

CONFEDERATION OF EUROPEAN SHIPMASTERS' ASSOCIATIONS

CESMA NEWS



MARCH 2025



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CESMA NEWS

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CONFEDERATION OF EUROPEAN SHIPMASTERS' ASSOCIATIONS

SECRETARIAT:

MUNTPLEIN 10
NL-1012WR AMSTERDAM
THE NETHERLANDS
Tel.: SEE LIST OF BOARD MEMBERS BELOW
e-mail: info@cesma-europe.org
website: <https://www.cesma-europe.org>

PRESIDENT:

CAPT. D. DIMITROV, BULGARIA
Mob: +359 888 340 160
e-mail: president@cesma-europe.org
private: mitko652012@yahoo.com

DEPUTY PRESIDENT:

CAPT. G . RIBARIC, SLOVENIA
Mob: +386 31 375 823 Home: +386 56 772 642
e-mail: deputy.president@cesma-europe.org
private: jrg.ribaric@gmail.com

VICE PRESIDENT:

CAPT. M. BADELL, SPAIN
Mob: +34 680 321 138 Home: +34 934 089 288
e-mail: vice.president@cesma-europe.org
private: badellmariano@gmail.com

SECRETARY-GENERAL:

CAPT. H. ARDILLON, FRANCE
Mob: +33 609 450 057 Home: +33 235 801 505
e-mail: general.secretary@cesma-europe.org
private: hubert.ardillon@gmail.com

ADMINISTRATOR:

CAPT. H. AMMERLAAN, NETHERLAND
Mob: +31 646 260 098
e-mail: administrator@cesma-europe.org
private: h.ammerlaan56@gmail.com

WEBMASTER:

CAPT. D. LAKOS, CROATIA
Mob: +385 98 433 685
e-mail: webmaster@cesma-europe.org
private: damirlakos@gmail.com

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2025: 30 YEARS FOR CESMA

As it is already known, our 30th CESMA Council Meeting and AGA will be hold at Lisbon in next May. It is a pleasure to confirm that the AGA will take place in the European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA) premises.

At sea, the news are good sometimes, but sometimes only. Since beginning of the year, the nicest news came from Yemen. Surprising yes. And it was after more than one year the Galaxy Leader and her crew were freed. And this is exactly one of the best informations for seafarers, even if we can consider that the fourteen months as hostages is not understandable. So surprising, because in the same time, other seafarers and captains are not free, retained by State authorities in prison or by pirates, piracy is still active at sea. We should keep in mind that our Croatian colleague and his chief officer of M/V Phoenician-M are not retained on drug smuggling, but only because they were in charge of the vessel. And surprising also, because it is still very difficult for captains and crews to be forced to transit via the Red Sea, the navigation in this area being not enough safe.

Navigation is dangerous. One more roll-on/roll-off container vessel had a fire, which led to crew to evacuate using lifeboats, and of course we should wait the incident investigation report to know why there was fire. And in March, there was the collision near English coasts between a container vessel at speed of 16 knots and a tanker at anchor. Then also no doubt that the investigation report would be very interesting to read.

Probably, beyond other subjects, we will speak about during the AGA, where all the Board is wishing to see You.

Capt. Hubert ARDILLON
Secretary General CESMA

THE CROATIAN UPKSJ – KRAJLICA MORA ASSOCIATION REGRETS TO ANNOUNCE THE DEATH OF CAPTAIN JURAJ KARNINČIĆ ON JAN. 8TH 2025.

Jurko was a man of the sea, a captain of the high seas, and above all, a true devotee of his calling.

Born in Bol on the island of Brač in 1945, the sea was his path, his inspiration, and his love from the earliest days of his life. With unwavering passion and determination, he embarked on his maritime career. After graduating from the Maritime High School in Split and the Maritime College in Rijeka, he boarded the ship Trepča as a cadet and set sail for distant New Orleans.

In that youth filled with dreams and enthusiasm, a story began that would last for decades – a story about a captain who, with his knowledge, responsibility, and character, left an indelible mark on seafaring.

For Jurko, sailing was never an adventure; it was a profession that demanded dedication, discipline, and deep respect for the sea. His love for sailing was endless. The sea, for him, was an inspiration, a place of beauty and challenge, but also a force requiring caution and reverence.

His words: “If you respect the sea, it will be humble and obedient to you in return,” remain a timeless message for all of us who share a passion for sailing.

All members of the Northern Adriatic Captains’ Association “Queen of the Sea” express their deep gratitude to Jurko for his selfless and devoted work as the president of the association. At our last meeting, we joked that Jurko should remain a lifetime president – a sentiment that, to our great sorrow, has now come true.

Captain Juraj KARNINČIĆ was much more than a seafarer. He was a man of great heart, profound wisdom, and incredible vitality. His legacy lives on in all who had the privilege to sail with him, learn from him, or simply share moments with this extraordinary man.

Dear Jurko, may you have calm seas and safe passage on your final horizons.



Capt. KARNINČIĆ (on right) with CESMA Board during 26th AGA at RIJEKA on Sept. 2021

INTERVIEW GIVEN TO RIJEKA MEDIAS ABOUT CAPTAIN JURAJ KARNINČIĆ

Q: What impressed you most during your first encounter with Captain Juraj KARNINČIĆ?

A: I had the honor and privilege of meeting Captain Juraj KARNINČIĆ back in 1992, when we boarded the ship Trepča together. Jurko, as we all fondly called him, was then the Chief Officer, while I served as the Third Deck Officer. That first voyage together marked the beginning of a friendship and collaboration that spanned more than five decades.

Jurko was not just a colleague but also a source of inspiration. His calm demeanor always served as a pillar of support for his crew, and his authority stemmed from the deep respect he commanded among all who had the privilege of working with him.

Q: Which moment do you consider significant in his extraordinary career?

A: Captain Juraj KARNINČIĆ had an outstanding career, which began in 1964 after he graduated from the Maritime High School in Split. By the age of 26, he had passed the captain's exam, and at just 31, he became the commander of a ship. His first ship under his command was Nikola Tesla, then part of the Jugolinija fleet. This marked the start of an impressive career as a captain, which spanned decades and took him across the world's oceans – all except for the Antarctic and Australian waters.

After retiring, Jurko remained active in maritime circles. He was particularly proud of his role as the captain of the training ship Kraljica Mora (Queen of the Sea), where he had the opportunity to mentor future generations of seafarers.

His vast experience and expertise were always in demand, and he willingly shared his knowledge, enriching the maritime community around him.

Q: How did his philosophy of respect for the sea influence his approach to sailing and life?

A: Jurko was not only a top-tier seafarer but also a man deeply connected to the sea. His love for the sea was deeply rooted in his childhood. Born in Bol on the island of Brač in 1945, he grew up in a family that lived off the sea and the land. His grandfather, father, and other family members were involved in fishing and traditional shipbuilding. This connection to the sea shaped his character and steered him toward a life in maritime pursuits.

He respected the sea and its power, fully aware of the dangers it posed but also of the beauty it offered. His well-known saying, “If you respect the sea, it will be humble and obedient to you in return,” was the cornerstone of his sailing philosophy.

For Jurko, a ship was not just a means of travel; it was a community where every crew member had a vital role to play. He always emphasized the importance of teamwork and solidarity, considering them the foundation of successful navigation and safety at sea.

Q: How do you think Captain KARNINČIĆ left his mark on maritime affairs and his colleagues?

A: Jurko was a man of remarkable energy and unwavering dedication. His legacy lies not only in his professional accomplishments but also in the relationships he built with people. Everyone who knew him remembers him as a man with a warm smile, a big heart, and an indomitable spirit.

His passion for the sea and for life left a profound impact on all who knew him. He was not only a captain but also a teacher, mentor, and friend.

Q: What is your farewell message to Captain KARNINČIĆ?

A: Today, as we remember Captain Juraj KARNINČIĆ, we honor an extraordinary man. His life was devoted to the sea and to the people around him. Jurko taught us the importance of discipline, solidarity, and love for what we do.

The sea was his love, his inspiration, and his challenge. His spirit lives on in all of us who had the privilege of knowing him.

Captain Bero VRANIC
Krajlica Mora Association – Rijeka

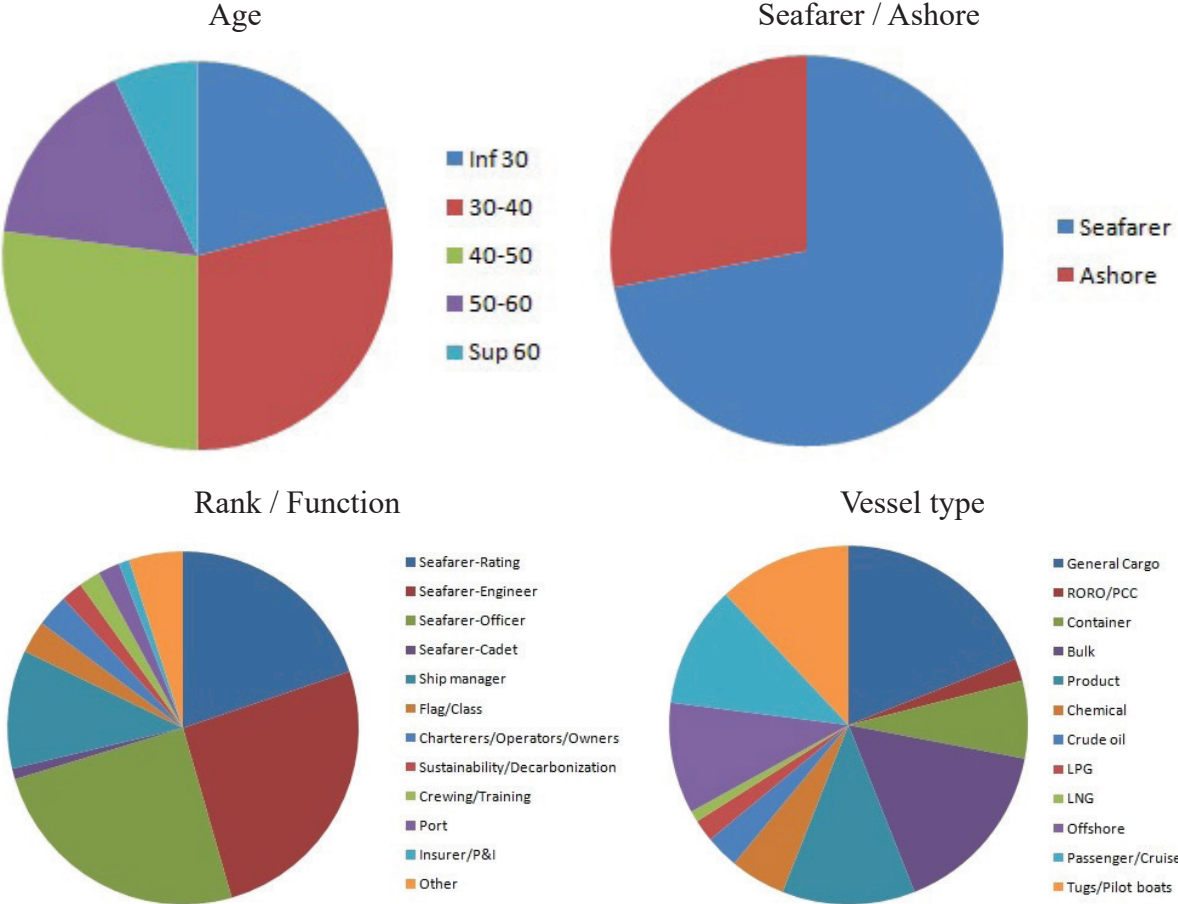
INVESTIGATING MARITIME COMMUNITY PERCEPTIONS OF AMMONIA AS A MARINE FUEL

AFCAN was contacted in February 2024 regarding an investigation initiated by Maersk Mc Kinney Moller Center for Zero Carbon Shipping in order to find out the reluctance and training desires of seafarers embarked on ships whose propulsion would be ensured by ammonia. This survey was then relayed to all CESMA Members Associations. We do not know how many responses came from CESMA, thank you to those who responded; however there was a synthesis of the global responses received. It is this synthesis which is proposed below.

Decarbonization of the shipping industry will require widespread uptake of new low- or zero-carbon alternative fuels. Ammonia has been identified as a promising alternative shipping fuel in the mid to long term, with the development of ammonia-fueled marine engines and ship designs ongoing. However, the characteristics of ammonia, including its toxicity and gaseous nature, mean that its implementation as a marine fuel will require much more than technical readiness: the industry will also need a strong focus on safety, human factors, and new training requirements relating to ammonia as a fuel.

To support this focus, the Mærsk Mc-Kinney Møller Center for Zero Carbon Shipping (MMMCZCS) has undertaken a survey of over 2,000 respondents across the maritime community to better understand their perceptions, concerns, and requests relating to ammonia as a marine fuel. Throughout the multiple-choice questionnaire, the respondents had the option of sharing their thoughts in the (optional) open fields. More than 1,500 comments were compiled from these open-field responses.

The survey reached respondents covering a range of different ages, positions, vessel segments, and level of experience with gaseous fuels or ammonia as cargo. Over half (58.6%) of the total respondents agreed that they would be willing to sail on or work with ammonia-fueled vessels, while 24% were unsure and 12% reported that they would not be willing. More specifically, 59% of seafarers and 57% of ashore personnel who responded to the survey agreed that they would be willing to work with ammonia. While more than half of the respondents were willing to sail on or work with ammonia-fueled vessels, these respondents nevertheless raised some specific concerns, especially regarding training and safety.



It should be noted that, except for the transport of LPG, on-board sailors responded in greater numbers than on-shore service employees. This may seem strange, since LPG carrier ships are authorized to transport ammonia, and therefore sailors who were able, for a certain number, also to load ammonia.

The seafarers' responses were provided by sailors with experience of ammonia as cargo for 13%, and 23% with experience on a gas-powered ship.

To the question: would you sail on a ship powered by ammonia?, sailors answered yes to 59%, perhaps 26% and no to 15% (1% without answer); they are the most reluctant mechanics (54% yes and 29% no); and the younger the sailor, the more willing he is.

Many survey responses highlighted a desire for more knowledge and training about ammonia. When asked about knowledge needs regarding ammonia as a marine fuel, respondents (seafarers and shore-based personnel) highlighted many safety-related topics, such as the impact of ammonia on humans and the environment (72% and 55%), firefighting (51% and 33%) and other emergency response procedures (54% and 50%), as well as the characteristics of ammonia (55% and 38%).

Respondents also expressed a desire for comprehensive training, including safety-focused topics such as leak management (67% and 65%), emergency response (62% and 61%), and risk analysis (60% and 62%), but also on new procedures and engine maintenance (47% and 45%), regulations (42% and 44%) and gas as fuel (39% and 38%); likewise the specific need for refueling training on simulator and on board (57% and 51%).

For these specific training needs, it should be noted that seafarers who have already sailed on ships loading dangerous goods in bulk are more likely to require training than those who have no experience with these cargoes.

Continuing on the theme of safety, the survey sheds light on the primary safety concerns of both seafarers and ashore personnel. The respondents' basic perception of the characteristics (e.g., toxicity) and safe handling of ammonia seems to be generally accurate and reflects a good understanding of the possible risks involved. However, the survey showed a lack of knowledge regarding some technical aspects of ammonia handling and operations. Further study, communication, and training on these topics are, therefore, important. The survey responses also highlighted the importance of safer technology and design to support ammonia's introduction as a marine fuel.

Another area of concern for survey respondents was the effectiveness and readiness of regulations – that is, whether regulations would be ready in time to appropriately protect seafarers from ammonia-related safety risks. Respondents additionally called for strict safety standards surrounding the design of the fuel systems.

Implementation of ammonia as a marine fuel will also require additional investments, such as costs associated with upskilling and training of seafarers. In the survey comments, some seafarers expressed their desire for monetary compensation due to the potential risks involved with the operation of ammonia as a marine fuel and the added complexity to their job.

Overall, the survey results suggest that the majority of the maritime community is willing to sail on and work with ammonia-fueled vessels. With that said, several barriers remain that will have to be addressed, including comprehensive training and safer ship and system designs. Some of these topics will be addressed in current or future MMMCZCS projects, including a project linked to future revisions of the STCW Tables relating to the International Code of Safety for Ships Using Gases or Other Low-flashpoint Fuels (IGF Code) in the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (STCW Code).

In publishing this survey report, we aim to share the opinions, concerns, and suggested ways forward raised by the community who will be most directly impacted by the use of ammonia as a marine fuel. The knowledge shared in this report can help the industry to address the concerns and misperceptions raised by first-in-line operators. In addition, the survey findings can be used to shape future training content and address upcoming ship and fuel systems designs, as well as guidelines for safe bunkering and in-port handling of ammonia.

To summarize:

1: The majority of respondents from across the maritime community are willing to sail on or work with ammonia-fueled vessels.

2: Acceptance of ammonia as a marine fuel is conditional on a comprehensive level of training and certification.

3: Enhanced, reliable, and safe onboard fuel systems and inherently safer ship designs are seen as critical safety elements.

Capt. Hubert ARDILLON
Secretary General CESMA

PHOENICIAN-M

Legal Case Analysis of Captain Marko Bekavac

Captain Marko Bekavac is a highly experienced seafarer with 33 years of maritime service, including 17 years as a deep-sea captain. He is a reputable individual with a family in Split, Croatia, and has maintained an unblemished professional record without any prior incidents involving legal or regulatory authorities.

In his most recent assignment, Captain Bekavac was employed through TEAM SHIP CREW, a Hamburg-based agency, and served as the master of the vessel PHOENICIAN-M, owned by the Turkish company Iskenderun Shipping Management, sailing under the Panamanian flag. This assignment marked his first experience navigating Caribbean waters and his first visit to Colombia.

Upon assuming command of the vessel in Gibraltar on June 20, 2023, Captain Bekavac was unaware of the planned voyage route. He was the only Croatian crew member onboard and did not previously know the crew. The vessel entered Colombian waters and docked at the port of Barranquilla on August 25, 2023, to load bulk coal for transport to Turkey.

Given the port's known reputation for drug smuggling, Captain Bekavac requested additional security measures from the shipowner and the agency, including surveillance cameras and private security personnel. These requests were documented but ignored. Despite this, Captain Bekavac implemented comprehensive security protocols, such as: formal notification to the crew about smuggling risks, 24-hour watch rotations, illumination of the vessel and restricted access, maintaining a log of individuals boarding the vessel, arranging for divers to inspect the ship's hull.



The loading operation was conducted by port workers. On September 5, 2023, an anti-smuggling team initially found nothing suspicious during their search. However, a subsequent search with drug-sniffing dogs on September 6 revealed 14 bags containing 420 kg of cocaine hidden in a tank. Captain Bekavac documented the incident with photographs, logbook entries, and data saved on his laptop and a USB stick. He instructed the crew to conduct a thorough search to ensure no additional contraband was present.

As captain, Bekavac could not directly supervise or inspect the loading of bulk cargo, which was sealed immediately after loading. Responsibility for cargo handling rests primarily with port workers, the second officer, and the chief engineer. The captain's duties typically involve ensuring proper loading procedures, stability of the vessel, and the absence of material defects in the cargo.

Despite the discovery of drugs in Colombia, the vessel was permitted to continue its voyage to Turkey. Colombian authorities found no evidence linking Captain Bekavac to the smuggling.

Prior to entering the Turkish port of Erdemir, Captain Bekavac proactively informed Turkish authorities about the Colombian incident. Upon inspection, Turkish police discovered an additional 137.036 kg of drugs in cargo hold no. 2. Unlike in Colombia, Turkish authorities did not present the evidence to the captain or confirm its contents in his presence. They confiscated his laptop, USB stick, and phone.

Captain Bekavac, along with the first officer and ten crew members, was detained, while the remaining crew was released, and the vessel continued its journey.

Captain and the ship's first officer have been imprisoned in Turkey since October 2023, with the captain receiving a 30-year prison sentence.

The court's verdict was based solely on the principle of command responsibility, asserting that the captain is responsible for the cargo (except for sealed containers), the crew, equipment, and all incidents on board. According to Article 1092/1 of the Turkish Commercial Code, one of the captain's duties is to prevent the loading of contraband and to ensure that no illegal cargo is loaded. The court argued that the captain failed to act as a prudent commander and did not take sufficient precautions, thereby holding him guilty of allowing the transport of prohibited substances on the ship.

Under Turkish criminal law, a conviction requires evidence of intent to commit a crime. Intent is defined as "the conscious and deliberate commission of an act."

In the appeal filed within the legal timeframe, the following points were raised: the USB stick was not reviewed, and its contents were not examined.

Security certificates (two in total) were not inspected, nor were the prescribed security measures and the responsible personnel identified.

The certificates, based on the International Ship and Port Facility Security (ISPS) Code (adopted in Turkey on December 12, 2022), state that the shipowner is required to appoint a company security officer and a ship security officer. It is explicitly stated that the ship's security officer is responsible for handling cargo and supplies, which is not the captain's duty. Additional security measures for the ship should have been arranged and paid for by the port.

Captain Bekavac made multiple requests for additional security measures to the shipowner and the agency, which were ignored, serving as evidence of his lack of intent to smuggle drugs.

Article 21 of the Turkish Penal Code states that "the commission of a criminal act depends on the existence of intent," and intent requires awareness and deliberate action.

The appeal argues that no evidence of intent was established during the trial. On the contrary, the proceedings showed that Captain Bekavac took every possible step to secure the ship, requested additional security measures, informed Turkish authorities and police about the drugs, and was unaware of the voyage route prior to boarding.

The trial also revealed the first officer's primary responsibility for overseeing loading, transportation, and unloading operations, which falls under his duties and not the captain's. The court's decision was made without referencing the cargo manifest, a crucial document defining the terms and conditions of transportation. It is impossible for a captain to supervise loading 24/7 over a six-day period, which contradicts the normal course of operations. The trial failed to address who would oversee loading during the captain's rest periods. Additionally, not all crew members were questioned, their statements were not collected, and no investigation was conducted into the drug found in Colombia, nor why the ship was allowed to depart despite the discovery of a significant quantity of drugs.

It is worth noting that coal is delivered to ports in bulk via trucks, making it nearly impossible to detect foreign substances hidden within the cargo. Due to the nature of coal, anything that comes into contact with it turns black.

The second-instance court's decision is expected within six months to a year.

The most crucial point is that no evidence or connection has been established between the seized drug and Captain Bekavac.

We hope that the second-instance court will reconsider the case, uphold Captain Bekavac's appeal, and acquit him of all charges.

Unfortunately, the appeal was rejected on January 14, 2025. A 14-day period for further appeals remains open. If this appeal is not accepted, Captain Bekavac will have to seek justice in the Supreme Court.

UPKS (Split), Member of ZHUPK (Croatia)

PHOENICIAN-M (continuing)
Chief Officer Ali Alkhohhari
Letter for Helsinki Shipmaster's Association ry



To Whom it May Concern,

Subject: Captain Marko Bekavac & Chief Officer Ali Alkhohhari

The Panama-flagged bulker mv Phoenician-M, was transporting coal from Colombia to Turkish port Eregli in October 2023. The Turkish authorities searched the vessel and located 137 kilos of cocaine mixed in among the coal in the vessel's cargo hold number two.

The ship had a crew of 20 from the Croatia Philippines, Finland, Poland and Russia aboard, when it was detained in Turkey. Turkish authorities arrested 10 crew members including captain Marko Bekavac and chief officer Ali Alkhohhari on charges related to narcotics.

Captain Bekavac as the master reported that the ship did not have strong security measures while loading in Colombia even if he had requested that from the manager of the vessel. He told the Turkish authorities as much he could, when the vessel arrived to the Turkish port Eregli.

The court failed to produce any proof that connected the crew to the cocaine. Eight crew members were found not guilty. The court did, however, stress that the master and the chief officer are in charge of the vessel and cargo operations. Because the cocaine was found in cargo hold, the court sentenced the captain and chief officer to 30 years in prison. Turkish authorities concentrated only on the senior officers' responsibilities, not on the smuggling of narcotics.

It seems that maritime is the only industry, where people are guilty until proven innocent.

The relatives of Captain Marko Bekavac and chief officer Ali Alkhohhari appealed the verdict, but the Court rejected the appeal on January 7th, 2025, and the verdict remained in effect.

Next step is to appeal to the Supreme Court, but it can take 2 years before the case is taken into consideration. That is a very long time considering that they are innocent.

To be convicted of being responsible for the ship is special. What is this, sacrificing two sea-farers, trying to show? That it is not worth bringing drugs to Turkey, or is it a face-washing operation for the authorities?

If we want to make shipping an attractive profession in the future, this won't help. How can we get qualified officers on ships, if there is a fear that they will end up in prison for something they didn't do. Seafarers, and especially the master and senior officers, are being prosecuted for many different things today, because their responsibility is so wide that it is easy to find them guilty.

Helsinki Shipmasters association's opinion on the matter is that this must be kept on the agenda until a decision is made to release them, or that they are transferred to their home countries, Croatia and Finland.

We have been in contact with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for the matter, but they will not tell us of the progress of the case, because we are not relatives, and this is a criminal charge. However, we will send them everything that is written about the matter so that they are aware of the situation.

The case has been covered quite a bit in the shipping press, but the Turkish authorities are not giving in. Lloyd's Maritime Institute has sent a letter to International Maritime Organization IMO regarding the matter. The Beaufort Sea n Shore Foundation has also called the President of Turkey about the matter.

Stig SUNDBERG
Helsinki Shipmaster's Association ry

CROSS (MRCC) GRIS-NEZ 2023

ACTIVITY REVIEW

A- Search And Rescue

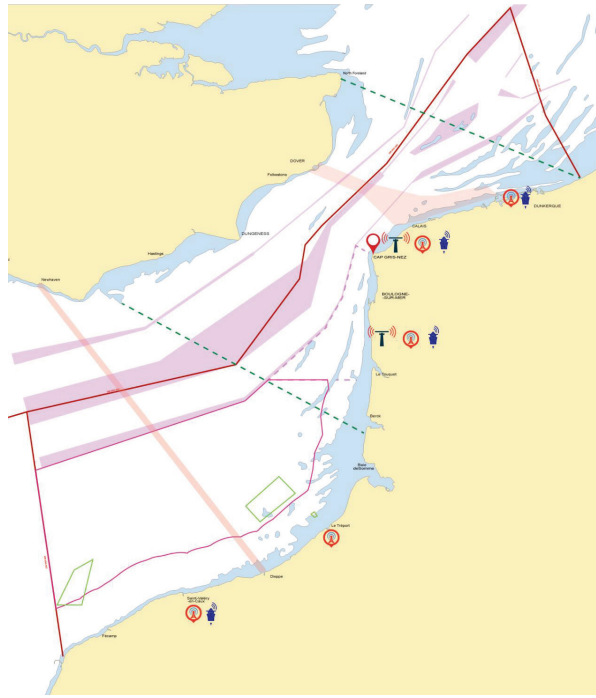
During the year 2023, CROSS Gris-Nez coordinated 1,273 maritime rescue or assistance operations in its search and rescue zone between the Belgian border and Cape Antifer. This represents a decrease of 33% compared to the number of events coordinated in 2022, due in particular to a drop in Channel crossings by migrant boats (small boats), which does not reduce their dangerousness or the complexity of the conduct of associated operations by CROSS. Based on its roles as SAR Point of Contact and Single Point of Contact, the CROSS Gris-Nez was also required to coordinate 603 international operations.

Thus, in total, CROSS teams had to handle 1,876 rescue or assistance operations from northern France to the far reaches of the Globe's poles.

With 62.05% (790 operations) of events, the migratory phenomenon in the Channel stands out as the dominant factor in maritime rescue operations. CROSS also coordinated 483 "classic" rescue or assistance operations not involving small boat crossings.

If operations linked to the migratory phenomenon are almost exclusively handled under search and rescue (SAR), there is more diversity among the 483 other coordinated events. For the latter, 283 concerned search and rescue (SAR), 122 were linked to assistance to ships and 78 concerned various operations.

If the months of July and August did not generate an increase in operations, due to the unfavorable weather for this summer season, the late season of September and October, which was particularly mild and sunny, led to a higher number of operations than the usual average.



CROSS Gris-Nez zone of responsibility

The international function of SPOC (Single Point of Contact) Gris-Nez

The CROSS Gris-Nez was required to take charge of 603 events outside its Search and Rescue Region (SRR), involving a total of 1,496 people, including 29 injured and 5 dead.

The types of international events, detailed below, are distributed as follows:

- 421 Search and Rescue operations
- 21 Maritime Assistance Service operations
- 108 Miscellaneous operations
- 53 security operations

1- Human toll

In total, 35,301 people were involved in operations coordinated by CROSS Gris-Nez in its area of responsibility, including 5,969 rescued, 336 assisted, 2,131 rescued alone, 732 involved in false alarms as well as 24,382 monitored during a crossing of the Channel in small boats (assisted).

More than 96% of those involved (33,986) in the total operations are migrants.

This particularly high number, compared to the total number of operations coordinated by the CROSS, should be qualified with regard to the configuration of the small boats engaging in a crossing of the Channel; These precarious boats commonly have several dozen people on board (sometimes up to nearly 90 per crossing).

On average, a migrant boat has, depending on the month, around fifty people on board during the crossing.

17 people were declared dead in operations in 2023, including 11 linked to the migratory phenomenon, and 36 were injured, including 8 linked to the migratory phenomenon, the phenomenon strongly impacting the results associated with rescue operations in the SRR.

The phenomena or activities that led to deaths in the CROSS Gris-Nez area are respectively:

- the migratory phenomenon (11);
- falls into the sea from pleasure boats (4);
- swimming (2).

CROSS Gris-Nez was also called upon to process 5 discoveries of bodies on the foreshore and 1 discovery of bodies at sea, which could not be recovered.

4 people are missing, including 2 migrants after the boat they had boarded sank.

Main generating facts about people (generating events – number of people involved):

Tidal isolation 220	Undetermined situation 97	Medical problem 31
Swimming 28	Other event 26	Falling into the sea 24
Bodily accident 22	Inexperience 13	Discovery of bodies 6
Snorkeling 2	Suicide attempt 2	

With regard to people, apart from undetermined situations, the main events causing distress situations are as follows:

– isolation by the tide: 50 events during the year 2023 representing 209 people involved (excluding migrants isolated by the tide during operations linked to crossings);

– medical problems and personal accidents: 53 events during 2023 representing 55 people involved;

– swimming: 28 people involved.

Medical problems and personal accidents:

Medical problems and personal accidents were mainly encountered on fishing vessels (12 events) and passenger vessels (16 events). Professional sailors, including fishermen, remain the main ones affected with 27 people involved.

Medical problems and personal accidents have led to:

– 16 dockside receptions;

– 8 medical evacuations (EVASAN);

– 7 medical evacuations (EVAMED).

The rest of the operations required care on board without diversion of the ships.

Regarding bodily injury accidents only, they are mainly recorded on fishing vessels (7 fishing vessels involved in an injury accident to a crew member on board).

2- Activity report

Two thirds of the operations coordinated by CROSS Gris-Nez in 2023 are linked to the migratory phenomenon in the Channel.

The main generating facts on mobiles/floats:

The activity of CROSS Gris-Nez remains extremely marked by the migratory phenomenon.

The generating events at the origin of other operations involving floats are heterogeneous; a majority often remains difficult to determine, particularly when it concerns relayed by witnesses or relatives for those practicing water sports in difficulty.

Occurrences (for a grand total of 1113):

Illegal immigration 790	Propulsion damage 118	Undetermined situation 70
Other event 23	Propeller engaged 17	Electrical damage 15
Grounding 14	Difficulty maneuvering 13	Object discovery 9
Steering gear damage 8	Collision 7	Capsize 5
Waterway 5	Dismasting 3	Inexperience 3
Fire 3	Running out of fuel 2	Calming 2
Dangerous gear on board 2	Rigging damage 2	Anchoring break 1
Explosion 1		

The main mobiles involved:

Given the conditions for crossing the Channel in small boats, motorized inflatables represent nearly three quarters of the mobiles involved in the operations coordinated by CROSS in its SRR.

Pleasure activities then make up the majority with 12.4% of floats involved in operations.

Various nautical leisure activities, including jet-skiing, account for 7.5% of operations. Although nautical leisure practices are heterogeneous, half of the operations concern kite-surfing which therefore turns out to be the most accident-prone activity in proportion.

Commercial activities, more than half of which are professional fishing, represent 6.6% of operations.

Occurrences (for a grand total of 1113):

Pneumatic with engine 790	Sailing pleasure 73	Motor pleasure 65
Fishing vessel 55	Cargo ship 41	Kite surfing 25
Service vessel 13	Other nautical leisure 12	Stand-up paddle 11
Light sail 5	Kayak 5	Passenger ship 5
Not specified 4	Windsurfing 3	Water scooter 2
Survival craft/raft 2	Boat tender 1	Military ship 1

B- MARITIME SURVEILLANCE – SURNAV

General summary of SURNAV operational activity

37,744 passages of vessels of gross tonnage > 300 UMS in the upstream route of the Pas de Calais (Dover) TSS, i.e. 103 vessels per day on average and 1.25% more compared to 2022 (37,277, i.e. 102 vessels per day on average in 2022)

– 19,322 other reports including 17,947 MOUVINF, 1,228 SURNAV, 147 WETREP

– 728 million tones of goods transported, up 0.4% (725 million tones and an increase of 0.4% in 2023), including 292 million tones of dangerous and/or polluting goods (239 million tones and an increase of 22.4% in 2023).

– 95 dangerous situations, i.e. likely to result in an accident

– 1 near miss

– 7 reports of infringement

53 damages reported as such by ships or detected by CROSS, including 33 lasting more than 30 minutes

– 147 anchorage autorisations

– 316 swimmer crossings

Every day, around 200 ships use one of the shipping lanes to cross the Strait of Pas de Calais. Added to this, are the ferry traffic (nearly 100 daily connections), the activity of fishing vessels, the navigation of pleasure craft, the crossings of swimmers and migrant boats.

In 2023, for the ascending route of the Pas de Calais TSS alone, 37,744 vessels reported to CROSS. Traffic in the North-East lane therefore saw an increase of 1.25% in the number of ships compared to 2022.

As part of resolution MSC.190 (79) of December 6, 2004 relating to the reporting system for oil tankers with a deadweight of more than 600 GRT sailing in the particularly vulnerable maritime zone of Western European waters, the CROSS Gris-Nez collected 147 WETREP (Western European Tanker Report) declarations compared to 107 in 2022, consistent with the increase quantities of dangerous goods.

Dangerous products having passed through the NE route (in millions of tons) in 2023 represent 72% class 3 (flammable liquids), 15% class 2 (flammable gases), 10% class 9 (miscellaneous), 2% class 8 (corrosives).

Conclusion SURNAV assessment.

The year 2023 was marked by an increase in the quantities of goods transiting through the DST, in particular dangerous materials (+22.4%). This increase is a continuation of that of 2022. If the number of commercial ship damages remains stable, the increase in the quantities of goods in transit increases the risk in the event of an incident.

The still significant number of crossings by migrant boats requires a reinforced monitoring of the Navigation watch and close contact with commercial vessels in order to avoid dangerous close situations with boats or with State resources engaged in SAR operations.

The detection of a fishing vessel, failing to keep watch, on course to collide with the Fécamp wind farm changing course at the last minute illustrates the need to strengthen navigation surveillance across the entire area. To this end, the experimentation within the CROSS Gris-Nez of new navigation monitoring systems (EGIDE-EWS, ELMAN VTS) was a strong point of the year. By allowing automated alerts, adjusted and adapted to the area, the Gris Nez Maritime Traffic Seervice will be able to intervene more easily in the event of an abnormal situation outside its TSS surveillance zone.

From DIRM-MEMN (Inter-Regional Directorate of the Sea –East Channel-North Sea) report

**Capt. Hubert ARDILLON
Secretary General CESMA**

GMDSS MODERNIZATION SUMMARY

Revised SOLAS Radio communications GMDSS Requirements

A revised SOLAS Chapter IV containing requirements for radio communications applies to new and existing ships on or after 1 January 2024. These requirements apply to all cargo ships of 300 gross tonnages and above, and to all passenger ships, regardless of size, on international voyages. This has been published by the IMO as Resolution MSC.496 (105). It has also published guidelines in COMSAR.1/Circ.32/Rev.3 – Harmonization of GMDSS Requirements for Radio Installations On Board SOLAS Ships.

Impact of Amendments

The amendments to SOLAS Chapter IV have the following major consequences:

- General radio communications are now a separate functional requirement from GMDSS, but are still mandatory for all ships at sea.
- Regulation 12 of SOLAS Chapter IV clearly mentions now that every ship, while at sea, shall maintain, when practicable, a continuous listening watch on VHF channel 16. This way, non-Convention vessels would, if in distress, be able to alert GMDSS – fitted ships.
- MF and HF direct-printing telegraphy (NBDP) is no longer required for transmission and reception of distress and safety radio communications. However, HF NBDP equipment is still maintained for reception of maritime safety information (MSI) and might be used for general radio communications.
- The amended Regulation IV/7.1.1.4 states that “every ship shall be provided with a receiver or receivers capable of receiving MSI and search and rescue related information

throughout the entire voyage in which the ship is engaged”. Equipment to carry on board is depending on the ships trading pattern. IMO circular MSC.1/Circ.1645 gives guidance on choosing equipment to meet the new requirement. Consultation of the IMO GMDSS master plan will help to decide which equipment should be carried on board a ship: NAVTEX, EGC or HF NBDP receiver. Informations broadcasted on NAVTEX and HF NBDP are complementary to the one broadcasted on EGC. Hence, it is generally mandatory to carry a NAVTEX and an EGC receiver when a ship is sailing in and beyond NAVTEX service areas.

- The SOLAS amendments have moved the requirements for carrying portable two-way VHF radiotelephone apparatus and search and rescue transponders (SARTs) or search and rescue transmitters (AIS-SARTs) from SOLAS Chapter III to Chapter IV. This change has necessitated some amendments to the wording of the related SOLAS certificates. The changes also affect certificates related to the SPS Codes, HSC Codes and MODU Codes.

The definition of Sea Area A3 has changed as follows:

- “Sea area A3 means an area, excluding sea areas A1 and A2, within the coverage of a recognized mobile satellite service (RMSS) supported by the ship earth station (SES) carried on board, in which continuous alerting is available”.
This means Sea Area A3 is dependent on the particular RMSS SES equipment installed on the ship. For example, for a ship provided with Inmarsat SES, Sea Area A3 for that ship will be roughly from 70°S to 70°N (i.e. the coverage area for the Inmarsat satellite system). For a ship provided with Iridium SES, Sea Area A3 for that ship would be the entire globe. Where two SES are installed, the SES with the lesser coverage will determine the RMSS coverage of the ship, and consequently the size of the Sea Area A3 where the ship can sail. Thus, “regional” radio safety certificates will be issued to ships based on the SES installed on board.
- VHF emergency position indicating radio beacons (EPIRBs), which have never been used, are no longer acceptable for GMDSS purposes. They are replaced with a satellite EPIRB.



Old and New GMDSS

New radio installations – performance standards delay

Regulation IV/14 introduces several performance standards that replace earlier ones and apply to equipment installed after 1 January 2024. In particular, the following related instruments have been adopted or amended for different equipment:

General requirements

Resolution MSC.466 (101) amendments to the Performance standards for the presentation of navigation-related information on ship borne navigational displays (Resolution MSC.191 (79)).

VHF equipment

- Resolution MSC.511 (105) Performance standards for ship borne VHF radio installations capable of voice communication and digital selective calling;
- Resolution MSC.515(105) Performance standards for survival craft portable two-way VHF radiotelephone apparatus; and
- Resolution MSC.516(105) amendments to the Performance standards for radio communication equipment (Resolution MSC.80(70)), in particular annex 1 Recommendation on Performance standards for on-scene (aeronautical) portable two-way VHF radiotelephone apparatus.

MF and HF equipment

- Resolution MSC.507 (105) System performance standard for the promulgation and coordination of maritime safety information using high-frequency narrow-band direct-printing ;
- Resolution MSC.512 (105) Performance standards for ship borne MF and MF/HF radio installations capable of voice communication, digital selective calling and reception of maritime safety information and search and rescue related information; and
- Resolution MSC.508 (105) Performance standards for the reception of maritime safety information and search and rescue related information by MF (NAVTEX) and HF.

Ship earth stations and enhanced group call (EGC) equipment

- Resolution MSC.513 (105) Performance standards for Inmarsat-C ship earth stations capable of transmitting and receiving direct-printing communications;
- Resolution MSC.431 (98) amendments to Revised Performance standards for enhanced group call (EGC) equipment (Resolution MSC.306(87)); and
- Resolution MSC.434 (98) Performance standards for a ship earth station for use in the GMDSS.

Integrated radio communication systems

Resolution MSC.517 (105) Performance standards for a ship borne integrated communication system (ICS) when used in the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS).

Emergency position-indicating radio beacons

Resolution MSC.471 (101) Performance standards for float-free emergency position-indicating radio beacons (EPIRBs) operating on 406 MHz.

Search and rescue transmitters and transponders

Resolution MSC.510 (105) Performance standards for search and rescue radar transponders.

The following resolutions have not been modified and are still in force :

- Resolution A.662 (16) Performance standards for float-free release and activation arrangements for emergency radio equipment;

- Resolution A.694 (17) General requirements for ship borne radio equipment forming part of the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS) and for electronic navigational aids;
- Resolution MSC.246 (83) Performance standards for survival craft AIS search and rescue transmitters (AIS-SART) for use in search and rescue operations ; and
- Resolution MSC.302 (87) Performance standards for bridge alert management.

However, because of global supply chain problems and shortage of equipment approved to the new standards, the IMO has published MSC.1/Circ.1676 – Delays Affecting the Availability of New GMDSS Equipment Compliant with the Revised Performance Standards set out in Resolutions MSC.511 (105), MSC.512 (105) and MSC.513 (105).

MSC.1/Circ.1676 invites flag Administrations to permit the continued installation of VHF radio installations, MF and MF/HF radio installations and Inmarsat-C SES approved to the older performance standards until 1 January 2028.

Resolution MSC.512 (105) combines MF and MF/HF radio installations and introduces the automatic connection system (ACS) which may be an integral part or a separate unit of the MF/HF station. ACS should be able when receiving a DSC call requesting a connection to confirm if the proposed frequency/channel is available in accordance with the latest version of Recommendations ITU-R M.493, Digital selective-calling system for use in the maritime mobile service and ITU-R M.541, Operational procedures for the use of digital selective calling equipment in the maritime mobile service.

As indicated in COMSAR/Circ.32/Rev.3, a single MF/HF radio installation may be accepted both as a primary MF radio installation and a duplicated MF/HF radio installation.

Resolution MSC.471 (101) recommends that float-free EPIRBs operating on the frequency 406 MHz, if installed on or after 1 July 2022, conform to performance standards and type-approval standards not inferior to those specified in the annex to the resolution. In particular, EPIRB should be provided with a low duty cycle light detectable by all types of night vision devices, a GNSS receiver and an Automatic Identification System (AIS) locating signal in accordance with the Recommendation ITU-R M.1371, Technical characteristics for an automatic identification system using time division multiple access in the VHF maritime mobile frequency band.

Operational procedures and guidance

Others related instruments have been adopted for new operational procedures and guidance:

- Resolution MSC.509 (105)/Rev.1 Provision of radio services for the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS)
- Resolution MSC.514 (105) Guidelines for the avoidance of false distress alerts
- MSC.1/Circ.803/Rev.1 Participation of non-SOLAS ships in the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS) and guidance on the development of training materials for GMDSS operators on non-SOLAS ships
- MSC.1/Circ.892/Rev.1 Guidance on alerting of search and rescue authorities
- MSC.1/Circ.1039/Rev.1 Guidelines for shore-based maintenance of EPIRBs
- MSC.1/Circ.1040/Rev.2 Guidelines on annual testing of EPIRBs
- MSC.1/Circ.1645 Guidance for the reception of maritime safety information and search and rescue related information as required in the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS)
- MSC.1/Circ.1656 GMDSS operating guidance for ships in distress situations, superseding COM/Circ.108

- MSC.1/Circ.1657 Procedure for responding to DSC distress alerts by ships, superseding COMSAR/Circ.25
- MSC.1/Circ.1658 Guidance on distress alerts, superseding COMSAR/Circ.45
- MSC.1/Circ.1659 Guidance for the dissemination of search and rescue related information through the international enhanced group call service
- COMSAR.1/Circ.32/Rev.3 Harmonization of GMDSS requirements for radio installations on board SOLAS ships
- COMSAR.1 /Circ.33/Rev.1 GMDSS Coast Station Operator's Certificate (CSOC) syllabus
- COMSAR.1/Circ.60 Procedure for routing distress alerts

A table of modification of related instruments to SOLAS IV following GMDSS modernization in annex 1 will help to identify former and new related instruments.

Main ITU references are listed in annex 2, as in force following the world radio conference 2023 (WRC-23).

What carriage requirement modification before 2028

Basically, the revised SOLAS Chapter IV will not necessitate any new installations of radio equipment on existing ships. The only exception will be the need to replace VHF EPIRBs equipment, something which is not thought to affect many ships. The affected SOLAS certificates will generally be updated at their expiry, in accordance with the guidance provided in MSC-MEPC.5/Circ.6.

Cospas-Sarsat update (extract from Cospas-Sarsat web pages)

The International Cospas-Sarsat Programme initiated the development of the Medium-altitude Earth Orbiting Satellite System for Search and Rescue (MEOSAR system) in 2004. Since then, search-and-rescue (SAR) repeater-payloads have been placed on the satellites of the Global Navigation Satellite Systems (GNSS) of Europe (Galileo), Russia (Glonass), the USA (GPS) and, most recently, China (BDS, also known as “BeiDou”). Following an early operational capability (EOC) phase, the initial operational capability (IOC) of the MEOSAR system was declared in April 2023. MEOSAR complements the existing LEOSAR (satellites in low-altitude orbits) and GEOSAR (satellites in geostationary orbit) systems, and gradually is replacing the LEOSAR system as the primary satellite architecture for Cospas-Sarsat. Once fully operational, the MEOSAR system will provide global coverage and near-real-time beacon detection and independent location.

Preparation for digital transmissions

SOLAS Regulation IV/7.1.1.4 has been drafted in order to prepare future systems to broadcast MSI and SAR related information, particularly in digital format. In order to prepare the introduction of new digital systems, MSC 109 adopted resolutions MSC.569 (109) on Performance standards for the reception of maritime safety information and search and rescue related information by MF and HF digital navigational data (NAVDAT) system and MSC.509 (105)/Rev.1 on Provision of radio services for the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS) in adding a new annex 5 to MSC.509 (105) on criteria for use when providing a NAVDAT service.

In doing so, the Committee confirmed that carriage of NAVDAT equipment was not mandated under the 1974 SOLAS Convention and that the provision of radio services for the GMDSS was determined by SOLAS Contracting Governments.

Implementation of the NAVDAT service by ships would only be possible after revision of MSC.1/Circ.1645 on Guidance for the reception of maritime safety information and search and rescue related information as required in the GMDSS.

Annex 1

Table of modification of related instruments to SOLAS IV following GMDSS modernization

With the adoption on 28 April 2022 of Resolution MSC.496 (105) amendments to the international Convention for the safety of life at sea, 1974, the different related instruments have been changed as indicated in the table below.

Resolutions

Former reference	New reference	New title
A.662(16)	No change	Performance standards for float-free release and activation arrangements for emergency radio equipment
A.694(17)	No change	General requirements for ship borne radio equipment forming part of the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS) and for electronic navigational aids
MSC.246(83)	No change	Performance standards for survival craft AIS search and rescue transmitters (AIS-SART) for use in search and rescue operations
MSC.302(87)	No change	Performance standards for bridge alert management.
MSC.306(87)	MSC.431(98)	amendments to Revised Performance standards for enhanced group call (EGC) equipment (Resolution MSC.306 (87))
...	MSC.434(98)	Performance standards for a ship earth station for use in the GMDSS
MSC.191(79)	MSC.466(101)	Amendments to the Performance standards for the presentation of navigation related information on ship borne navigational displays (Resolution MSC.191 (79))
...	MSC.471(101)	Performance standards for float-free emergency position-indicating radio beacons (EPIRBs) operating on 406 MHz.
A.699(17)	MSC.507(105)	System performance standard for the promulgation and coordination of maritime safety information using high-frequency narrow-band direct-printing
A.700(17) & MSC.148(77)	MSC.508(105)	Performance standards for the reception of maritime safety information and search and rescue related information by MF (NAVTEX) and HF
A.801(19)	MSC.509(105) / Rev.1	Provision of radio services for the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS)
A.530(13) & A.802(19)	MSC.510(105)	Performance standards for search and rescue radar transponders
A.803(19)	MSC.511(105)	Performance standards for ship borne VHF radio installations capable of voice communication and digital selective calling
A.804(19) & A.806(19)	MSC.512(105)	Performance standards for ship borne MF and MF/HF radio installations capable of voice communication, digital selective calling and reception of maritime safety information and search and rescue related information
A.807(19)	MSC.513(105)	Performance standards for Inmarsat-C ship earth stations capable of transmitting and receiving direct-printing communications
A.814(19)	MSC.514(105)	Guidelines for the avoidance of false distress alerts
MSC.149(77)	MSC.515(105)	Performance standards for survival craft portable two-way VHF radiotelephone apparatus
MSC.80(70)	MSC.516(105)	Amendments to the Performance standards for radio communication equipment (Resolution MSC.80(70))

A.811(19)	MSC.517(105)	Performance standards for a ship borne integrated communication system (ICS) when used in the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS)
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Circulars

Former reference	New reference	New title
MSC.1/Circ.803	MSC.1/ Circ.803/ Rev.1	Participation of non-SOLAS ships in the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS) and guidance on the development of training materials for GMDSS operators on non-SOLAS ships
MSC/Circ.892	MSC.1/ Circ.892/ Rev.1	Guidance on alerting of search and rescue authorities
MSC.1/ Circ.1039	MSC.1/ Circ.1039/ Rev.1	Guidelines for shore-based maintenance of EPIRBs
MSC.1/ Circ.1040/ Rev.1	MSC.1/ Circ.1040/ Rev.2	Guidelines on annual testing of EPIRBs
...	MSC.1/ Circ.1645	Guidance for the reception of maritime safety information and search and rescue related information as required in the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS)
COM/Circ.108	MSC.1/ Circ.1656	GMDSS operating guidance for ships in distress situations
COMSAR/ Circ.25	MSC.1/ Circ.1657	Procedure for responding to DSC distress alerts by ships
COMSAR/ Circ.45	MSC.1/ Circ.1658	Guidance on distress alerts
...	MSC.1/ Circ.1659	Guidance for the dissemination of search and rescue related information through the international enhanced group call service
...	MSC.1/ Circ.1676	Delays Affecting the Availability of New GMDSS Equipment Compliant with the Revised Performance Standards set out in Resolutions MSC.511 (105), MSC.512 (105) and MSC.513 (105).
COMSAR.1/ Circ.32	COMSAR.1/ Circ.32 / Rev.3	Harmonization of GMDSS requirements for radio installations on board SOLAS ships
COMSAR/ Circ.33	COMSAR.1/ Circ.33/ Rev.1	GMDSS Coast Station Operator's Certificate (CSOC) syllabus
COMSAR.1/ Circ.37	COMSAR.1/ Circ.37/ Rev.1	Guidance on minimum communication needs of Maritime Rescue Coordination Centres (MRCCs)
COMSAR.1/ Circ.50	COMSAR.1/ Circ.50/ Rev.4	Distress priority communications for RCCs from shore-to-ship via global maritime distress and safety system (GMDSS) satellite service providers
...	COMSAR.1/ Circ.60	Procedure for routing distress alerts

Annex 2

Main ITU references as updated following the WRC-23.

Radio Regulations (RR) Edition of 2024

Recommendation ITU-R M.493-16 Digital selective-calling system for use in the maritime mobile service

Recommendation ITU-R M.541-11 Operational procedures for the use of digital selective calling equipment in the maritime mobile service

Recommendation ITU-R M.585-9 Assignment and use of identities in the maritime mobile service

Recommendation ITU-R M.633-5 Transmission characteristics of a satellite emergency position-indicating radio beacon (satellite EPIRB) system operating through a satellite system in the 406 MHz band

Recommendation ITU-R M.1082-1 International maritime MF/HF radiotelephone system with automatic facilities based on digital selective calling signaling format

Recommendation ITU-R M.1171-1 Radiotelephony procedures for routine calls in the maritime mobile service

Recommendation ITU-R M.1172 Miscellaneous abbreviations and signals to be used for radio communications in the maritime mobile service

Recommendation ITU-R M.2010-2 Characteristics of a digital system, referred to as navigational data for broadcasting maritime safety and security related information from shore-to-ship in the 500 kHz band

Recommendation ITU-R M.2058-1 Characteristics of a digital system, referred to as navigational data for broadcasting maritime safety and security related information from shore-to-ship in the maritime HF frequency band

Recommendation ITU-R P.368-10 Ground-wave propagation curves for frequencies between 10 kHz and 30 MHz

Recommendation ITU-R P.372-17 Radio noise

Report ITU-R M.2027 Engineering guidance for operators to upgrade shore-based facilities to operate the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System in the A1, A2 and A3/A4 sea areas

Resolution 349 (REV.WRC-23) Operational procedures for cancelling false distress alerts in the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System

**[Admiral (Maritime Affairs)] Jean-Charles CORNILLOU
French Delegation in MSC, NCSR and IMO/ITU Expert Group Consultant**

THE BALTIC SEA

A letter dated 15th March 2025

As we all know, incidents have been happening in the Baltic Sea all the time. Quite often, the Russian shadow fleet that is moving Russian oil can be attached to it.

There has been cable and pipeline breakage when anchors have fallen in the open sea. It has been going well for decades and now within a very short time there have been many cases of anchor dragging in the open sea. This has attracted attention as to whether the cases were intentional or whether they fell due to negligence. Investigations are still ongoing in many cases.

It is very difficult to prove that they are intentional, but nevertheless it is strange that many of them occurred now, when the geopolitical situation is quite tense in the Baltic Sea.

If they are not intentional then it has happened that the seamanship of those seafarers is at a low level now. When ships are in cold weather conditions there are a lot of things that need to be considered, and this may also be the reason why these things have occurred. Whatever the reason, something has changed in the Baltic Sea, and not in a better direction.

It's not just cable breakages that have occurred here. There have been some serious near misses in a short period of time. All of these could have led to serious oil spills, and they also put human lives at risk.

In January, a large tanker suffered a serious engine failure in the Southern Baltic Sea and had to be towed to the coast to a place of refuge. The tanker is still at anchor off Poland where engine repairs are being carried out. The weather was bad at the time of the incident, and it could have led to a major accident. The ship was carrying 100,000 tonnes of crude oil.

In February, an explosion occurred in the engine room of a large tanker in the port of Ust-Luga. The ship had to be evacuated. However, it was towed to the pier where its cargo is currently being dis-charged. The ship was carrying 100,000 tons of heavy fuel oil. As a result of the explosion, the ship's engine room filled with water. It was fortunate that the ship was in the harbour area and not at sea, where it would have been much more difficult to save it.

In December 2024, a bulk carrier ran aground outside the port of Ust-Luga. There is no information about how the vessel went aground, and Russian authorities have been very quiet about the incident.

The vessel was aground for weeks, and one reason of the grounding could be GPS disturbance. GPS and AIS disturbance is also a serious problem on the Eastern part of Gulf of Finland.

Although there hasn't been much ice in the Baltic Sea and Gulf of Finland in recent years, it is still cold and dark here. Operating in cold conditions requires special skills. There doesn't seem to be much of that these days, and it is a really worrying development.

A few years ago, Russian authorities were very particular about how much experience the captain and officers had in ice navigating and operating in cold conditions. Today, that seems to be non-existent.

The condition and age of the ships are also at a level we are not used to. The same applies to the competence. It doesn't really matter these days. The main thing is that the cargo moves.

Although there has been no ice, there is little in the Eastern Gulf of Finland, and there are no requirements for ice classes. Especially older ships that are not built for cold conditions can get into serious troubles.

Russia assists ships to and from ports with icebreakers, but this does not eliminate the possibility that weaker ships may suffer serious damage in the ice. Although Russia sets ice classes, but they are not followed.

We have also previously written about our concerns in the Baltic Sea, and since the situation has not improved, in the contrary they have gotten worse, and we want to bring the matter up again.

The authorities are doing a lot of work on the matter here, but since Finland is a small country, we think it is good for everyone to know about it.

Maritime safety should always improve as technology and training develop, but now it seems that this is not happening in all respects. Circumventing the sanctions with the shadow fleet ships has caused a maritime safety issue.

Stig SUNDBERG
Helsinki Shipsmaster's Association ry

CTPC on Board Amerigo Vespucci

Collegio di Trieste dei Patenti Capitani di Lungo Corso e di Machina (CTPC) renewed the Board. Capt. Milena Modugno was elected as new president to relief Capt. Mario Carobolante after several years of presidency.

Last February, as the sail ship Amerigo Vespucci was back in her home port, they invited CESMA Deputy President Capt. Giorgio Ribaric to visit the vessel.



New CTPC President Capt. M. Modugno between Capt. G. Ribaric and Capt. M. Carobolante

FROM THE EDITOR

1. Crew

InterManager Urges Shipping Industry to Act on Seafarer Criminalisation

Published Jan 15, 2025 by **Splash 247**

InterManager, the international trade association for the shipmanagement sector, is calling on shipping industry colleagues to contribute to a new campaign to highlight the issue of criminalisation of seafarers.

InterManager said in a release it is concerned at the “increasingly harsh” treatment of ships’ crew in some parts of the world and is actively taking part in industry discussions to identify the depth of the problem and to address seafarers’ concerns.

The association now plans to collate statistics on criminalisation incidents which it plans to share with the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and other shipping industry stakeholders.

InterManager is asking for other shipping organisations, maritime colleagues, and seafarers to inform it of cases of criminalisation that they are aware of, to ensure that the data InterManager collects is as comprehensive as possible.

Secretary-general, Kuba Szymanski, explained: “There is a concern within the shipping industry that seafarers are being unfairly detained when authorities find something wrong with their ship, often when drugs are found onboard but also in other circumstances. Most frequently senior officers are detained, although the whole crew can be, and held without charge for long periods of time and often without any proper legal representation or assistance.”

InterManager has recently begun compiling figures which show senior officers are most at risk of criminalisation. Statistics collected so far reveal that in 63% of cases the ship’s master was the one imprisoned. Tanker crew represents the most frequent vessel type on which arrests occurred with Asia leading the world when it comes to arrests.

Of the 25 crew taken hostage in the hijacking of the Galaxy Leader on 19 November last year 17 are Filipino nationals.



Galaxy Leader Crew Freed

Published Jan 22, 2025 by **GCaptain**

After more than a year in captivity, the crew of the Israel-linked car carrier Galaxy Leader has been freed with the IMO secretary general praising “the power of collective diplomacy” for their release.

Galaxy Leader was hijacked by Houthi militia in the Red Sea near the Yemeni port of Hodeida on 19 November 2023. Its crew composed of 25 people from Bulgaria, Ukraine, the Philippines, Mexico and Romania has been held since that time.

IMO secretary general Arsenio Dominguez welcomed the release of the seafarers: “I welcome the release of the 25-member crew of the Galaxy Leader, who has endured over a year of captivity since they were taken hostage in November 2023 while transiting the Red Sea. This is a moment of profound relief for all of us – not only for the crew and their families, but also to the wider maritime community.

“I am grateful for all the Member States, regional entities, and international partners whose steadfast support and strategic engagement were pivotal in securing the crew’s freedom, and to ensuring their wellbeing.

“Today’s breakthrough is a testament to the power of collective diplomacy and dialogue, recognising that innocent seafarers must not become collateral victims in wider geopolitical tensions. It is also a return to operations in the Red Sea as we have been accustomed to, and upholding of the freedom of navigation.

“IMO will continue to rigorously uphold its commitment to the safety of seafarers worldwide, who continue to face risks in their essential work,” the Secretary-General stated.

However, the assertion that the release of the crew marks a return to operations in the Red Sea “as we have been accustomed to and upholding of the freedom of navigation”, may not be the case, as vessel operators are reluctant to take the risk immediately, preferring to take a wait and see approach to developments in Palestine.

Some other reactions came from Philippines President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.: “It is with utmost joy that, after more than a year of captivity in Yemen, I announce the safe release of all seventeen Filipino seafarers, together with the rest of the crewmembers of M/V Galaxy Leader. Our Filipino seafarers are now in the care of our Philippine Embassy in Muscat, Oman and will be reunited with their loved ones in the Philippines very soon.” President Marcos thanked His

Majesty Haitham bin Tarik, Sultan of Oman, and his government for their successful mediation, which led in the eventual release, and safe passage of the Filipino seafarers through Oman.

Also from BIMCO Secretary General & CEO David Loosley: “Today, 25 seafarers held hostage on board the Galaxy Leader have been released. For the first time since November 2023, they can look forward to reuniting with their families and loved ones. Their freedom should never have been taken in the first place. Seafarers should never have to face the threat of being attacked, taken hostage or being shot at when they go to work.”

And from International Chamber of Shipping Secretary Guy Platten: “We welcome the news of the Galaxy Leader crew being released today and that they will be reunited with their families after being held in captivity since the 19 November 2023. The fact that the innocent crew was held for over 430 days is unacceptable and a truly dreadful situation. Nobody should have to endure such an ordeal, and we call on all nations to support our seafarers and shipping so that this does not happen again. “ICS deplures any and all attacks on shipping as they are a breach of international law and threaten the lives of innocent seafarers and the safety of merchant shipping.”



EU Project to Investigate Human Rights at Sea

Published Jan 22, 2025 by **Splash 247**

The European Union is investing in growing protections for persons at sea with the newly established BlueRights project.

The study investigates how the most fundamental universal human rights – the right to life, liberty and health can also be granted to people at sea, and what states and other actors must do to achieve this goal.

The project will run for four years and will bring together academics and practitioners working at the interface of the law of the sea and human rights. At the time of application, the network comprised 73 people from 38 different countries working for universities, international organisations, public authorities and NGOs.

“While the oceans are attracting growing attention, people at sea still receive little consideration by stakeholders, scholars and the public at large. The frequent violations of their most basic human rights, which safeguard their life, liberty and health, often go unseen and unpunished,” the backers of the project in introducing the study, warning that death, slavery, unlawful arrest and other human rights violations result in the practical negation of the universality of human rights – the idea that all persons are equally entitled to human rights – advocated by the European Union and the United Nations.

The action aims to assess, from a legal perspective, how human rights can be enjoyed also by people at sea and by all people at sea. It will answer two fundamental questions: What is the content and scope of the rights to life, liberty and health when applied at sea and who is responsible for protecting them and how?

Seafarer Happiness Index: Port Access Restrictions Concern

Published Jan 27, 2025 by **GCaptain**

The Mission to Seafarers’ latest Seafarers Happiness Index reveals a decline in seafarer satisfaction to 6.91 in Q4 2024, down from 7.16 in Q3, marking the first downturn in four quarters.

The quarterly survey, conducted in partnership with Idwal and NorthStandard, highlights restrictive port policies as a major factor impacting crew welfare. Seafarers report increasing frustration with limited shore access, poor facilities, and inadequate transport options, contributing to heightened mental strain.

Other significant challenges include unreliable onboard Wi-Fi connectivity, despite promises of free access, which further intensifies isolation among crew members. The survey also reveals growing concerns over stagnant wages amid rising living costs, while workload and fatigue continue to be pressing issues due to long hours and increasing administrative duties.

“Shore leave is not a luxury but a vital opportunity for rest and mental recovery for seafarers,” said Ben Bailey, Director of Programme at The Mission to Seafarers.

Thom Herbert, Idwal Crew Welfare Advocate, emphasized the urgency of the situation: “The Q4 2024 report is again a stark reminder of the persistent challenges facing seafarers today. Despite pockets of progress, the decline in overall happiness, especially related to shore leave and connectivity, underscores the urgent need for industry-wide reforms”.

The Mission to Seafarers, operating in over 200 ports across 50 countries, continues to provide support to 1.89 million seafarers through its global network of chaplains, staff, and volunteers.

2. Environment



FuelEU Maritime Takes Effect

Published Jan 2, 2025 by **GCaptain**

Shipping Industry Faces Historic Emissions Challenge

The European Union’s landmark FuelEU Maritime regulation came into force on January 1, 2025, marking a watershed moment for the shipping industry’s decarbonization efforts. The regulation targets vessels over 5,000 gross tons calling at EU ports, requiring a gradual reduction in greenhouse gas intensity from marine fuels – starting with a 2% cut in 2025 and advancing to 80% by 2050.

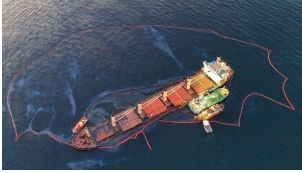
For an industry that accounts for approximately 3% of global emissions, this regulation represents a critical component of the EU’s ambitious Fit for 55 initiative, which targets a 55% emissions reduction by 2030.

While the regulation offers flexibility through its technology-neutral approach, allowing operators to choose from options including biofuels, LNG, methanol, ammonia, and hydrogen, significant challenges remain. Industry experts point to high costs and fuel availability as major obstacles to widespread adoption.

The maritime sector faces additional workforce challenges, with recent studies indicating that 450,000 seafarers will require training by 2030 to safely handle alternative fuels.

Despite these hurdles, the regulation marks a decisive step toward maritime decarbonization. As carbon allowance prices rise and regulatory scrutiny intensifies, shipping companies are increasingly pressured to prioritize long-term decarbonization investments over temporary solutions.

3. Safety



Use of Pilots in Gibraltar

Published Feb 5, 2025 by **Splash 247**

More pilot use is recommended in Gibraltar, according to a new accident report surrounding one of the most high-profile casualties to hit the British overseas territory in recent years.

On August 29 2022, the OS35 bulk carrier was departing the Bay of Gibraltar anchorage and collided with the LNG carrier Adam LNG. The impact caused a breach in holds two and three of the OS35, leading to the vessel's controlled beaching to the east of Gibraltar, where it was subsequently dismantled with the ship becoming a feature of the tiny British territory's coastline for many months.

The investigation found that the master and bridge team of the OS35 did not monitor the manoeuvre out of the Western Anchorage effectively and made an error in their understanding of the effects of the tidal flow and wind.

The Gibraltar Port Authority (GPA) has been recommended to consider introducing compulsory pilotage for vessels departing from the Western Anchorage.

Had a pilot been onboard the report suggests that the manoeuvre astern by the OS35 would not have been their chosen option for the location and conditions that were found on the day. Had the OS35's turn to port been initiated as the anchor was being lifted there was sufficient sea room to continue moving ahead and turn to port to depart the anchorage to the west.

There was also suitable sea room to pass between the vessels ahead, which would have provided greater control of the vessel than by manoeuvring astern, where the manoeuvre is more difficult to control and monitor.

4. Security



EU Extends Red Sea Maritime Security Operation Through 2026

Published Feb 5, 2025 by **Splash 247**

The European Union has extended its maritime security operation in the Red Sea region until February 28, 2026, allocating over €17 million to safeguard freedom of navigation amid ongoing regional tensions.

Operation ASPIDES, headquartered in Larissa, Greece, under Rear Admiral Vasileios Gryparis's command, will expand its mandate to include gathering intelligence on arms trafficking and shadow fleets. This information will be shared with key international organizations including INTERPOL, EUROPOL, and the IMO.

EUNAVFOR launched Operation ASPIDES in February 2024 in response to Houthi attacks on shipping in the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden.

The operation's scope covers critical maritime chokepoints including the Baab al-Mandab Strait and the Strait of Hormuz, along with international waters in the Red Sea, Gulf of Aden, Arabian Sea, Gulf of Oman, and Persian Gulf.

While Houthi forces have temporarily suspended attacks following recent Gaza ceasefire developments between Israel and Hamas, shipping traffic through the Suez Canal route remains affected due to the volatile situation and ongoing security concerns.

5. Technical



Increasing Share of Biofuels, Compliance Sometimes Problematic

Published Mar 4, 2025 by **Mer et Marine**

If the share of biofuels increases in maritime bunkering, a report from Lloyd's Register recalls the need for strict compliance of these mixtures to be able to comply with international regulations.

The latest report from FOBAS (Fuel Oil Bunkering Analysis and Advisory Service), from the British classification society Lloyd's Register, highlights a significant increase in the use of biofuels in maritime navigation. A movement largely attributed to the regulations of the European Union (Fuel EU Maritime) and the International Maritime Organization (IMO), in particular the sulfur emissions control area (SECA) in the Mediterranean, which will come into force on May 1, 2025.

The report notes growth in the use of biofuel blends, including Fatty Acid Methyl Ester (FAME) residual blends, widely adopted in Singapore, Algeciras and the Antwerp-Rotterdam-Amsterdam region.

However, concerns persist about the transparency of their composition and the risk of introducing biofuels of uncertain quality into the supply chain.

The same concerns are noted on very low sulfur fuel oil (VLSFO) bunkers. Approximately 2.5% of VLSFO samples showed a sulfur level slightly higher than the regulatory limit of 0.5%. 0.8% of samples exceeded 0.53%, putting some vessels at risk of non-compliance.

The report also notes problems with sediment and fuel stability. The instability of asphaltenes in fuel blends is a common cause of problems, with Houston and Antwerp identified as risk areas.

For the more traditional marine gas oil (MGO), the report notes problems with flash points below the SOLAS limit of 60°C, partly due to unintentional or intentional mixing with automotive diesel, which has a lower flash point.

CESMA LOGBOOK (2025-1)

We were represented at the following occasions:

11/JANUARY	CAPT. KARNINCIC FUNERAL CEREMONY (DP, CTPC)
30/JANUARY	VIDEO CESMA BOARD + SINCOMAR MEETING
12-13/FEBRUARY	GREEN PORT ALLIANCE MEETING ON REDUCTION OF EMISSIONS FROM SHIPS, VARNA, BG (P)
5-7/MARCH	MEETING WITH STAMCO AND ELEN MARINE COMPANIES REPRESENTATIVES – IMO EXCEPTIONAL BRAVERY AT SEA AWARD 2025 – NOMINATION OF CAPTAINS OF GALAXY LEADER & ELEN ARMONIA (P)
18/MARCH	CESMA BOARD MEETING, VIDEO AND BRUSSELS, BE
19-20/MARCH	EUROPEAN SHIPPING SUMMIT (P, SG)
22/MARCH	MEETING WITH KBZ, BRUSSELS, BE (P)
24/MARCH	VIDEO CESMA BOARD + SINCOMAR MEETING
28/MARCH	WEBINAR NI SHIPHANDLING (P)
31/MARCH	NI ADMIRALTY CLUB MEETING (P)

On the front page:

Capt. Juraj KARNINCIC (1945 – 2025)

Sail Ship ANEMOS entering Le Havre port

Car Carrier Grande Brasile on fire on 18th February 2025

Container vessel Solong and M/T Stena Immaculate after collision on 10th March 2025

AIMS OF THE ORGANISATION

- **TO WORLDWIDE PROTECT THE PROFESSIONAL INTERESTS AND STATUS OF EUROPEAN SEAGOING SHIPMASTERS.**
- **TO PROMOTE MARITIME SAFETY AND PROTECT THE MARINE ENVIRONMENT.**
- **TO PROMOTE ESTABLISHMENT OF EFFECTIVE RULES WHICH PROVIDE HIGH PROFESSIONAL MARITIME STANDARDS AND PROPER MANNING SCALES FOR VESSELS UNDER AN EUROPEAN NATION FLAG.**
- **TO INFORM THE PUBLIC IN THE EU ABOUT DEVELOPMENTS IN THE EUROPEAN MARITIME INDUSTRY AND THOSE CONCERNING SHIPMASTERS IN PARTICULAR.**
- **TO CO-OPERATE WITH OTHER INTERNATIONAL MARITIME ORGANISATIONS.**
- **TO RETAIN AND DEVELOP THE HIGHEST MARITIME KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE IN EUROPE.**
- **TO BE INVOLVED IN RESEARCH CONCERNING MARITIME MATTERS IF APPLICABLE IN CO- OPERATION WITH OTHER EUROPEAN INSTITUTIONS AND/OR ORGANISATIONS.**
- **TO ASSIST MEMBER SHIPMASTERS WHO ENCOUNTER DIFFICULTIES IN PORTS WITHIN THE REACH OF NATIONS REPRESENTED BY CESMA MEMBER ASSOCIATIONS**
- **TO PROMOTE THE SEAFARING PROFESSION IN EU MEMBER STATES**

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION:

- **EURO 16.00 PER SEAGOING MASTER (WITH A MINIMUM OF 25)**
- **EURO 8.00 PER SEAGOING MASTER FOR ASSOCIATED MEMBER ASSOCIATIONS (WITH A MINIMUM OF 25)**

LIST OF CESMA MEMBERS AND REPRESENTATIVES

MEMBER REPR VDKS GERMANY	CAPT. W. MERTENS PALMAILLE 29 22767 HAMBURG	Tel: +49 40 384 981 FAX: +49 40 389 2114 E-mail: vdks.office@t-online.de E-mail: office@vdks.org
MEMBER REPR AFCAN FRANCE	CAPT. H. ARDILLON RUE DE BASSAM 29200 BREST	Tel: +33 298 463 760 E-mail: courrier@afcan.org
MEMBER REPR HYDROS FRANCE	CAPT. F. VANOOSTEN 201 RUE RENE CASTELIN 59240 DUNKERQUE	 E-mail: vanoosten.francis@wanadoo.fr E-mail: associationhydros@gmail.com
MEMBER REPR NVKK NETHERLANDS	CAPT. H. AMMERLAAN C/O PAARDENKOP 39 3922 GL ELST UT	Tel: +31 6 8394 4694 E-mail: info@nvkk.nl
MEMBER REPR CTPC ITALY	CAPT. M. MODUGNO VIA MAZZINI 30 34121 TRIESTE	Tel: +39 040 362 364 MOB.: +39 334 740 0488 E-mail: collegio69@collegioditrieste.191.it
MEMBER REPR CNPC ITALY	CAPT. G. LETTICH VICO DELL' AGNELLO 2/28 16124 GENOA	Tel: +39 010 247 2746 E-mail: info@collegionazionalecapitani.it
MEMBER REPR USCLAC ITALY	CAPT. A. RAGGI VIA XX SETTEMBRE 21/10 16121 GENOA	Tel: +39 010 576 1424 Fax: +39 010 553 5129 E-mail: segreteria@usclac.it
MEMBER REPR IYM ITALY	CAPT. L. TRIGGIANI MOLO CENTRALE BANCHINA PORTO 17025 LOANO (SV)	Tel: +39 347 960 3893 E-mail: secretary@italianyachtmasters.com
MEMBER REPR ACCMM SPAIN SPAIN	CAPT. M. BADELL SERRA CARRER DE SARDENYA 259 1-4 08013 BARCELONA	Tel: +34 934 089 288 MOB: +34 680 321 138 E-mail: info@capitansmercants.com
MEMBER REPR AVCCMM SPAIN	CAPT.P. ODIAGA GOROSTIZU C/BAILLEN, 5 PLANTA – 1 48003 BILBAO	Tel: +34 944 166 506 MOB: +34 636 449 0 54 E-mail: avccmm@avccmm.org
MEMBER REPR KBZ BELGIUM	CAPT. A. PELS BROUWERSVLIET 19 B-2000 ANTWERPEN	TEL +32 473 95 04 03 E-mail: secretary-general@kbz-crmb.be

MEMBER REPR IIMM IRELAND	CAPT. B. KAVANAGH NATIONAL MARITIME COLLEGE RINGASKIDDY / CORK	Tel: +353 214 335 637 E-mail: kavanagh.bill@gmail.com
MEMBER REPR ZPU SLOVENIA	CAPT. G. RIBARIC OBALA 55 SI – 6320 PORTOROZ	MOB: +386 31 375 823 E-mail: zpu.slo@siol.net
MEMBER REPR BSMA BULGARIA	CAPT. S STOYANOV 49B CHATALDZHA BUL 9000 VARNA	Tel: +359 887 406 973 E-mail: chairman@bsma-bg.org
MEMBER REPR LKKA LATVIA	CAPT. J. SPRIDZANS TRIJADIBAS STREET 5 RIGA, LV-10 48	Tel: +371 26 457 031 E-mail: president@lkka.lv E-mail: jazeps.spridzans48@gmail.com
MEMBER REPR ZHUPK CROATIA	CAPT. D. LAKOS TRG PAPE ALEKSANDRA III,3 23000 ZADAR - HRVATSKA	Tel: +385 98 433 685 E-mail: udruga.kapetana@zd.t-com.hr
MEMBER REPR UPKCG MONTENEGRO	CAPT. J. MILUTIN PELUZICA b.b 85330 KOTOR	Tel: +382 32 304 672 Fax: +382 325 107 E-mail: captain@t-com.me
MEMBER REPR LCC LITHUANIA	CAPT. J.LIEPUONIUS KANTO 7 KLAIPEDA/ LT- 92123	Tel: +370 698 75704 E-mail: jurukapitonuklubas@gmail.com
MEMBER REPR SINCOMAR PORTUGAL	CAPT. J. TEIXEIRA CAIA DE ROCHA CONDE D OBIDA ARMAZEM 113 1350 352 LISBON	Tel: +351 213918180 E-mail: sincomar.fesmar@net.vodafone.pt
MEMBER REPR HELSINKI SHIPMASTERS SF-FINLAND	CAPT. S. SUNDBERG VEHNAKUJA 4 06400 PORVOO	Tel: +358 40 5944954 E-mail: sundberg.stig@outlook.com
MEMBER REPR ROMANIA SHIPMASTERS	CAPT. M. TUTUIANU STR. AL.STEFLEA NR. 8A CONSTANTA	Tel: +40 722 727 123 E-mail: office@acnr.ro

HON. VICE PRESIDENTS: CAPT. W.VON PRESSENTIN

HON. MEMBERS: CAPT. G. KIEHNE CAPT. J-D TROYAT

ADVISORS: