid in the region by all lawful means including US and UN sanctions and through interdictions.



### Attacks continue

To give readers some idea of what is taking place in these waters a statement from CENTCOM in mid-February read:

*From 1:15 p.m. (Sanaa time), Feb. 16, to 1 a.m., Feb 17, four anti-ship ballistic missiles launched from Houthi-controlled areas of Yemen into the Red Sea. It is assessed that three of the missiles were launched towards commercial vessel MT Pollux, a Panamanian-flagged, Denmark-owned, Panamanian-registered vessel. There were no reported injuries or damage from MT Pollux or any other ship in the area.*

*Additionally, between the hours of 1:40 p.m. and 6:45 p.m., CENTCOM successfully conducted two self-defense strikes against one mobile anti-ship cruise missile and one mobile unmanned surface vessel (USV) in Yemen. CENTCOM identified the mobile missile and USV in Houthi-controlled areas of Yemen and determined it presented an imminent threat to U.S. Navy ships and merchant vessels in the region.*

### The Mission

USCENTCOM directs and enables military operations and activities with allies and partners to increase

regional security and stability in support of enduring US interests.

Command Priorities are to:

1. Deter Iran
2. Counter Violent Extremist Organizations
3. Compete Strategically with Regional Constructs and Integrated Air and Missile Defense / Counter Unmanned Aerial systems.

United States Central Command (USCENTCOM) was established 1 January 1983. As its name implies, USCENTCOM covers the “central” area of the globe located between the European, Africa and Indo-Pacific Commands.

### Briefings

A valuable briefing is available here:

<https://www.centcom.mil/ABOUT-US/>

and another here:

<https://www.centcom.mil/ABOUT-US/HISTORY/>

*Illustrations per US CENTCOM ©.*

## ICS publishes new International Medical Guide

The Master of the ship is responsible for health and medical care on board, but in practice this is often delegated to others, such as the chief officer or second officer, who are appropriately trained and called ‘*the officer responsible for medical care*’.

Medical guidance covering illness, injuries and other health issues needs to be readily available as a vital aid to saving lives, in fact, international regulations call for a medical guide to be carried on commercial ships that do not have a doctor on board, which includes most merchant ships in operation.

Recognising this need, the International Chamber of Shipping (ICS) recently published the *International Medical Guide for Seafarers and Fishers*, in collaboration with the International Maritime Health Association (IMHA) and the International Transport Workers’ Federation (ITF).

### Latest medical knowledge

This guide represents the latest medical knowledge with clear and practical explanations of procedures throughout, and includes a ship’s medicine chest detailing the medicines and equipment that should be carried on board, and ten action cards that can be removed and carried anywhere on the ship to immediately assess an emergency medical situation.

### Note: Telemedical Assistance Services (TMAS)

The guide also highlights the importance of keeping the Master informed of any changes in condition of injured or ill crew members, and includes prompts for contacting telemedical assistance services (TMAS) and the best way to communicate symptoms to



doctors ashore. The guide covers both physical and mental health.

In the words of Dr Robert Verbist, president of the International Maritime Health Association (IMHA): 'Seafarers are among the most isolated people on earth when it comes to medical care and we should do everything possible to help them and assist them.'



Since it was released last year, the ICS medical guide can be found on board the fleets of major shipping companies keen to support crews with the latest medical guidance. Panama, The Marshall Islands and Bahamas flags all recognise the guide as fulfilling the mandatory carriage requirement of holding a medical guide on board.

*International Medical Guide for Seafarers and Fishers*, is priced at £225 and is available in print and as a digital e-book. More information can be found on the ICS Publications website here: <https://publications.ics-shipping.org>.

### Discount for IFSMA Members

**IFSMA members are entitled to a 10% discount on the print copy when ordering from ICS Publication using the discount code IMGSFIFSMA10.**

## Unprecedented shipping disruptions

### Risk to global trade

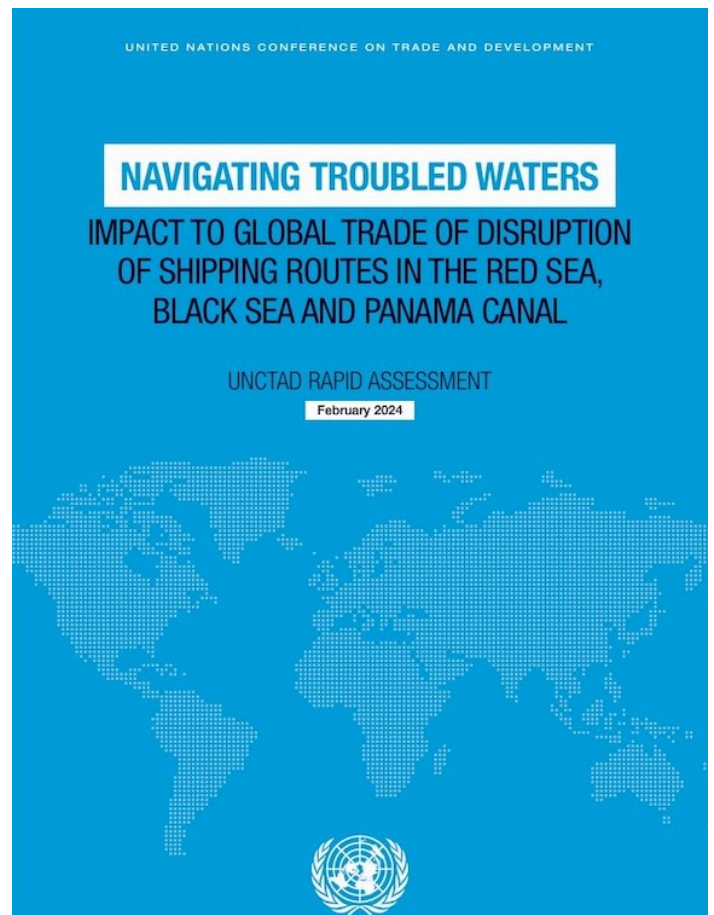
### UNCTAD report

Key shipping routes in the Red Sea, Black Sea and Panama Canal are simultaneously under threat, with

far-reaching implications for inflation and food and energy security.

### Trade and supply chain challenges

Recent attacks on commercial vessels in the Red Sea have severely affected shipping through the Suez Canal, adding to existing geopolitical and climate-related challenges facing global trade and supply chains, UNCTAD reported in a new report released on 22 February: *Navigating Troubled Waters. Impact to Global Trade of Disruption of Shipping Routes in the Red Sea, Black Sea and Panama Canal. UNCTAD Rapid Assessment\**.



The Red Sea crisis compounds the ongoing disruptions in the Black Sea due to the war in Ukraine, which have resulted in shifts in oil and grain trade routes and altered established patterns.

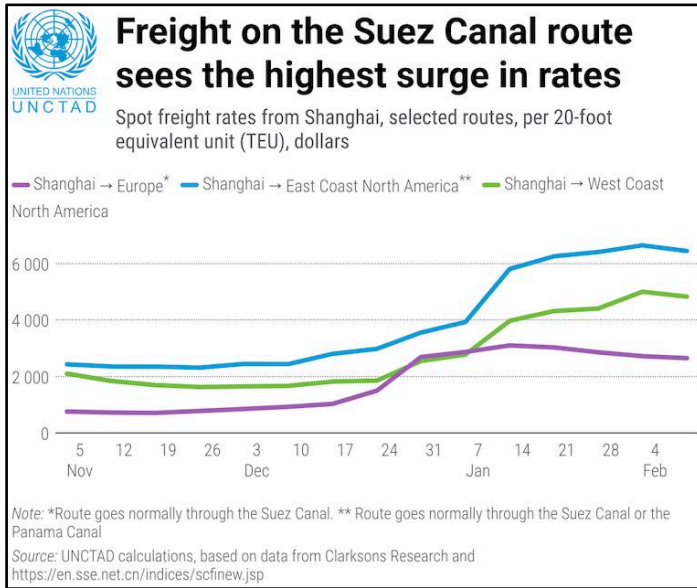
Additionally, the Panama Canal, a critical artery linking the Atlantic and Pacific oceans, is confronting a separate challenge. Dwindling water levels have raised concerns about the long-term resilience of global supply chains, underscoring the fragility of the world's trade infrastructure.

UNCTAD estimates that transits passing the Suez Canal decreased by 42% compared to its peak. With major players in the shipping industry temporarily suspending Suez transits, weekly container ship transits have fallen by 67%, and container carrying capacity, tanker transits, and gas carriers have experienced significant declines.

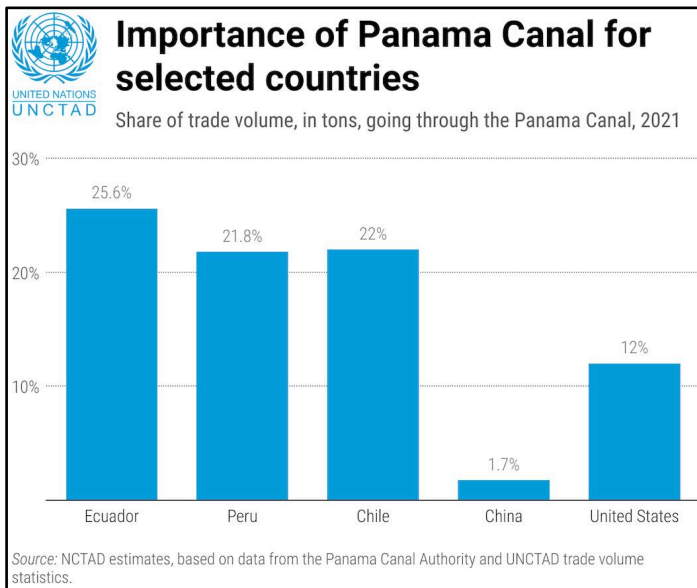
Meanwhile, total transits through the Panama Canal plummeted by 49% compared to its peak.

## Costly uncertainty

Mounting uncertainty and shunning the Suez Canal to reroute around the Cape of Good Hope has both economic and environmental repercussions, particularly for developing economies.



Growing significantly since November 2023, the surge in the average container spot freight rates registered the highest-ever weekly increase of \$500 in the last week of December. This trend has continued.



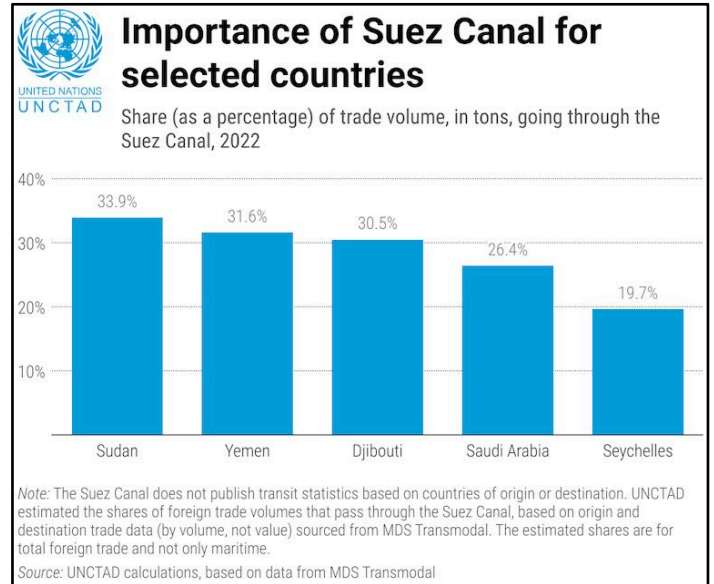
Average container shipping spot rates from Shanghai more than doubled since early December (+122%), growing more than threefold to Europe (+256%), and even above average (+162%) to the United States West Coast, despite not going through Suez.

## Alternative routes sought

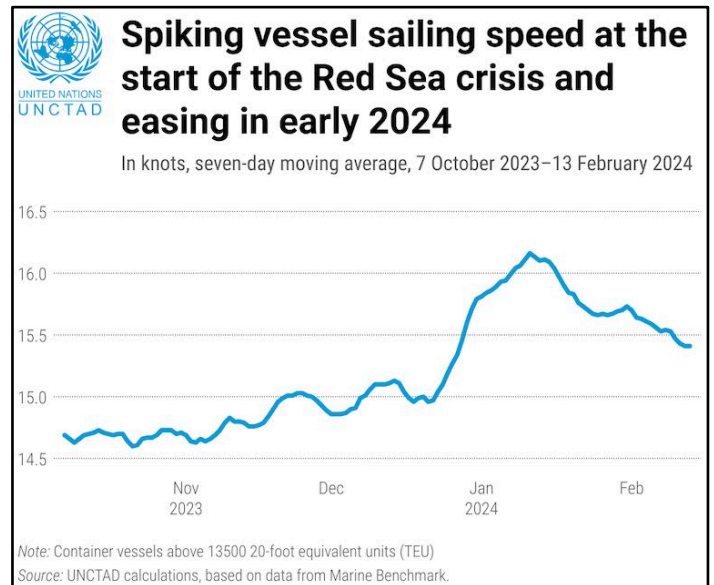
Ships are avoiding the Suez and Panama canals and seeking alternative routes. This combination translates into longer cargo travel distances, rising trade costs and insurance premiums.

The Panama Canal is particularly important for the foreign trade of countries on the West Coast of South

America. Approximately 26% of Ecuador's trade volumes cross the canal. The share is around 22% for both Chile and Peru.



Foreign trade for several East African countries is highly dependent on the Suez Canal. Approximately 31% and 34% of foreign trade by volume for Djibouti and the Sudan, respectively, is channelled through the waterway connecting the Mediterranean Sea to the Red Sea.



## Soaring prices

UNCTAD underscores the far-reaching economic implications of prolonged disruptions in container shipping, threatening global supply chains and potentially delaying deliveries, causing higher costs and inflation. The full impact of higher freight rates will be felt by consumers within a year, it is reported.

## LNG shortfall

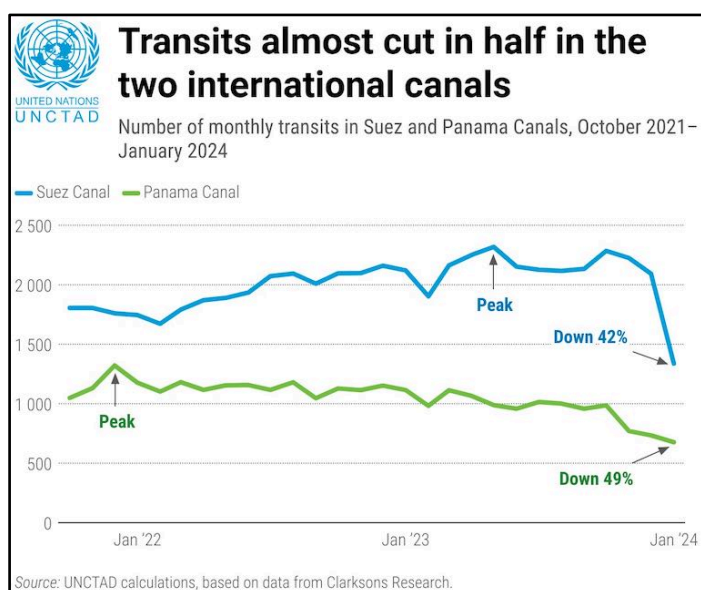
In addition, practically no liquefied natural gas carrying vessels are using the Suez Canal at present. This is directly impacting energy supplies and prices, especially in Europe.

## Grain trade disruption

The crisis could also impact global food prices, with longer distances and higher freight rates potentially cascading into increased costs. Disruptions to grain shipments pose risks to global food security, affecting consumers and lowering prices paid to producers.

## Climate impact

For more than a decade, the shipping industry has lowered speeds to reduce fuel costs and greenhouse gas emissions. However, disruptions in key trade routes like the Red Sea and Suez Canal, coupled with factors affecting the Panama Canal and Black Sea, are leading to increased vessel speeds to maintain schedules, which have led to higher fuel consumption and greenhouse gas emissions.



UNCTAD estimates that these factors could result in up to 70% rise in greenhouse gas emissions for a Singapore-Rotterdam round trip.

## Pressure on developing economies

Developing countries are particularly vulnerable to these disruptions and UNCTAD remains vigilant in monitoring the evolving situation.

It emphasizes the urgent need for swift adaptations from the shipping industry and robust international cooperation to manage the rapid reshaping of global trade. The current challenges underscore the exposure of global trade to geopolitical tensions and climate-related challenges, demanding collective efforts for sustainable solutions, especially in support of countries more vulnerable to these shocks.

## UNCTAD Global Supply Chain Forum

UNCTAD) and the Government of Barbados will organize the first Global Supply Chain Forum in Barbados from 21 to 24 May 2024.

This high-level forum is in response to the need to tackle ongoing and future supply chain challenges, covering issues such as financing, sustainable and

resilient transport and logistics, trade facilitation, transport connectivity, digitalization, food security, transport costs, climate change adaptation and mitigation, and helping developing countries to prepare for the energy transition in international transport.

The event is the result of the call by The Hon Mia Amor Mottley, Prime Minister of Barbados, during the 15<sup>th</sup> UNCTAD Ministerial Conference (UNCTAD15), as well as the 2022 Bridgetown Covenant. It also responds to the Bridgetown Initiative on Urgent and Decisive Action Required for an Unprecedented Combination of Crises.

The forum will be an in-person four-day event, with selected sessions streamed on-online.

For more on the Forum and the corporate video readers are invited to see here: <http://tinyurl.com/4heuvjir>

\*The UNCTAD report is available here: <http://tinyurl.com/4heuvjir>

Pictures credit

Tables per [www.unctad.org](http://www.unctad.org) with grateful thanks.

## Eastern Pacific Shipping

### First bound4blue eSAILs® wind propulsion

It was reported simultaneously from Barcelona and Singapore on 22 February that Eastern Pacific Shipping (EPS) had signed a contract for its first ever wind-assisted propulsion system, partnering with bound4blue to install three 22-metre eSAILs® onboard the vessel *Pacific Sentinel*.

Using turnkey 'suction sail' technology which drags air across an aerodynamic surface to generate exceptional propulsive efficiency this will be fitted later in year, helping the 183-metre loa, 50,000dt oil and chemical tanker reduce overall energy consumption. A reduction by approximately 10%, depending on vessel routing is anticipated.

### Flexible efficiency

Power source provider bound4blue is gaining significant industry traction for its fully autonomous eSAIL® technology, it has been reported. This latest agreement follows similar contracts recently. Suitable for both newbuilds and retrofit projects, the system delivers energy efficiency and cost savings for a broad range of vessels, regardless of their size and age, it is claimed.

### Sustainable commitment

Working in tandem with existing propulsion systems on *Pacific Sentinel*, the three eSAILs® will use an autonomous control system to optimize power and reduce engine load and fuel consumption, with no need for crew input and with low maintenance requirements.

In the words of Cyril Ducau, Chief Executive Officer at EPS: *'EPS is committed to exploring and implementing innovative solutions that improve energy efficiency and reduce emissions across our fleet.'*

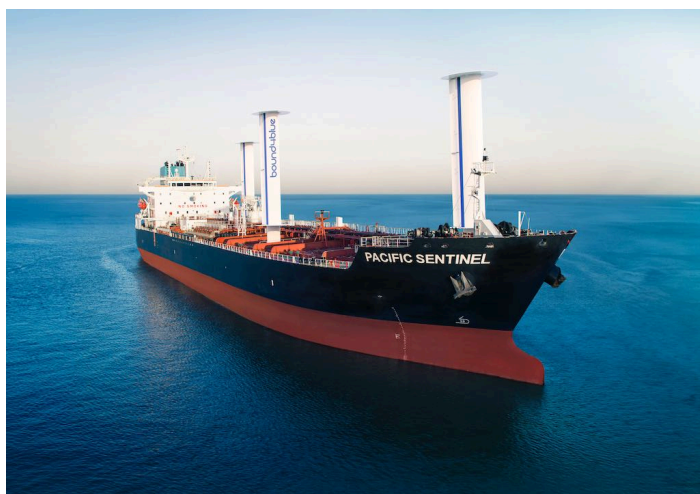
*'Over the past six years, our investments in projects including dual fuel vessels, carbon capture, biofuels, voyage optimisation technology and more have allowed us to reduce our emissions intensity by 30% and achieve an Annual Efficiency Ratio (AER) of 3.6 CO2g/DWT-mile in 2023, outperforming our emission intensity targets ahead of schedule.'*

*'The addition of the bound4blue groundbreaking wind-assisted propulsion will enhance our efforts on this path to decarbonise.'*

*'With this project, we are confident that the emission reductions gained through eSAILS® on Pacific Sentinel will help us better evaluate the GHG reduction potential of wind assisted propulsion on our fleet in the long run.'*

### Regulatory results

*Pacific Sentinel* will achieve a 'wind assisted' notation from class society ABS once the eSAILS® are installed. It is understood that the technology will help ships to comply with existing and upcoming regulations.



*Pacific Sentinel* showcasing the three 22-meter-high eSAIL®.

Christopher J. Wiernicki, ABS Chairman and Chief Executive, said: *'Wind assisted propulsion is an energy efficiency technology with a significant role to play in helping the global fleet swiftly improve its carbon intensity.'*

*'As we wait for global alternative fuel infrastructure to mature, utilizing a readily available and truly zero emission solution such as the wind, is a smart move. ABS is proud to support early adopters of this technology such as EPS, who are blazing a trail with this technology for the rest of the industry to follow.'*

### EU funding

This project is co-funded by the European Union under grant agreement No. 101103465 from Innovation Fund programme.

### About bound4blue

bound4blue develops automated wind-assisted propulsion systems as a turnkey solution for shipowners and shipping companies seeking to reduce fuel costs and polluting emissions. bound4blue's eSAIL® system is a validated installation for saving fuel and emissions.

Completely autonomous, with low maintenance and easy installation onboard bound4blue's suction sails are offered in three sizes, ranging from 12m to 36m in height, all with optional tilting systems to ensure overhead clearance under port operations if needed.

The company, founded in 2014 with a vocation clearly focused on the renewable energy sector in the maritime field, has its HQ in Cantabria (Spain) with offices in Barcelona and Singapore. The company has installed its eSAIL® system on three ships and has signed additional agreements with other shipowners: Louis Dreyfus Company, Marubeni Corporation, Odfjell and SNA TUHA'A PAE, to install the system on their fleets.

For more information, visit: [www.bound4blue.com](http://www.bound4blue.com)

### About Eastern Pacific Shipping

With a history spanning 60 years, Eastern Pacific Shipping Pte. Ltd. (EPS) is a leading shipping company committed to the green and technology-driven growth of the industry.

With HQ in Singapore for the past 30 years, EPS has a 6,000 strong and growing workforce afloat and ashore with a versatile fleet of over 250 vessels and 25 million dt across three core segments of containership, dry bulk, and tanker vessels.

### The Xlinks Morocco-UK Power Project

It has been reported that this project will see a new electricity generation facility entirely powered by solar and wind energy combined with a battery storage facility.

Located in Morocco's renewable energy-rich region of Guelmim Oued Noun, it will be connected exclusively to Great Britain via 4000km (2485 miles) HVDC sub-sea cables.

### Sun + wind + batteries

This is said to be the first of a kind project. It will generate 11.5GW of zero carbon electricity from the sun and wind to deliver 3.6GW of reliable energy for an average of 19+ hours a day. This is estimated to be enough to provide low-cost, clean power to over seven million British homes and once complete, the project will be capable of supplying 8% of Great Britain's electricity needs.

Alongside the consistent output from its solar panels and wind turbines, an onsite 22.5GWh/5GW battery facility will provide sufficient storage to reliably deliver each and every day, a dedicated, near-constant

source of flexible and predictable clean energy for Britain, designed to complement the renewable energy already generated across the UK.

### Trade Winds benefit

When domestic renewable energy generation in the United Kingdom drops due to low winds and short periods of sun, the project will harvest the benefits of long hours of sun in Morocco alongside the consistency of its convection Trade Winds, to provide a firm but flexible source of zero-carbon electricity.



Artist's impression of a proposed CLV.  
Illustration per <https://xlcc.co.uk/>.

Four cables, each 4000km long, form the twin 1.8GW HVDC sub-sea cable systems that will follow the shallow water route from the Moroccan site to a grid location in Great Britain, passing Spain, Portugal, and France.

Agreement has been reached with National Grid for two 1.8GW connections in Devon, Britain's south west. Voltage source converter stations will enable the Xlinks project to secure high value balancing contracts with National Grid, and a HVDC Technical Feasibility study has been completed to validate reliability and cost.

### Moroccan leadership

Morocco has become, over the last ten years, an international leader in renewable energy. The country has been a forerunner in the development of large, innovative renewable energy projects worldwide, such as the Noor Ouarzazate Complex, which hold the largest concentrated solar power (CSP) project globally, or its wind integrated programme. Furthermore, the country has set up a solid legal framework to foster investments in the renewable energy field.

### Ideal resources

Most importantly, Morocco benefits from ideal solar and wind resources, required to develop renewable projects that could guarantee suitable power production throughout the year. It has the third highest Global Horizontal Irradiance (GHI) in North Africa, which is 20% greater than Spain's GHI and over twice that of Britain. Furthermore, the shortest winter day still offers more than 10 hours of sunlight. This helps in providing production profiles that address the needs of

the island's power market, especially during periods of low offshore wind production.

### Moroccan expertise

This project will benefit from the well-established Moroccan renewable energy expertise whilst supporting its leading role globally in the fight against climate change and providing further value to its natural resources and reinforcing its renewable energy industry. The project is also consistent with the country's energy export strategy, which is why it is at the heart of this project.

Britain is also demonstrably actioning its commitment to the global ambition of achieving net zero emissions by 2050, both leading in the rapid decarbonisation of its own economy, and by corraling international action to fulfil the Paris Climate Agreement.

### Generation

The Morocco – UK Power Project will be powered by a wind and solar farm within Morocco's Guelmim Oued Noun region. The wind farm will utilise the reliable Trade Winds in the region, which are driven by the temperature differential between the Atlantic Ocean and African continent. The windspeed at the generation site increases throughout the late afternoon and evening, ensuring power can be delivered to Britain during times of peak demand.



Typical power cables carried in a cable laying vessel (CLV).

Photo per: <https://xlcc.co.uk/>.

The solar photovoltaic (PV) farm will track the sun from east to west throughout the day. This will not only maximise the output of the solar farm, but it will also increase the output early in the morning and late in the afternoon, providing the most consistent generation profile to Britain. Although the project will benefit from the most advanced solar panel designs, they will work in the same way as the ones installed on people's houses, throughout Britain, and existing generation sites within Morocco. However, the increased solar resource means that the same PV panels generate approximately three times more power in Morocco than they would in Britain.

Importantly, the solar panels will generate as much as five times more power from January to March than those in Britain, which will help to keep the lights on and homes warm in Britain throughout the coldest winter days.

## A new CLV

Last May XLCC, a partner of Xlinks, announced it had completed model testing on its new Cable Laying Vessel (CLV) for its renewable energy focused business; testing in the Netherlands highlighted the vessel's potential efficiency levels. A report in *The Daily Telegraph* of 26 February indicated that designs for the new vessel are complete. Yard and date for completion / commissioning of the new vessel are awaited.

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## **Sentinels of the sea: ancient boulder corals are key to reef survival in a warmer world**

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By Kate Marie Quigley

**DECRA Research Fellow (James Cook University), Principal Research Scientist (Minderoo Foundation), James Cook University.**

Seas surrounding Australia this month hit an alarming level of warming. It comes on the back of serious marine heatwaves in the Northern Hemisphere summer.

Such warming is highly dangerous for corals. Every half a degree of ocean warming increases their risk of bleaching and potential death.

The best long-term strategy to protecting Earth's coral reefs is to dramatically cut greenhouse gas emissions and so limit global warming. But in the meantime, we must urgently make corals more resilient and protect those that are vulnerable.

That is particularly true for the huge, ancient features of reefs known as boulder corals. Research suggests they will be a vital part of reef survival in a warmer world.

### The old-growth trees of the sea

Boulder corals (*Porites*) can grow to more than 10m high and live for more than 600 years. In Australia they are often referred to as "bommies". Each bommie can comprise multiple species, but they're often a single massive individual.

The corals play a crucial role in reefs, including providing habitat for marine life. Importantly, they can maintain these functions even when other coral species are absent.

Some species are thought to be resistant to stress. Old corals have likely experienced – and survived – past warming episodes, proving their resilience.

For example, a paper in 2021 described a giant boulder coral discovered on the Great Barrier Reef which was thought to be more than 400 years old. It has survived 80 major cyclones, numerous coral bleaching events and centuries of exposure to other threats.

This resilience can benefit the whole reef ecosystem. We can think of boulder corals as akin to old-growth trees in a forest. Just like forests containing big, old trees are more resistant to fire, studies show a mix of different growth forms, including old and large boulder corals, fare better in the long-term under marine warming.

Older and bigger corals may also produce more offspring, so can more rapidly replenish the reef after disturbances.

Clearly, as our oceans face unprecedented pressures under climate change, we must protect – and learn from – these sentinels of the sea.

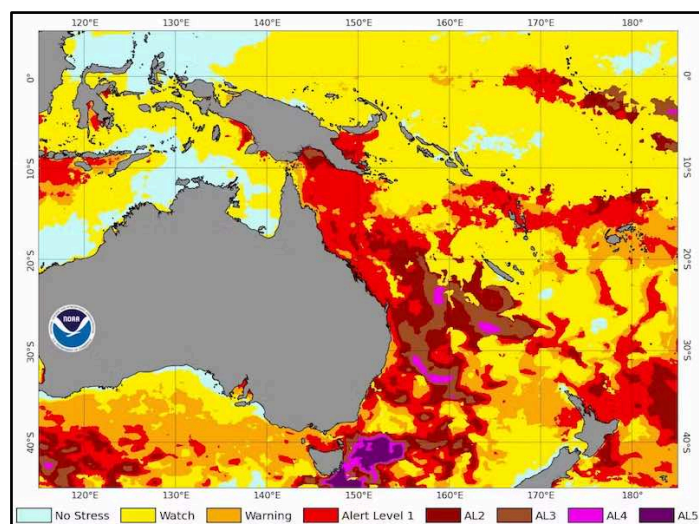
### Preparing for the challenges ahead

Understanding boulder corals is crucial to predicting how they might cope under climate change, and planning for their protection.

But scientists still have much to learn about boulder corals. In particular, we don't know exactly how many species exist, their life histories and how they evolved.

My colleagues and I are aiming to overcome this knowledge gap. We are studying reefs across Australia, with a particular focus on boulder corals at Ningaloo Reef off Western Australia.

We are creating maps of what species of boulder corals exist and where they are located. And using cutting-edge genomics technology, such as DNA sequencing, we are measuring the tolerance of each species to warming and trying to predict when they will reproduce.



*An image showing various levels of bleaching alert around Australia.*

Importantly, we are also examining the mutually beneficial relationship between the corals and algae. This relationship provides algae with shelter, gives corals their colour and provides nutrients to both partners. It may also be a main factor in coral resistance to warmer temperatures.

So far, we have found more diversity than initially expected. This is exciting because it may signal an

increased capacity to resist different types of stress. But the work to fully map Ningaloo's coral diversity has only just begun.

We hope our findings, once finalised, can inform local community management actions such as:

- public education campaigns and signs
- managing visitor numbers to reefs
- installing public moorings to reduce harm from boat anchoring, especially during coral spawning.

The information can also be used in broader management actions such as:

- establishing "baseline" conditions from which to measure change
- zoning decisions, including the establishment or ramping up of marine park protections, especially for resilient coral species and individuals
- impact assessments following events such as heatwaves
- direct conservation actions for iconic, at-risk bommies, such as providing shade to diminish stress from heat
- the development of national reef management plans.

### Something worth fighting for

The stress to coral wrought by recent marine heatwaves compounds damage incurred over decades. The Great Barrier Reef, for example, has experienced five major heatwaves in 30 years.

Broadly, making reefs more resilient to these pressures involves:

- resisting, recovering, managing and adapting to shocks across ecosystems
- improving governance structures
- preparing human communities for change.

Awareness of the need to increase reef resilience is growing. For example, it formed the basis of a 2017 blueprint for the Great Barrier Reef and a strategy for the Ningaloo Coast released last year. But more work is required.

There's also a need for coordination across Australia's reef areas. This might include the exchange of knowledge and data between researchers and combined lobbying efforts to better protect reef ecosystems.

What's more, Traditional Owners must be offered the opportunity to be consulted about, and meaningfully engaged in, protection of reef areas, including co-management of Sea Country.

The Australian Coral Reef Society, of which I am a councillor, last week released an open letter to the federal government, calling for action on climate change to protect reefs. The task has never been more urgent.

There is still a lot of reef worth fighting for – but only if we act now.

*The author would like to acknowledge the contribution of Ningaloo marine park managers – in particular, Dr Peter Barnes – to the research she and her colleagues are undertaking.*

### Editorial note:

This article first appeared in *The Conversation* on 22 February 2024 and is published under a [Creative Commons Attribution-No Derivatives licence](#).

The author receives funding from the Australian Research Council in the form of the Discovery Early Career Researcher Award (DECRA) and holds a joint position as Principal Research Scientist at Minderoo Foundation, a philanthropic organisation

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## Industry Principles for Establishing Effective Measures to Combat and Eliminate Harassment and Bullying in the Maritime Sector

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### (ICS Guidelines)

The ability of the maritime sector to successfully combat harassment and bullying on board ships highly depends on the effectiveness of company policies and other complementary measures. This includes how they are developed, implemented, applied and monitored.



Drawing inspiration from an array of company policies and complementary initiatives, ICS and its global network of shipowners and operators have produced a set of industry principles for establishing effective measures to combat harassment and bullying.

These are outlined below.

### Five High-Level Principles

Company policies and complementary measures to successfully combat harassment and bullying in the maritime sector should be mindful of the following high-level principles:

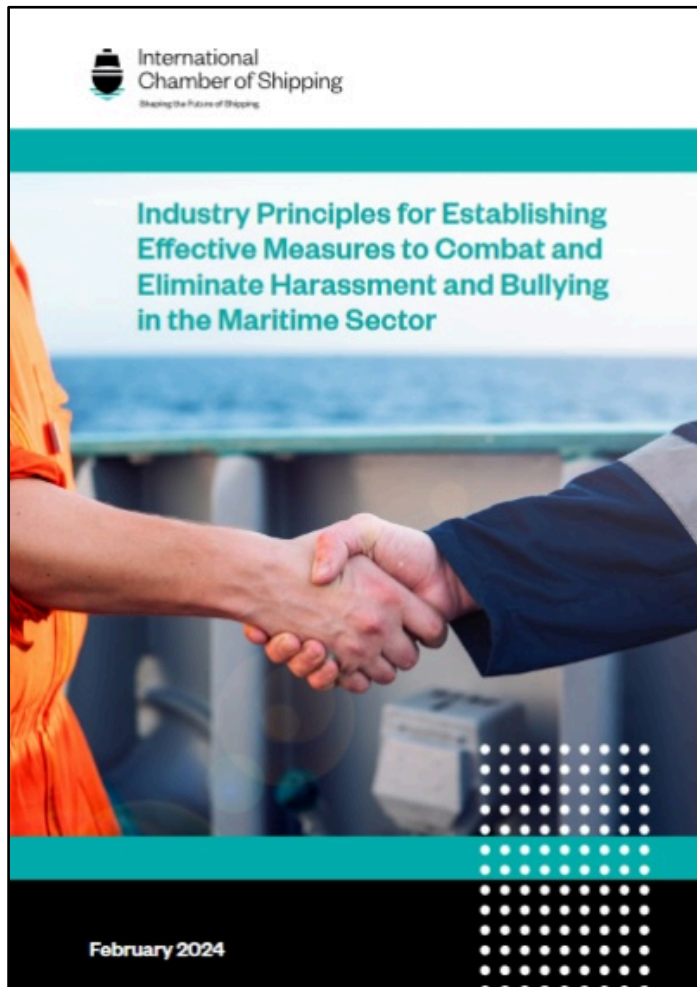
1. Be data driven (e.g., surveying employees on board and ashore).
2. Foster a culture of inclusion and diversity.

3. Support all cultural backgrounds, races, religions and faith.
4. Treat complaints of harassment or bullying with seriousness and treat those making complaints with respect and dignity, avoiding “victim blaming”.
5. Include a statement of strong leadership commitment to the elimination of harassment and bullying.

### Eight Detailed Principles

Company policies and complementary measures to successfully combat harassment and bullying in the maritime sector should also be mindful of the following, more detailed, principles.

1. Defining ‘harassment and bullying’.
2. Raising awareness about harassment and bullying throughout the company.
3. Establishing anti-harassment and bullying policies.
4. Ensuring companywide support for anti-harassment and bullying policies.
5. Considering additional measures to complement anti-harassment and bullying policies.
6. Identifying and implementing further measures to complement anti-harassment and bullying policies.
7. Benchmarking companies’ anti-harassment and bullying policies and complementary measures.
8. Fostering a positive work culture on board.



**All shipowners and operators are being strongly encouraged to take these ICS principles into account, when reviewing their existing policies or establishing new policies and complementary measures to address harassment and bullying.**

The full ICS guideline document as a 4MB pdf is available here: <https://tinyurl.com/5hfewsbn>

### Piled a little too high?

*By Michael Grey, IFSMA Honorary Member*

He intended to pass. Probably, he won't make that mistake again. We all hope for the best, but it is slightly concerning to consider, in the event of the Houthi attacks on shipping continuing into the southern winter, all these container ships diverting around the Cape of Storms, with their huge, high, deck loads. There was a picture published the other day showing a big Far East ship arriving in a European port, deep laden, with boxes eleven high abaft the exhausts. You probably would not take bets against some spectacular stack collapses occurring in an area where exceptional waves are routinely met with. Will the carriers continue to play the percentage game and hope that if a stack collapses, it happens on someone else's ship? One anticipates that they will.

There was some useful research undertaken by Gard recently on this topic, especially valuable as it represented a good cross section of these incidents, rather than trying to derive lessons from a single casualty, or just a few. The club studied in-depth incidents that occurred to its own entered ships, between 2016 and 2021, and at claims frequencies on a six-year average. There may be some alarm that while the average for feeder ships was found to be 1%, for ultra-large container vessels this rose to 9%. There again, if one considers the exposure to bad weather of these big ships, their tendency for faster roll periods and the height of the stacks, this statistic is not so surprising.

The Gard researchers also considered the weather for a period of up to six days before a reported incident, which is also useful, demonstrating the cumulative effect of prolonged and worsening weather upon the safety and stability of a container stack. Here it is easy to understand the gradual slackening of lashings as the ship moves in a seaway, and the likely impracticality of expecting a small number of crew members to take their lives in their hands checking and tightening lashings, as the ship moves increasingly violently, in worsening weather. It is also not difficult to imagine the gradually deteriorating situation inside a box where the internal securing arrangements have been inadequate and are being tested to destruction by the ship's movement, ultimately damaging the container itself and prejudicing the integrity of an individual stack.

But should not the master of a ship be able to avoid the worst of the weather, bearing in mind the sophisticating of modern forecasting and routing advice? The Gard study notes the phenomenon of different “risk tolerance,” pointing out that while a master might be more than willing to mitigate the



possibility of damage by taking a longer and smoother route, the commercial operator may prioritise time and fuel saving, effectively “pushing the limits.” It is not difficult, these days, to imagine which party is calling the shots. The authors also point out that while the theory of bad weather avoidance might seem relatively simple, the practicalities are rather more complex. Similarly, there may be differences in the solutions provided by loading computers to the reality, on account of weight misdeclarations and actual stowage locations.

The club also points to the problem of worn and corroded lashing equipment, which constitutes one of the “top three” issues when containerships are inspected by surveyors. One wonders whether there should be tighter or more stringent routeing criteria when “worn” ships are being operated, as there seems little indication that those stowing cargo will avoid using slots where there are corroded sockets and lashing eyes. Custom and practice in commercial shipping seems to take little account of either external criteria like weather or internal problems such as the age or condition of a ship and its equipment, when considering its capacity on any voyage. Nobody, therefore, should expect that ships diverting around the Cape during the present “emergency” will be more lightly laden. It is a factor of the passing years, but this writer can recall concerned articles being written about the wisdom of loading containers on deck more than two high in the winter, North Atlantic.

**This article was first published in The Maritime Advocate Online No 850 of 23 February 2024 and appears here by kind permission of the author and of the editor.**

**Michael Grey is former editor of Lloyd’s List.**

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## ***Galaxy Leader***

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### **Industry calls for release of crew**

On 19 February we saw the three-month anniversary of the Houthi seizure of *Galaxy Leader*\* and its twenty-five seafarers in the Red Sea.

The vessel, a roll-on/roll-off vehicle carrier, was seized on the 19 November last.

Elements of the maritime industry joined together with organizations from around the world to express their concern for the seafarers who have been held hostage, and called upon the Houthis to release the crew of *Galaxy Leader*.

Statements dispersed widely read: *‘The 25 seafarers who make up the crew of the Galaxy Leader are innocent victims of the ongoing aggression against world shipping, and their plight is a major concern as the merchant shipping community continues to come under attack.*

*‘All efforts must be made by international organisations and States to secure the release of the seafarers.*

*‘It is abhorrent that seafarers were seized by military forces and that they have been kept from their families and loved ones for too long. All 25 crew members of the Galaxy Leader must be released now.’*

\*Bahamas-flag vehicle carrier, built 2002, 48710gt.

**Readers will see below the full list of co-signatories to this statement:**

***Asian Shipowners Association***

***Asociación de Navieros Españoles (ANAVE)***

***BIMCO***

***Chamber of Marine Commerce***

***Chamber of Shipping of America***

***Confederazione Italiana Armatori***

***Cruise Lines International Association***

***Cyprus Shipping Chamber***

***European Community Shipowners’ Association***

***Federation of National Associations of Ship Brokers and Agents***

***IFSMA***

***InterManager***

***International Association of Ports & Harbors***

***International Chamber of Shipping***

***International Christian Maritime Association***

***International Marine Contractors Association***

***International Maritime Employers’ Council***

***International Parcel Tankers Association***

***International Transport Workers’ Federation***

***Japanese Shipowners’ Association***

***Liberian Shipowners’ Council***

***Norwegian Shipowners’ Association***

***Royal Association of Netherlands Shipowners***

***Swiss Shipowners Association***

***The Seamen’s Church Institute***

***UK Chamber of Shipping***

***World Shipping Council***

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## ***From the IFSMA Office***

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### **Articles**

Members are reminded that you can submit articles of interest to Shipmasters for publication in the IFSMA Newsletter. We are happy to check the English and make any adjustments necessary.

### **Next General Assembly**

Advance notice - The next IFSMA Biennial General Assembly will be held in the Faroe Islands on 20/21/22 August 2025. Reserve these dates now in your diaries so you do not double book.