

EIGHT BELLS

AUGUST 2020



JOURNAL OF THE COMPANY OF MASTER MARINERS OF SRI LANKA



*Therefore there is no man so proud-minded over this earth,
Nor so assured in his graces, nor so brave in his youth,
Nor so bold in his deeds, nor his lord so gracious to him
That he will never have some anxiety about his sea-
voyaging—*

About whatever the Lord wishes to do to him.

“The Seafarer” LINES 39-43

Author unknown; this poem is part of the Exeter codex, a tenth-century anthology of Anglo-Saxon poetry

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Membership as at AGM 2020.

Total Membership 359,
A total of twenty life memberships were awarded at the AGM

COUNCIL MEMBERS FOR THE YEAR 2020/2021

<i>Capt. Mahendra Ranatunga</i>	<i>President</i>
<i>Capt. Lasitha Cumaratunga</i>	<i>Vice President</i>
<i>Capt. Uditha Karunathilake</i>	<i>Vice President</i>
<i>Capt. Upul Peiris</i>	<i>Secretary</i>
<i>Capt. Kolitha Gunawardane</i>	<i>Asst. Secretary</i>
<i>Capt. Sampath Athukorale</i>	<i>Treasurer</i>
<i>Capt. Sanjeewa Usgoda</i>	<i>Asst. Treasurer</i>
<i>Capt. Prawala Perera</i>	<i>Editor</i>
<i>Capt. Palitha De Lanerolle</i>	<i>Immediate Past President</i>
<i>Capt. Nirmal Silva</i>	<i>Shore Member</i>
<i>Capt. Hemantha Madanayake</i>	<i>Shore Member</i>
<i>Capt. Peshala Medagama</i>	<i>Shore Member</i>
<i>Capt. Sanjeewa Delgoda</i>	<i>Shore Member</i>
<i>Capt. Nandika Peiris</i>	<i>Shore Member</i>
<i>Capt. Prasad Alwis</i>	<i>Sailing Member</i>
<i>Capt. Sumudu Dodampalage</i>	<i>Sailing Member</i>
<i>Capt. Nishantha Hettiaratchy</i>	<i>Sailing Member</i>
<i>Capt. Yasas Sanjeewa</i>	<i>Sailing Member</i>

New Website and mobile app

- A new web site and a mobile app has been developed to
- Provide members and visitors an easier way to learn about the CMM
 - Allow members to browse information of other members
 - Register events that are organized by CMM
 - Acquire knowledge about new development/changes in the industry

Editorial

This issue comes out at one of the most unusual periods in the recent history. The entire world has virtually come to a standstill amidst a global pandemic. With travel restrictions and closure of airports happening all over the world seafarers have turned out to become prisoners on their own ships. While those who have completed their contracts suffer without the option of signing off, many others who were on vacation are facing difficulties finding their next employment.

With such a situation unfolding in our realm, the general public remains blissfully unaware about the plight of the seafarers. Global media will remain to be indifferent as long as the public receives uninterrupted supplies in their local supermarkets and department stores. If there was ever the possibility for seafarers to be acting in unison across the globe, and with just a couple of days of industrial action, they have the power to bring international trade to its knees. But due to the ground realities of our industry this will never come to be and this *premier weapon* used in trade union action is not available to the seafarers. It is heartening to see however, that individual crew in isolated incidents are taking matters into their own hands and exercising their rights of not sailing with the ship on expired contracts. This has started to happen in ports of Australia and may spread across the globe if the situation doesn't improve soon.

Seafarers, suffering as individuals are not entirely without hope. An increasing number of countries are allowing crew changes to happen and IMO/ILO are striving to engage the governments. IMO's call to the governments across the globe to designate seafarers as key workers is a major step towards uninterrupted crew changes. This keyworker designation should theoretically ensure that seafarers are exempted from

travel restrictions and are able to travel to and from ships. This is a key element in allowing crew changes to take place. The flip side of the coin of working in an environment where several countries are involved in the procedures and share responsibility is that different standards are being maintained by different countries.

Sri Lanka is one of the first countries that allowed crew changes but unfortunately had to impose restrictions on procedures as a sizable number of COVID 19 infected seafarers flew into our airports for joining ships.

In our own shores there were certain undesired incidents taking place during the mandatory quarantine of seafarers. Substandard accommodation and exorbitant fees charged on off signers for quarantine were among the allegations. It is encouraging to note that seafarer societies including CMM are taking the leadership to represent seafarer issues.

While maintaining the founder purpose of being an organization for members to socialize with one another, increasingly many seems to be sharing the belief that CMM should take an active role in taking the leadership in shipping related technical matters in the country and that the CMM needs to be more socially visible.

Restrained by the fear of being ridiculed for voicing controversial issues and possibly discouraged by the knowledge about the constitution's own restrictions, the general membership seems to be reluctant to discuss these matters on AGMs.

Constitutions are not made in stone and should be amended if the majority of the membership so desires. At the same time if the consensus

is to keep the constitution unchanged it should also remain so. The important thing is to have an honest exchange of ideas as discussion is the core of any democracy.

I invite the membership to send in your thoughts and make the "Eight Bells" your stage for voicing your opinions.

Capt. Prawala Perera

Editor

prawala.perera@gmail.com

Outgoing President's Address At The AGM

Good Evening Gentlemen,

I stand here as the out-going President of CMM as our constitution stipulates that a president can hold office for 3 consecutive years. In a very short time, we will have a new president for the Company of Master Mariners of Sri Lanka.

First of all let me thank all of you who are present here and the entire membership especially the Committee Members for the honour you had bestowed on me to carry out smoothly the affairs related to CMM during the last 3 years which I thoroughly enjoyed. A special thanks goes to our Secretary – Capt. Upul Peiris who did this honourable job without any complaints.

The past three years had been a smooth sailing for our team as we did not come across any difficult period related to our 'Day to Day' affairs. Having said that, we had some anxious moments due to the Covid-19 epidemic where we were confined to one place thus preventing us from having our committee meetings and other events physically. As the entire country turned into the electronic mode, we too had our meetings on-line, thanks to our committee member – Capt. Nishantha Jayakody who handles all our e-affairs.

The monthly committee meetings have begun again and I must mention that meeting people 'Face to Face' makes a big difference rather than seeing them on screen.

Last year we started to do more for the Shipping Industry especially for the members who are sailing. The first on this endeavor was the program called the CPD – Continuing Professional Development for the sailing

Masters and Mates. As this was a great success we were planning to have more of this kind of training once in every 4 months but could not carry out due to the reasons you all know. In the near future, once the rules and regulations of the health authorities are lenient, we will have more of these to the other ranks too. I am sure the new committee will improve the method of conducting these seminars. We have increased our budget allocation too for the next financial year as the entire committee feels that we should engage more on professional development rather than on welfare events.

As you are aware, the entire country is facing an election in an unprecedented manner, we hope that the new government selected by the people of this country will have the courage to face the challenges in the coming months. Guided by the new administration, the entire country has to bounce back from the adversely affected Sri Lankan economy .I am reminded of the old adage – Disasters are Opportunities. We, as one of the professional associations in the Maritime Industry will have to play our role in dealing with the problems faced by our seafarers. One of the problems we encounter today is the Signing On and Off vessels during this pandemic times.

We have already started to voice our opinion by writing to the Higher Authorities of the subject ministry and hope to work with them so that our sailors will have a better deal financially.

In conclusion, I wish all the very best for the new president and his dynamic team to guide this organization to higher levels so that the CMM will be a force to reckon with in the Maritime Industry!

Finally, before I step down, let me thank again the entire membership and specially the organizing committee of this AGM. There were many postponements but finally you did it. A Big " Thank You" to the entire team

headed by Capt. Kolitha Gunawardene. So over to you, the new President and the Committee members.

Thank you and have an enjoyable evening!

Stay Safe – God Bless You All!

Capt. Palitha de Laxerolle

Outgoing President – CMM

President's address at the AGM

GOOD EVENING EVERYONE,

I would like to thank Capt.Laneroll and the committee for having faith in me .I am honoured to have been selected to this position. I am lucky to have a very strong committee and I know that they will extend their fullest support to me to steer CMM to greater heights.

We have been working towards steering CMM to the next level by sharing our knowledge and expertise with the seafaring and shipping industry. In doing so the new committee will continue to carry out the good work that has been initiated by the past presidents and the committees.

WE expect to engage with institutes such as Nautical Institute, CILT, CASA, and organize seminars and other trade related activities to share knowledge and experience of our fellow members with the industry.

The CPD program which was a brain child of Capt.Upul Peiris was a very successful initiative. We will continuously look at improving standards and delivering at least two programs during a year. To do that we will need your support, by volunteering to lecture and by attending and sharing your knowledge at these programs. We hope to develop these programs to be professionally recognized ones.

We should appreciate the time and effort the committee contributes to the organization in organizing these events on behalf of the membership. I would like to request the membership to give your fullest support to the committee by attending at these events which will in return encourage the team.

IT IS THE TEAM EFFORT THAT MAKES ANY ORGANIZATION SUCCESSFUL!

I will not take any more time as everyone is waiting for the main event, which is the fellowship, to start. Thank you everyone for attending and request you to follow the safety procedures while enjoying the evening.

STAY SAFE EVERYONE!

THANK YOU.

Capt. Mahendra Raratunga

President – CMM

Vote of thanks AGM 2020

President of CMM, Office Bearers at the head table, Past Presidents and dear members,

I feel honored and privileged to extend the vote of thanks at the conclusion of the 29th AGM of the Company of Master Mariners of Sri Lanka.

As you well aware this time we faced many challenges in organising the AGM. Despite several postponement , we managed to organized the AGM in this manner and would like to offer my sincere thanks to Capt. Palitha De Lanerolle the outgoing President of CMM, Capt. Mahendra Ranatunga, new president and the Council of Members for the support and advise rendered in planning the AGM with the evening to follow.

My sincere thanks go out to Capt. D.J. Amarsuriya who stepped down from the council after serving many years. Thank you Capt. DJ. , we really appreciated your thoughts, advices specially for constructive criticism at council meetings. Also would like to thanks Capt. Sugath De Silva who stepped down after valuable service in the council. Let me express my gratitude to Capt. Nimal Perera for accepting our request to act as the pro-term President when electing office bearers for the year 2020/2021.

I remain grateful to our regular sponsors Ceyline shipping and CINEC campus who helped to make this event a success. .On behalf of all members, I offer our sincere thanks the management and the staff of the Cinnamon lakeside Hotel for their cooperation and assistance in extending us every facility to make this evening a successful one.

I extend our thanks to the Band who will be providing the music for us tonight..

Finally, it is a matter of immense pride for me to convey my gratitude to the CMM members and their families for showing their support towards CMM by responding in such large numbers amidst ongoing pandemic.

Finally, On behalf of the council, may I now invite you for a time of fellowship
Thank you all and have a Great Evening. Secretary's report

Capt. Upal Peiris

Secretary CMM



AGM 2020



THE COMPANY OF MASTER MARINERS OF SRI LANKA

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

25 JULY 2020

AGM WHICH WAS POSTPONED DUE TO CORONOVIRUS WAS HELD AT THE CINNOMON LAKESIDE.

MEMBERSHIP TURNED UP FOR THIS EVENT IN NUMBERS.SOON AFTER THE AGM AND THE ELECTION OF NEW COUNCIL MEMBERS THE FELLOWSHIP WAS IN FULL SWING.

ONLY THING MISSING FROM THIS EVENT WERE THE CHILDREN WHO WERE NOT INVITED DUE TO CONCERNS FOR COVID.







Member achievements

www.dailynews.lk/2020/07/22/finance

Capt. Nish Wijayakulathilaka was appointed as the vice president of the Nautical Institute UK at the Annual General Meeting held on 02nd July 2020. He also a Fellow and was a council member of the institute, UK and former Secretary of the Sri Lanka Branch from 2014 to 2020.

He is a law graduate (LLB Hons) Second Class Honors from the New Buckinghamshire University, United Kingdom and a post graduate (MBA) from the University of Colombo. He has started his higher education from the University of Moratuwa and further Maritime higher education was completed at the CINEC Maritime Campus. He also a Member of the Company of the Master Mariners of Sri Lanka and the Chartered Member of the Chartered Institute of Logistic and Transport (CMILT). He is also a Good Will Maritime Ambassador appointed by International Maritime Organization (IMO) UK.

The Nautical Institute is a global body for maritime professionals with consultative status at the IMO. The

aim of the Nautical institute is to promote professionalism, best practice and safety throughout the maritime industry and to represent the interests of members.

The Aims and Objectives of the Institute as follows ,Encouraging and promoting a high standard of qualification, competence and knowledge among those in control of seagoing craft including non-displacement craft, Facilitating the exchange and publication of information and ideas on nautical science, encourage research and publish its results, Establishing and maintaining appropriate educational and professional standards of membership, Co-operating with Government Departments and other bodies concerned with statutory and other qualifications, and with universities and other educational institutes and authorities in the furtherance of education and training in nautical science and practice and Encouraging the formation of branches and professional groups in different areas worldwide.

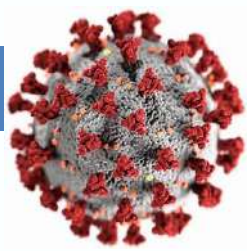
Nautical Institute Branches are grouped into world zones.

The principal aim of the Branches is to promote the activities and increase the membership of The Nautical Institute in their area.

He was also appointed in 2017 as an IMO Goodwill Maritime Ambassador from the International Maritime Organisation, UK.

IMO – the International Maritime Organization – is the United Nations specialized agency with responsibility for the safety and security of shipping and the prevention of marine and atmospheric pollution by ships. IMO's work supports the UN SDGs.

As a specialized agency of the United Nations, IMO is the global standard-setting authority for the safety, security and environmental performance of international shipping. Its main role is to create a regulatory framework for the shipping industry that is fair and effective, universally adopted and universally implemented.



As seafarers we have been at the receiving end of the COVID 19 epidemic. More so than any other profession at the exception of the health sector. The readership would be interested in having a glimpse into the Sri Lankan maritime experience in dealing with the COVID -19 pandemic. From the many articles sourced a handful of industry leaders have delivered on the promise of sharing their experiences and we have the privilege of publishing their articles today.

I sincerely apologize to the gentlemen who have taken their time to start writing about their experience but couldn't complete their articles in time for the publication. As you would reasonably understand we couldn't hold onto publishing the journal anymore but would like to thank your efforts and hope for your continued contributions.

Successful health measures implemented by SLPA has promoted safety at work and continuity of smooth operations during COVID-19.

By Guest Writer MR. **MR. D. UPALI DE ZOYSA**
ADDL. MANAGING DIRECTOR, SLPA

Sri Lanka Ports Authority (SLPA), under the purview of Hon.Minister of Ports and Shipping Johnston Fernando and with the instructions of the Chairman of SLPA, General Daya Ratnayake, has immediately taken a number of measures with the assistance of health authorities' guidance and instructions to prevent and control the spread of the Covid-19 inside the Port of Colombo and all commercial ports in Sri Lanka. These fruitful steps taken immediately following the announcement of the health crisis in Sri Lanka, have resulted in no Covid-19 infections being reported so far inside the port premises. These measures have further enabled continuation of smooth operations of all essential port services in and outside the port without any hindrance, to fulfill the national requirement at this very moment.

No sooner the outbreak was officially notified by health and other authorities, all operations and services of Sri Lanka Ports

Authority (SLPA) and the Port of Colombo were recognized as essential services. Accordingly, services and operations of the Jaya Container Terminal (JCT), South Asia Gateway Terminal (SAGT), Colombo International Container Terminal (CICT) and services of Colombo Logistics were announced essential services.

Sri Lanka Ports Authority (SLPA), as a responsible public institution has taken all preventive measures against the health situation. At a time when the WHO has announced Covid-19, Pandemic, the health crisis has also brought a new global challenge to face with, including our country and its institutions. SLPA also has to share this situation of challenge with no difference.

In February this year, with the health authorities' acknowledgements and awareness programs of the development of Covid-19 in the island, Sri Lanka Ports Authority (SLPA) commenced an immediate systematic campaign to control the spread of the virus in the port premises. The Management of SLPA, following these instructions, guided all relevant parties to follow due preventive measures that

should be utilized in order to prevent any hazardous health situation and also against any unpleasant health situation that could arise.

On March 10th, at the Mahapola Port and Maritime Training Academy of SLPA, an



awareness program on Covid-19 was held to educate all sectors of employees in the institution.

On March 13, 2020, the Management Meeting held at the institution solely aimed at promoting the need to control Covid-19 at the port premises. To expedite the implementation of Covid-19 preventive measures, a special preventive committee was also appointed with the initiative of the Vice Chairman of SLPA and presided by the Additional Managing Director of Sri Lanka Ports Authority (SLPA) Mr. Upali De Zoysa. The committee provides necessary guidelines and instructions by public health authorities to be implemented in the

institution. All Heads of Divisions are informed through the committee,

on required preventive measures to be taken at each Division of the institution.

With such implementations, immediate arrangements were made to purchase necessary preventive health related Hygiene solutions, protective gears and other equipment for the safety of all levels of port employees and port users inside the port.

SLPA's Covid-19 Prevention Operation

Center acts under the preventive committee was established in SLPA Secretariat. The operational center collects and reports information on all Covid-19 issues in the port premises to the top management as required, coordinates matters pertaining to handling of vessels during outbreak, coordinates corporate needs and issues pertaining to port charges and other service issues.

These implementations were also accompanied by the establishment of a "Disinfection Unit" at the Security

Division of SLPA. Covid -19 prevention activities are conducted collaboratively with the Covid-19 Prevention Unit of the Sri Lanka Navy at the port premises. Simultaneously, the Medical Division of SLPA is also



implementing necessary measures to regulate Covid - 19 preventive operation in accordance with the Government's health recommendations to ensure safety of employees.

Meanwhile, an essential special rotation of workforce arrangement has also been implemented by the management of SLPA to limit the presence of employee gathering at work, thereby, calling only for the most essential segments of employees and staffs on a shift basis during and after normal working hours. Under these implementations, it is compulsory for every employee who reports to such service during

the period, to report to work on the recommendation of the Divisional Head. Essential employees and officers have also been provided with facilities to carry out their duties online from home as per Government Circulars.

Instructions have been issued for employees reporting to work to fulfill health check-ups at the institution's Medical Division prior to reporting at their work places. Special daily transport services have also been arranged for long and short distance employees reporting to duties at the Port of Colombo. These steps and measures have helped increase health safety of all employees at the institution and the continuity of smooth operations at the Port of Colombo.

Further, the provision of meals and food, fuel concessions and the purchase of goods on concessionary terms and on the basis of consumer convenience, and pharmaceutical facilitation for employees who have long-term medicinal requirements have also been successfully fulfilled by the authority as effective welfare measures during the outbreak. The management has taken decisions not to deduct loan installments from employee salary, for the months of April and May this year. The concession has been offered for the ten month loan, transportation loan, multi-

purpose loan, and distress loan obtained by employees from the institution. The co-operative financial institutions in SLPA have also taken steps not to redeem loan installments during the period from employees who obtained various loan facilities from them.

Meanwhile, Sri Lanka Ports Authority's Guideline for Eradicating Covid-19 was launched on May 14, at the Mahapola Ports and Maritime Academy (MPMA) to maintain the safety of all those efficiently and effectively involved in the port's operations. Following the guideline, the institution's foremost objective is to ensure the safety of the Sri Lanka Ports Authority (SLPA) and all those involved in the operations of the ports. A series of special video production has also been released by the Communication and Public Relations division of SLPA in social media and the institutional web site to motivate and encourage employees, with a safety message for their loved ones at home and to acknowledge the public.

During the Covid-19 period, certain concessions have also been offered for consignees. Due to prevailing Covid-19 outbreak in the island, institutions and their staff related to operating import and export consignments have faced numerous difficulties. All terminals and warehouses in Sri Lanka Ports Authority (SLPA), SAGT and CICT have also reached their maximum capacities, creating several obstacles for the continuity of port operations, and obtaining

required space for positioning of containers and port cargo at terminals and warehouses in the port. Hon. Minister of Ports and Shipping Johnston Fernando with special attention into the matter further re-extended instructions issued earlier from 16th March 2020 to 13th April 2020 with regard to ‘occupational charges’. Accordingly, Sri Lanka Ports Authority, SAGT and CICT were instructed to offer related concessions from 14th April 2020 to 07th May 2020 to all consignees.

During this period, only basic occupational charges were charged at terminals for all imported local TEUs. Penal charges for the said period were fully waved off. The terminals of JCT and UCT of Sri Lanka Ports Authority, terminals of the SAGT and CICT acted accordingly. The concession period is now over following its deadline.

The institution, up to now has received a highly commendable helping hand for its Covid-19 preventive programme from all parties including the port health services, Sri Lanka Navy, employees of SLPA and all other stakeholders.

At a recent meeting held in SLPA, the Chairman of SLPA, General Daya Ratnayake thanked all levels of employees and staff members of the

institution for their dedicated efforts to maintain all operations of the port without hindrance at the very moment.

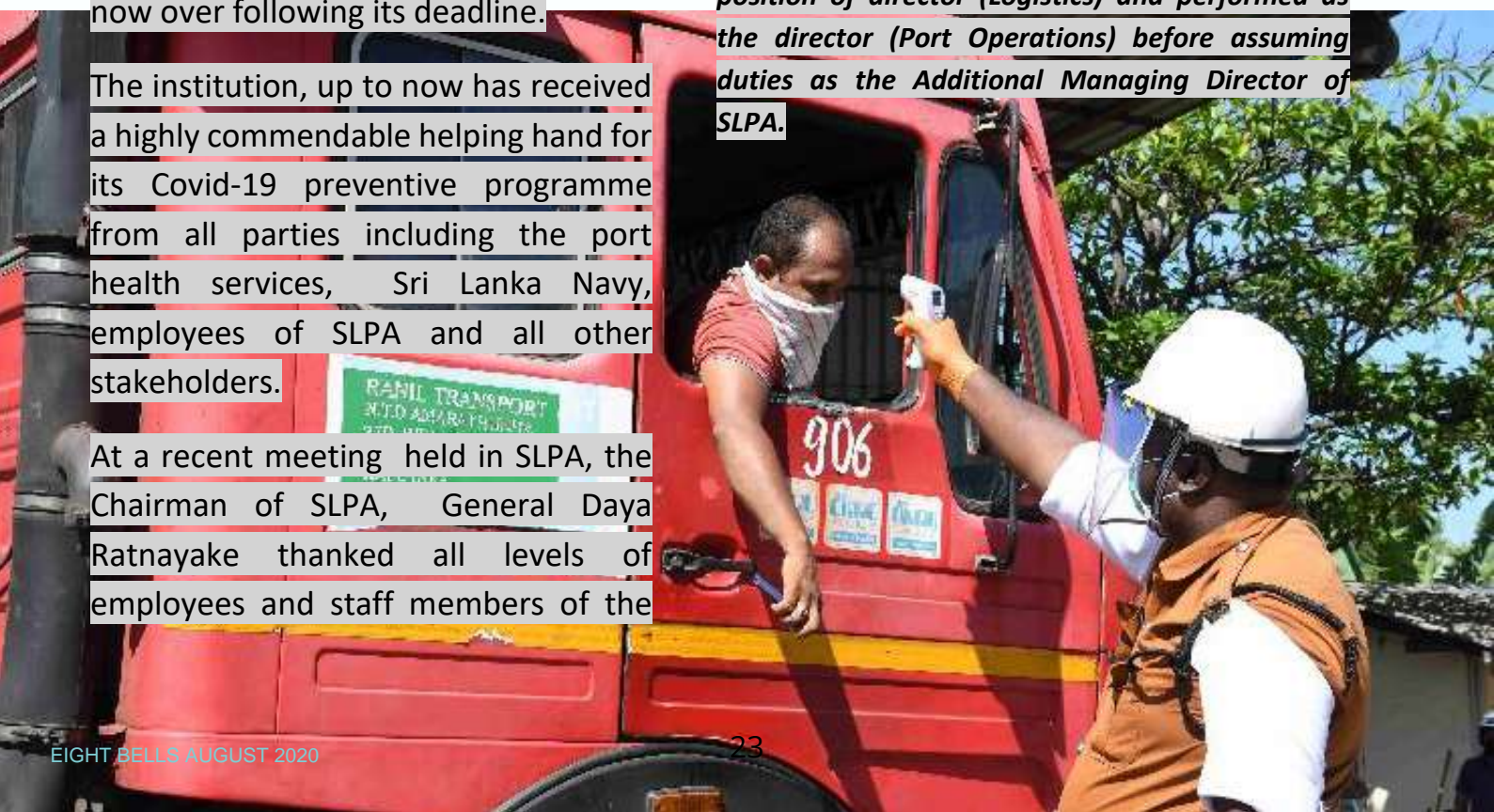
Sri Lanka Ports Authority (SLPA), as the pioneering port operator in South Asia who continued to operate around the clock during this global health issue right now, is implementing every preventive measure in the institution even beyond and higher than the expected level against the prevailing health situation to help fight Covid – 19 in Sri Lanka.

About the writer:

Graduated from University of Kelaniya Mr. Upali de Zoysa mastered in Business Administration from the Postgraduate Institute of Management University of Sri Jayewardenepura.

He has also followed postgraduate studies in Port and Shipping Management in Netherlands.

Mr. Zoysa joined SLPA as a management trainee in 1986 and came up in the career ladder up to the position of director (Logistics) and performed as the director (Port Operations) before assuming duties as the Additional Managing Director of SLPA.



THE NEW NORMAL AT HAMBANTOTOA

By Capt. Ravi Jayawickrama

By early January 2020 the whole world was talking of the “Novel Virus” that was spreading in China and on the 7th of January 2020 the WHO declared the Novel virus as 2019-nCoV and declared a Global Health Emergency.

Whilst there were reports of a rapid spread of the virus in China and other countries in the world only one person in Sri Lanka was reported with infection. By 11th of March as the Global spread accelerated the WHO declared this Virus as a Pandemic.

During this period the Hambantota International Port (HIP) planned out strategy to ensure all its staff and stakeholders and the community were well protected with education, prevention, mitigation being the cornerstones in our strategy. All efforts were made to prevent any infections of our staff with Covid 19 in order to ensure operations and business continuity in the Port.

The management adopted a three-phased strategy to fight the COVID19 virus.

OBSERVATION AND STRATEGY FORMATION

The number of cases reported in China were increasing rapidly and health authorities were cautious of a future global pandemic situation. HIP adopted a Strategy of observation and followed and implemented guidelines recommended by our Parent Company - China Merchants Ports, the WHO and Local Authorities. The HIP management team increased its alertness into an emergency response level increasing communications on a 24x7 basis using electronic technology.

PREVENTION OF IMPORT CASES TO SRI LANKA THROUGH HIP

The 2nd Phase was when Sri Lanka had only one reported case of import. It was a Chinese national who was in Sri Lanka on a tour. HIP immediately changed the approach raising the response level and taking additional preventive measures and the main objective was to ensure no HIP staff contracted and to make sure no cases were imported thro HIP to Sri Lanka.

ENSURE THE HEALTH & SAFETY OF HIP'S DIRECT AND INDIRECT EMPLOYEES WHILE ENSURING BUSINESS CONTINUITY AND SUPPORTING THE NATIONAL DRIVE TO “FLATTEN THE CURVE”

In this phase, whilst the reported cases in other countries overtook the reported cases in China and Sri Lanka started

reporting more imported cases with local spread of the virus. Sri Lankan government adopted a work from home approach and implemented a lockdown in the form of curfew. HIP changed the approach to ensure health and safety of all HIP direct and indirect staff while maintaining business continuity. At the same time HIP made it a priority to support the national drive to “flatten the curve” by taking various precautionary preventive steps.

The Emergency response team was Chaired by the C.E.O of Hambantota International Ports Group with three Deputy Chairmen and The Emergency Task Force consisted of all Heads of Departments (undersigned was designated Commander in Chief of the Emergency response to coordinate with all concerned parties including state officials)

PREVENTION AND CONTROL MEASURES- ACCORDING TO STATE OF ALERTNESS

Three Levels of Response were formulated depending on the country situation and the upgrading or downgrading from any level was decided by the Emergency response committee in consultation with the Task Force officials.

LEVEL III, EMERGENCY RESPONSE-

SUSPECTED CASES OF COVID-19 BEING FOUND IN SRI LANKA. NO MORE CONFIRMED CASES FOUND WITHIN 7 CONSECUTIVE DAYS FROM THE DATE OF STATUS CHANGE.

- a) Regular Executive Committee and GMs meetings for quick decision-making.
- b) Strict usage of PPE and disinfection procedures at front line and service windows.
- c) Investigate all people who may come into contact with COVID-19 carrier.
- d) People who may be exposed to COVID-19 should be self-quarantined and sent to hospital if necessary.
- e) Notify investors, tenants, and construction and outsourcing units to take comprehensive prevention measures.
- f) Measures shall be implemented according to the requirements of the health and epidemic prevention departments of Sri Lanka and recommendations of China Merchants Ports.
- g) Monitor and report fever and any cases of suspected infection, especially people who have visited affected countries or cities in the recent history of their travel.

h) Monitor and report fever and cases of suspected infection of visitors to the port.

i) Monitor and report all incoming vehicles, vessels, public transportation and animals.

LEVEL II, EMERGENCY RESPONSE— CONFIRMED CASES OF COVID-19 FOUND IN SRI LANKA.

a) All port staff must wear PPE.

b) Refrain from shaking hands whilst greeting, use the traditional Sri Lankan method of greeting with own clasped hands.

c) Cancel all foreign visits, business trips, study tours and other activities.

d) Conduct ERC members conference call daily to review progress of last day's work plan and requirement, discuss and solve current concerns and difficulties, make next day's action plan.

e) Strict disinfection and non-contamination practices for all staff.

f) Remote working and reduced staff numbers in office up to 50% or less while maintaining business continuity.

g) Physical measures adopted based on CMPort recommendations like shutting down central air conditioning, strict practice of social distancing,

improved hygiene control when serving meals at canteens, regular disinfection of office and terminal areas, avoiding contact with ship crews and strict practice of wearing PPE.

h) Avoiding staff movement through public transport by providing company transport and providing in-house accommodation where necessary.

i) Strictly enforce self-quarantine/self-isolation in case of any suspicious case.

j) Promote self-diagnosis of symptoms and regular monitoring of symptoms by measuring temperature.

k) Regular monitoring of people for their travel and contact points. Self-declarations to be made before travelling between districts.

l) Emergency medical handling procedure and isolation points are setup to isolate and control any suspected cases.

m) Regular awareness, updates and communications. Daily official status update to counter misinformation.

n) Company Emergency Role Succession plan is in place with a rotation of Roles A, B and C for business continuity.

o) Continuous awareness of policies, practices and SOPs among our employees.

p) Cascading of emergency policies, practices and SOPs to all our service providers.

q) Providing convenience to staff for purchasing supplies during the emergency time period thereby minimizing staff movement.

r) Acting socially responsible by providing physical and mental support to staff.

s) Donations to support the government institutions, health authorities and local community by providing essential items in their fight against COVID19.

LEVEL I, EMERGENCY RESPONSE–

IF ANY CONFIRMED CASE OF COVID-19 HAS BEEN IN THE PORT PREMISES, OR ANY CONFIRMED CASE AMONG ANY DIRECT/INDIRECT STAFF, SERVICE PROVIDER, PORT USERS WHO HAS BEEN IN THE PORT WITHIN THE LAST 21 DAYS.

a) HR Task Force shall immediately conduct an investigation of the person in contact with confirmed case.

b) HSE and Security Task Force shall immediately contact the Public Health Inspector and the Police, and coordinate with the authorized bodies to trace the suspect patients and ascertain the source of his infection.

c) HR Task Force shall inform the relevant persons who had been in close contact (1m distance) with

confirmed patients to keep in self isolation and observation, including but not limited to persons who shared the same office, lift, lunch place, etc.

d) Logistics Task Force shall execute immediate evacuation and disinfection of the place where the confirmed patients were located in, including but not limit to a building, house, room, workshop, office, vehicle, etc. under supervision of the HSE Task Force.

e) HR Task Force shall guide all departments to immediately reduce the staff headcount working in the premises of HIP to the barest minimum required to ensure sustainable port operations.

f) Each Task Force shall plan a feasible 3 tier staff rotation plan and obtain approval of HIP ERC in advance. The 2nd/3rd tier staff who are not required to report to office shall keep on remote working in their homes ready to take over at very short notice.

g) Logistics Task Force shall stop the use of company canteen and provide only packed meals/food that are delivered to the consumers.

h) HR Task Force will coordinate with the Public Health Inspector and Police and request COVID-19 testing for all the staff/outsourced staff who have been exposed to the patient.

i) All Task Forces shall coordinate with the Health authorities /Police /authorized bodies.

j) Once a confirmed case is declared by the Health Authorities, the Secretaries to the ERC shall inform CMPort Head Offices and the relevant government bodies accordingly and follow their guidance.

k) PR & Commercial Task Force shall prepare for possible media inquiries and provide a correct and positive news source.

l) A patient who has likely symptoms of COVID-19 during the subject mentioned time period, HSE Task Force should be informed and the mentioned patient should be kept in the specified isolation point until be transferred to specified hospital by HSE.

m) All staff who lodge in Hambantota area/work from home are not allowed to leave their lodgings/working place without prior approval from his/her direct supervisor, public transportation service should not be used, and social distancing strictly observed at work place as well as at lodgings.

In keeping with the norms recommended and practiced all over the world, HIP formulated S.O.P's for any and all situations of Covid infection which were identified as may occur in the port such as but not limited to Strict

Hygiene Practices, monitoring and recording details of visitors, Social distancing at work and canteens and minimizing meetings that may require large gatherings, providing transport to staff living beyond Hambantota etc. Infact staff living in the outstations, as far as Kantale were provided transport from/to Hambantota when remote working was introduced. Meetings were restricted to minimum participants as per social distancing guidelines and SOP.

Above mentioned measures were not only followed by own staff but had to be implemented and followed by all outsourced staff as well as any visitors to the Port. All tenants in the Administration building as well as within Port premises were required to follow HIP procedures at all times.

The HIP provided all its staff with adequate PPE as per their work requirements. With and acute scarcity of PPE in Sri Lanka, a large consignment of PPE was specifically imported from China.

In all our endeavors' we were always mindful of the community and many consignments of PPE were donated to the Hambantota General Hospital. During the initial Curfew period all places of religious worship in and around the district



CREW MANAGEMENT IN A GLOBAL PANDEMIC

By Capt.Rohan Codipilly

It crept up on an unsuspecting world, first as a flu happening in China.....

were donated packs of dry rations.

The proactive measures undertaken at the initial stages and there after ensured all our staff and their families as well as clients stayed safe. We still continue to practice all precautions as well as guidelines issued by the government and it's our fervent hope this pandemic will soon be controlled with the discovery of new vaccines and medications.

Ship crew changes carried out through Hambantota were done as per the Government guidelines and will continue to afford facilities for crew changes to any shipping line desirous of doing so.

Please do be safe and healthy.

The cruise industry caught the spotlight

An early snippet:

“On January 20, an 80-year-old passenger from Hong Kong embarked in Yokohama, and he disembarked in Hong Kong on January 25. On February 1, six days after leaving the ship, he visited a Hong Kong hospital, where he tested positive for Covid-19.” - The Maritime Executive.

Increasingly media attention was on the Cruise ships lining up in different parts of the world unable to discharge the passengers. Countries around the world were slowly going into lockdown effectively putting a stop to crew changes.

Sri Lanka went into lockdown on Monday 16th March.

News of rising death rates in various countries lead to further anxiety onboard.

Lack of clear information and the situational volatility made it impossible to plan crew changes ahead with any certainty.

Crew were becoming more anxious and some were feeling abandoned.

Media were reporting of crew taking things into their own hands, resignation, illnesses, refusal to work..... even reports of death by suicide.

Here are a few incidents that we faced.....

The messman on board was repatriated without a relief. The Cook managed all the work with some assistance from an OS. The need to have the Hatches cleaned in preparation for loading meant the deck crew member “could not be spared”. As you can imagine this meant the Cook had no help physically and was “alone”.

He developed severe physical symptoms that prevented him from carrying out his duties. The Master and a crew member had to become the “Cook”. This continued till a Cook and a Messman could join at a port where a crew change could be carried out.....

In another incident a Senior Engineer was not in a fit state of mind that let him focus on his work which he himself recognized and led him to resign from his duties. What to do? Prevailing travel restrictions meant a crew change could not be carried out. The crew on board had to manage. The Engineer concerned was staying in his cabin with only his thoughts for

company. After quite some time the vessel arrived at a port where a relief could join. BUT he could not sign off. Joining was permitted but not repatriations as the vessel had come from a port where COVID was present..... more time..... finally the vessel arrived where repatriation was permitted and the Engineer went home

A vessel arrives in a Northern European port where joining crew require Visas. The Embassy though is closed and obtaining Visas for joining crew is not possible. The ITF sends “a demand” that all crew members who are on board longer than their original contract need to be relieved “in order to avoid any further inconvenience”. A thorough PSC Inspection follows; nothing found. What to do? Nothing really. Vessel sails on a commitment to have the crew changed at the “next port”.

Happy ending to the story; the vessel’s next port (in another European country) did facilitate crew changes by providing Visa on arrival and the crew change was carried out.

The initial clamp down on crew changes, the subsequent uncertainty and lack of information on how repatriations could happen caused concern and confusion onboard as well as with families ashore. Sri Lankan Embassies overseas were approached by anxious crew members and their families as were authorities here.

Torrents of COVID-19 information coming in that was not helping the anxiety levels onboard prompted a Master to comment

that he would rather not have any more updates!

While this lasts, we all should bear in mind that feelings of isolation onboard can cause severe anxiety and those suffering severe anxiety are twice as likely to fall ill or be injured.


Thankfully though, this situation is changing due to joint efforts of IMO, ILO, IMEC, ITF, ICS etc. More Countries are facilitating crew changes, Charter and Commercial flights are operating now to a great extent. The Middle East has become the hub for travel to/from Colombo and the approval process is streamlined



Governments must recognize Seafarers as Professional key workers

Captain Nish Wijayakulathilaka *FNI*.

<https://www.dailynews.lk/2020/05/29>



“One of the goals of IMO, as stated in its Convention, is to ensure the availability of shipping services to the commerce of the world, for the benefit of humanity.”

As an IMO Goodwill Maritime Ambassador and the council member of the Nautical Institute United Kingdom and Secretary of the Sri Lanka Branch, I feel this is one of my duty and the time to raise the voice on behalf of the seafaring Professionals and future Mariners as more than 100,000 Mariners are stranded at Sea, and living as prisoners on board due to the travelling restrictions imposed worldwide.

It was reported that signing on and signing off procedures all over the world are being temporarily suspended by most of the countries which result in Seafarers to stuck onboard and watching at the horizon without hope.

The Nautical Institute, the United Kingdom which represents about 7,000 members across 70 countries around the Globe, raising their voice to treat seafarers as Key workers and Governments to allow the repatriation for those who have stranded at sea. CEO Capt. John Lloyd is giving their (NI) inputs to the IMO and addressing their

prestigious members around the world and make them feel that they are not alone during this Pandemic crisis time.

The shipping industry has called for seafarers to be designated as key workers, to keep vital maritime supply chains flowing during this Global crisis due to COVID 19. The International Maritime Organization (IMO) Secretary-General Kitack Lim urged the United Nations to request governments to declare seafarers, port personnel and other crucial maritime workers as “key personnel” amid the coronavirus pandemic.

Lim also has made the plea during a video meeting with UN chiefs and the UN Secretary-General to discuss the impacts of COVID-19 crisis. During the meeting, Lim has highlighted the importance and well-being of maritime workers to keep the global supply chain alive, and particularly the world’s seafarers who are on one of the front lines in the fight against COVID-19.

Lim has brought attention to travel bans and restrictions on crew changes imposed by governments due to the pandemic, and the impacts of these restrictions have on the flow of goods, including critical items such as pharmaceuticals, medical equipment and food supply.

The IMO has issued many circulars to overcome the issues facing by the shipping industry due to the present crisis.

The Ships are subjected to many Statutory and Class surveys and audits as required by the regulations to keep the safer ships and cleaner ocean. The IMO and Flag states issued guidelines and Shipping notices extending existing Certificates including Statutory, STCW Certificates, Medical certificates etc to keep the Maritime trade functioning as the 90% of Global trade borne by the sea. There is no other way of keeping the ships on moving other than extending the validity of the certificates, without jeopardizing the sea trade, but may threaten the safer ships Cleaner ocean as a result of extending the certificates without been doing the surveys and audits.

One of the goals of IMO, as stated in its Convention, is to ensure the availability of shipping services to the commerce of the world, for the benefit of humanity. IMO urge all IMO Member States to bear this in mind when framing their policy decisions with to the coronavirus. Defeating the virus must be the first priority, but global trade, in a safe, secure and environmentally friendly manner must be able to continue, too.

In the joint letter to the UN, the International Chamber of Shipping (ICS) and the International Transport Workers’ Federation (ITF) says the world’s governments must ensure ports remain open while facilitating crew

changes with as few obstacles as possible

They wrote: “Every month, around 100,000 seafarers need to be changed over from the ships they operate to comply with relevant international maritime regulations, governing safe working hours and crew welfare.

They also urged that “We, therefore, wish to emphasise the vital need for the world’s professional merchant seafarers to be granted appropriate exemptions from any national travel restrictions, when joining or leaving their ships, to keep the world’s maritime supply chains functioning”.

The live AIS screenshot of marine traffic makes you understand the ships moving at that instant. Those ships trade foods, raw materials, Oil and Gas, grains, fertilizers, finished products from East to West, North to South and vice-versa. The seafarers take care of the goods once loaded, no matter goods are on, FOB, CIF or time or voyage charter, but safely delivered to the destination. They cross major oceans

without sleeping and, sailing through the cyclones, experiencing heavy seas, pitching and rolling, heat and cold, haze and fog, wind and thunderstorms while they are away from their loved ones.

Why we call seafarer is a “ Key Worker” not only because of he makes the key contribution to the shipping trade, but he is taking part of protecting the sea by preventing Marine and Air pollution by strict compliance to the regulations, Also a major stakeholder of the economy by bringing of Foreign currencies to a country. Not only that, but Seafarer is also a well trained professional who keeps upgrading of their knowledge and certificates by means regular training and examinations.

It is the time to raise the voice, Governments to understand the role of the seafarer as around 90% of global trade is transported by commercial shipping.

Seafarers sail through war zones, dangerous areas and this is why they are called Key workers. They also sail through Tropical Cyclones and Typhoons

They sail through the high-risk areas declared by the JWC (Joint War Committee) as required by the shipowner or the charterer after paying the additional premium to the underwriters for their benefit, It does not mean that the risk of the seafarers is being eliminated by just paying the additional premium. The Seafarer stomach all these risks while sailing.

Marines to sail through the Cyclone to catch the lay can as per the commercial shipping requirement through heavy seas on deck and terrible pitching and rolling.

Sometimes they face two or more typhoons while sailing through the South China Sea. The picture shows two Typhoons at a time. One of our vessels was sailing in this area while both typhoons bothering the route of the vessel.

The International Labour Organisation (ILO) Special Tripartite Committee of the Maritime Labour Convention issued a statement last week that accurately frames the current situation:

“The global coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic is creating dire circumstances for the shipping industry and seafarers. Daily life in many countries has been heavily restricted, yet societies still need their supplies of food, medicine and everyday goods, and factories require materials and logistics to ship their products. This underlines the need for robust international supply chains and emphasises the critical importance of maritime trade to the global economy, which relies on shipping for 90 per cent of all goods.”

We have to focused on finding the solutions to the seafarers’ current contractual rights and the employers’ obligations for repatriation as per the Maritime Labour Convention, which is being threatened due to the current situations.

“Force Majeure” has been declared by Most of the countries which

affected not only the Mariners but Shippers, Receivers, Shipowners and Charterers as well. Most of the seafarers are working on contract basis and the terms and conditions are subjected to the Maritime Labour Convention and respective Government and Flagship labour regulations. However, the increasing challenge with growing travel restrictions which are being imposed by most countries and the virtual collapse of scheduled air travel is preventing regular crew changes and repatriations around the world.

This has increased and created many social problems onboard vessels and frustrations among those who have been stranded. It can be identified as a significant threat to the safety of the vessel and lives on board.

Maianiting of the mental healthcare of the Seafarers those who have been stranded is one of the challenges facing by the ship owners as a result of prevailing travel restrictions. We have already come across the experience of these challenges.

Around the world, many countries have introduced lockdowns, limiting people’s day to day life activities and the ability to move freely and meet family and friends and restricted to their own homes. As a result of locking down, most companies have introduced temporary freezing of crew change due to the air travelling restriction and restrictions imposed on the Ship’s crew, resulting in the seafarers those on contractual terms for 4 months to 9 months, some cases 12 months for

trainees, now been extended without seeing a definite date of repatriation, jeopardizing the Labour rules in the Maritime Labour Convention.

Usually, Crews are going ashore when the vessels are in port, now being banned by many ports resulting Seafarers to limit to their cabins. The seafarers well being is a vital factor for smooth operation onboard the vessels as well as safety of the lives at sea which being now threatened.

Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS) convention was introduced after the famous Titanic disaster, 1912, and Marine Pollution (MARPOL) Convention was introduced after the accident of Motor Tanker Torrey Canyon, 1967 and many more conventions are being in force to be strictly complied by the seafarers and Shipping companies. The Maritime Labour Convention (MLC), International Safety Management Code(ISM code), International Ship and Security and port facility Code(ISPS), and many other conventions are being combined with seafarers day to day life.

The seafarers are trained for their professions with all those regulations which an average Citizen may difficult to feel and understand.

The purpose of this article is to raise a voice with brother Seafarers for

the Governments around the world to talk each other and put up the processes and procedures to ensure seafarers are recognized as key workers, also to exempt from all the travel restrictions, and to allow crew changes, so that the global shipping supply chain can be functioned without jeopardizing and to extend the gratitude to the seafarers those who are working round the clock to keep the supply chain alive.

As per the info gathered, The UK has already designated seafarers as key workers, alongside other vital supply chain and transport staff across all freight modes.

Most of the ports around the world have announced that the crew changes are not permitted till further notice, It was witnessed with recent our email correspondence with the agents in South Africa, China, Thailand etc.

While understanding the seriousness of the COVID 19 Pandemic and national and international regulations, this is the time to develop a rigorous risk assessment and find a methodology and drawn up action plans for crew changes that we, as employers and ship Managers, seafarers and implement to mitigate the risks of infection during the crew change with consulting the expertise of Health Authorities in Government and Private sector.

Note: The author of the article Capt. Nish Wijayaulathilaka, Fellow of the Nautical Institute(FNI), UK, the IMO Maritime Goodwill Ambassador (IMOGMA) appointed by the International Maritime

Organisation(IMO), Council Member of the Nautical Institute, United Kingdom and the Secretary of the Sri Lanka Branch. He also a member of United Nations Association of Sri Lanka and Chartered Member of the Chartered Institute of Logistic and Transport (CMILT). He was graduated from Buckinghamshire New University for legal Education (LLB) with Second Class Honours and has a Master degree for Business Admirationc(MBA) from the University of Colombo. He can be contacted on nishww@hotmail.com for correspondence.

Seafarers organizations have engaged with the state apparatus represenataing seafarer issues. CMM too has contributed in our capacity as an organization consisting of senior maritime professionals in the island

COMPANY OF MASTER MARINERS

Oceani Reges - Natura Duces (Commanders of the Ocean - Leaders)
157/12, Koswatte Road, Nawala. Sri Lanka.

Phone: +94 776853939 Email: cmmstrilanka@gmail.com

10 July 2020

Admiral (Prof.) Jayanath Colombage,
Additional Secretary to the President for Foreign Relations
Presidential Secretariat,
Colombo 01.

Dear Admiral Colombage,

QUARANTINE PROCESS IN SRI LANKA FOR OFFSIGNING SEAFARERS

We, the Company of Master Mariners of Sri Lanka (CMM) are an association of Master Mariners who are committed to the safety and wellbeing of seafarers and wish to bring the following for your kind consideration and positive follow up with His Excellency the President over a matter of grave concern to our seafarers.

Since you have been the Chairman of the Nautical Institute (Sri Lanka Branch) for more than five years, you would be quite familiar with the CMM. Some of CMM members have also been closely working together with you as your NI branch committee members.

With due consideration and understanding the extreme difficulties and pressures the Covid-19 pandemic has put our President and his task force under, and with the demands for returnees increasing, we earnestly wish to bring the following areas of concern which we feel can be rectified with more focused understanding and not too much of effort for our seafaring community with regard to the quarantine process and costs.

As we are aware, most Governments have suspended international flights, closed their borders, ports and airports and imposed travel restrictions to limit the spread of the coronavirus.

These restrictions have directly impacted the capacity of seafarers to travel between the ships that constitute their workplace and their country of residence.

As a knock-on effect, most crews are stuck on board, undergoing severe stress, as they have been unable to be signed off and repatriated to their home ports. Crew changes are vital to prevent fatigue and protect seafarers' health, safety and wellbeing, to ensure the safe operation of maritime trade, of which Sri Lanka is dependent on for commerce.

Whilst being grateful, on behalf of our Sri Lankan seafarers who are essential workers in the global trade, that positive steps have been taken to arrange crew changes, our direct concern lies

with the wellbeing of our seafarers during their initial two-week quarantine period ashore, which we list below for your kind attention as brought to our notice by CMM Members who have completed their quarantine.

Seafarers are being billed Rs. 20,000 per day f/b per single room, whereas for normal incoming passengers the charge is Rs. 12,500 per day.

Some companies do not bear the cost and seafarers have to personally pay the charges. Ratings and trainee Cadets who are not financially well off (Cadets have to save money for their studies) have difficulty in bearing the costs for 14 days x Rs. 20,000.

Some of our members have complained about the service that they get for the amount they are charged, such as for the quality and variety of food, sanitary facilities, wi-fi connectivity etc., which are not up to the level expected. Ship owners too have protested and some have moved their crew change operation to India as a result. Since this would mean that shipowners will find it convenient and cheaper to do their crew changes at whatever port possible, the seafarers face the risk of losing their employment and our country the business opportunity.

There will be other shipping organisations who will also bring these matters forward, as ours is an Island nation which has a strong dependency on maritime activity.

We understand that in India, seafarers who are tested negative in the PCR test have the option of spending their 14 day quarantine at home or in institutions approved by the Government. Our concern and humble request is to reduce the cost of quarantine to the same as what other returnees from overseas have to pay and bring the services offered on par with the other hotels. Seafarers are a very important part of our nation and should be afforded at least the same facilities as that of other returnees.

Once again, whilst appreciation your efforts along with that of the Task Force and our armed forces, police and the health sector guided by the President, we should look at stabilizing the opportunity we have received with regard to crew changes and increased employment of seafarers as addressed in the webinar on "THE IMPACT OF THE GLOBAL PANDEMIC ON THE SHIPPING, AIRLINE AND AVIATION INDUSTRY" on 13th MAY 2020, organized by the National Chamber of Commerce, along with SLPA Chairman General Daya Ratnayake, and the concerns of seafarers voiced by Dr. Ruanthi De Silva.

We thank you for your positive follow up on the contents of this communication and would be pleased to have an opportunity to meet you in the near future and discuss if you can spare some time.

Yours faithfully,



Capt. Palitha De Lanerolle

President

Company of Master Mariners of Sri Lanka

“Seafarers for Sri Lanka” – Sri Lankan Seafarer’s Contribution to the COVID – Fund

Capt.Sanjeewa Delgoda writing for Seafarers CO-OP

As Sri Lankans, we faced with several national disasters during the past decade. In all times of crisis, we faced them successfully by working in unity as a nation. Covid-19 is a global epidemic which was started from Wuhan-China, on 17th of November 2019. The first case of the virus was confirmed on 27th January 2020 in Sri Lanka, after a 44-year-old Chinese woman from Hubei Province in China was found infected. Since then, it expanded to a lockdown condition, lasting for about two and half months.

As seafarers, the intention of contributing for Covid-19 “Itukama” fund was generated within ourselves. With the idea of supporting the nation in this crucial situation, all seafarers’ organizations unified and initiated a fund through Seafarers’ Co-op. A committee was formed with the representatives of all seafarers’ organizations.

We thank the office bearers and membership of the Merchant

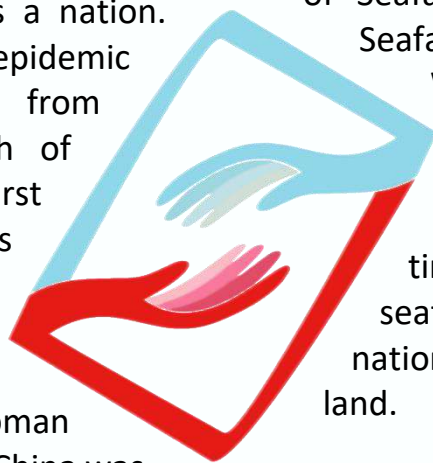
Shipping Secretariat, Ceyline Shipping Ltd, IMarEST, **Company of Master Mariners-Sri Lanka**, Manaco Marine, Mercantile Marine Management Ltd,

Pacific Manning Agency, UNK Global Maritime Institute, Nautical Diplomates Association, ALF Shipping (Pvt) Ltd and SOCHEM-Sri Lanka for their support and contribution.

The project was started under the theme of “Seafarers for Sri Lanka”, targeting the Seafarers’ Day on 25th June 2020.

Without any hesitation, all seafarers who were onboard and on vacation positively contributed for the fund. First time in the history, all Sri Lankan seafarers stand together during national emergency to help mother land.

As an outcome of the effort of all Sri Lankan seafarers, **more than five million rupees** were collected throughout the project. Marking the international Seafarers’ Day on 25th of June, the contribution of Sri Lanka seafarers was handed over to His Excellency the president, Mr. Gotabhaya Rajapakse.





Working at Heights

By Capt. Chandra Godakanda Arachchi

Working on ships apart from being usual tough business being out at sea dealing with day to day varying tasks, adverse weather conditions and all other perils at sea, it's imperative that all on board look after themselves and their mates from being harmed by accidents.

There are numerous risks associated with activities that need to be performed on board. Statistics indicate falling from heights while working has been the number one risk on board ships over the years. Falling from heights has led to critical injuries and fatalities even in calm seas when such accidents least expected perhaps being complacent.

Crew of a 30000 ton bulk carrier had been working to replace the wire rope of a cargo crane grab. Couple of seamen had safely descended from the grab upon completion of the task however whilst Bosun was about to descend post unclipping his safety harness lanyard lost his footing falling five meters on to a railing then further falling further one meter on to a the deck sustaining head

injuries. He was administered first aid, then moved to the hospital whilst the master seeking radio medical advice. However Bosun died just about an hour after the accident.

Weather in this case had been fair then perhaps CO taking the opportunity to complete the task. It appears that working at heights precautions had been taken (but not quite) and "Permit to work afloat" had been issued. Learnings from report mention about fall arrest equipment not the right type (right type -energy absorbing lanyard as per the report), shipboard procedures not addressing risks of falling from all stages of the task including ascending and descending and the need of a robust risk assessment not allowing individual perception of working at height is not a factor.



Energy absorbing lanyard

Analysis

Working at heights with significant risks should be avoided at sea (eliminate the risk at sea). If imperative to carry out the task a good risk assessment must be carried out with the participation of all members of the work party. Full task should be separated into steps such as ascending, moving to work location, removing wire, replacing wire, moving back to ladder and descending etc. Then each step has to be risk assessed and documented separately with input from work party. Control measures has to be put in place to reduce each risk documented to an acceptable risk. All members of the work party should read understand and sign the risk assessment or job hazard analysis (JHA). Responsibilities should be assigned to each member of the work party. This is to ensure that each member is aware of what is expected of him / her. It is important not to proceed with the task if then risk level cannot be brought down.

Workers should be trained to be Aware of what's going on during

performing complete task and simple step back (Stop, Think, Control and Proceed) at all times.

It is also important to inspect fall protection equipment before each use, ensure controls are in place to prevent falling objects including securing tools and material, identify suitable anchor points for securing fall protection equipment, ensure tie off to the anchor point yet while in a protected area, barricades and exclusion zones, signage (for possible falling objects).

Work must not begin or continue unless everyone involved confirms controls are in place.

Your family is waiting for you. Take care and look after your mates!!



Collision due to Relative Motion Illusion

Capt. Francis Lansakara - FNI



Background of the case

Car Carrier “City of Rotterdam” and the ro-ro “Primula Seaways” collided in River Humber, in UK on the night of 3 December 2015. The marine pilot under Associated British Ports, boarded the car carrier at Immingham Dock and was due to navigate car carrier along the River Humber to the mouth of the river, where full control was then to be handed over to Captain of the ship, who would take the vessel to sea. Humber Vessel Tracking Service (VTS) monitored the ship’s track which showed that she was straying into the north side of the shipping channel and into the nearby Anchorage.

Her passage also brought her into the track of vessels traveling west along the River, including another ship “Primula Seaways” which was traveling inbound along the channel. Despite alerts from VTS and the captain of the “Primula Seaways”, the “City of Rotterdam” continued its passage along the wrong side of the shipping lane and despite taking avoiding actions two ships collided head-on causing heavy structural damages to both vessels

Bridge designed as per SOLAS Convention



Upon investigation the UK Marine Accident Investigation Branch (MAIB) team determined that the City of Rotterdam’s pilot failed to apprehend the developing risk of collision because he had experienced "relative motion illusion" – that is, he was mistaken about the ship’s direction of travel. The prosecutor brought Criminal proceedings against the Master

and the Pilot the master was charged with conduct endangering ships structures or individuals in violation of UK Merchant Shipping Act.

The Pilot was charged with misconduct by Pilot endangering ship, contrary to UK Pilotage Act. Although the accident is about Colreg 9 Navigation in a Narrow Channel: where a vessel proceeding along the course of a narrow channel or fairway shall keep as near to the outer limit of the channel or fairway which lies on her starboard side as is safe and practicable. Experiencing the relative motion illusion is a novel concept affecting lookout which may occur in ships with hemispherical bridge design.

In the navigator's point of view

Understanding unconventional bridge design and approval process:

City of Rotterdam's hemispherical bow was designed to reduce wind resistance and carbon emissions and to provide better fuel economy. Only the front window on the centreline was in perpendicular to the vessel's fore and aft axis. Due to hemispherical design the bridge windows did not

meet the SOLAS Convention requirement that is SOLAS V/22.1.9.1 that "*all top windows shall be inclined from the vertical plane top out to an angle between 10 and 25 degrees*". Where the bridge design does not meet the required criteria, it will be known as unconventional bridge design. Exemption to unconventional bridge design may be granted under SOLAS V/22. provided they demonstrated that bridge windows in unconventional design was able to achieve, as close as practical, the visibility requirements detailed in the SOLAS convention. The City of Rotterdam was granted such an exemption certificate issued by its flag state and the process leading to granting such approval remain unclear.

Liability

- a. In accordance with precedent collision situation where a vessel in a narrow channel or fairway failed in her duty to keep to her side of the track can be blamed up to 80% and the other vessel who is innocent will still be blamed 20% for not taking whatever available actions to her. This part appeared to have settled between the parties without the courts' involvement.
- b. However, in a rare case criminal charges were brought against Master and the Pilot of City of Rotterdam in UK Courts. There were no criminal charges brought against master of the other ship (Primula Seaways). The master of "City of Rotterdam" was charged with conduct

endangering ships, structures or individuals, in violation of the UK Merchant Shipping Act. The master had failed to intervene in the pilot's action until it was too late. The Pilot was also charged with misconduct by pilot endangering the ship, contrary to UK Pilotage Act. The prosecution initially alleged a variety of failures by the Pilot but, in his defence the court was persuaded that he was subject to 'Relative Motion Illusion' caused by the non SOLAS compliant design of the ship's bridge and bridge windows. The pilot's error amounted simply to not taking sufficient steps to break himself out of the effects of that illusion. Following the accident both men had retired from the profession however, they were given suspended jail sentences and fines. One important factor to note while sentencing the judge had acknowledged the ship's unconventional bridge design had played a part in the accident.

- c. Liabilities discussed under the UK Merchant shipping acts and the UK Pilotage act are not universal. Accidents in Ports are governed by national laws of that state criminal proceeding will differ accordingly. Under Merchant Shipping Act of Sri Lanka if a master is convicted in courts for infringement of COLREGS his charges will be limited to a fine this may occur after a collision with damages and probably casualties. The Pilotage is governed by Pilotage Act and Sri Lanka Port Authority's

Act. Under the Pilotage Act the Port Authority is exempted from liabilities caused to any party due to negligence of it's pilot on the other hand if the courts found pilot is guilty of negligence in violation of port regulations he can be charged and the charges will be limited to a fine, the pilot also has the protection of limiting his fine to a minimum sum. The fines imposed by the courts under these circumstances are minimum amounts they may not have any impact on the convict

Comments:

- a) Although the flag state had exempted the vessel from SOLAS bridge design compliance it is unclear how the relative motion illusion was addressed during the approval process. The negligence of flag state, classification society or their surveyors were not mentioned in the court proceeding nor any of their faults were taken into account in sentencing.
- b) Bearing in mind there are many ships exist in the industry with hemispherical or unconventional bridge design decision of this case could well be a precedent for similar accidents in future.

Staining on a consignment of SUVs – Survey to identify the source and extent

Capt.Lalinda Namalarachchi

The following is a first-hand experience while the writer was acting as the P&I Club appointed surveyor who attended the vessel and carried out the Survey.

The vessel

Type:	Vehicles Carrier
Deadweight:	28300 mt
Length Overall:	229 m
Breadth Extreme:	33 m
ME power:	14700 kW

Synopsis

The subject consignment consisted of 230 units of popular South Korean SUVs loaded at Kwangyang (KYG) South Korea for North European market.

The vessel’s crew had discovered ‘rust stains’ on some of the vehicles during

a routine lashing re-tightening/inspection.

The Master promptly reported the incident to the owners/operators and the P&I Club in turn.

Possible Claim

As no one will be willing to purchase a less than perfect brand new car, the consignees may not be willing to receive stained vehicles from the car carrier particularly when any existence of staining was not notified at the port of loading.

Removal of stains or repainting costs could easily run into considerable sums in Europe, cargo insurers will make every effort to recover their losses from the o

Survey

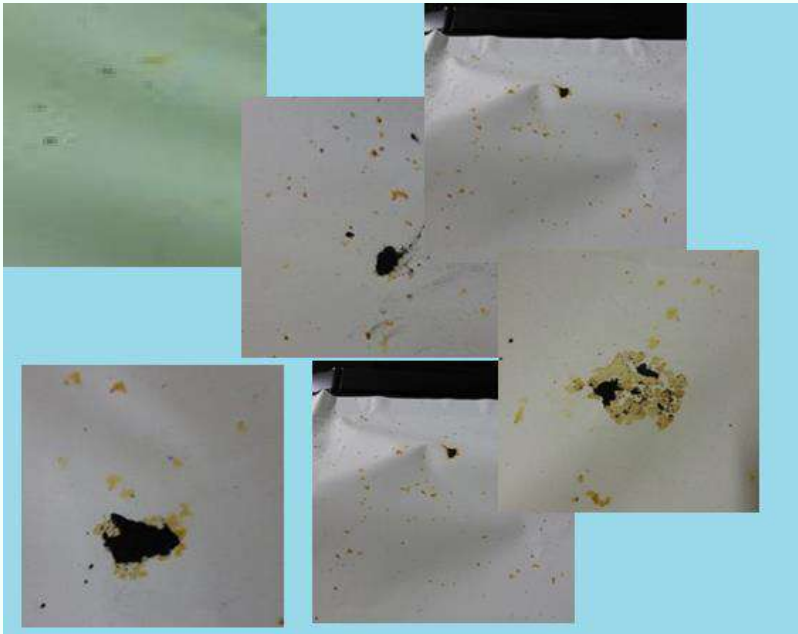
All subject SUVs were stowed at Deck 11 holds no.3 and 4.

We noted all SUVs to have stick on plastic protection sheets on both the bonnet and the hood. Those vehicles with glass hoods did not have the plastic protection.

We found contaminants, of a soot-like appearance (such as from burning petrochemicals) on 98 (45%) SUVs out of the

subject 230 that were loaded at KYG. The contaminant that had fallen on the plastic protection sheeting had stained them, but most that had fallen on exposed vehicle paint appeared dry and could be wiped off.

We found vehicles parked onboard,



adjacent to each other, one with contaminants, and the others without.

There were also cars loaded at the same port and stowed among the SUVs but we did not note any contaminants on the cars. We also inspected vehicles on deck 10 and 12, loaded at other ports and did not see any contaminants.

Few contaminant samples were collected into a plastic bag for further lab analysis, if required.

Background

The loading berth at Kwangyang is situated between two bulk cargo handling terminals, petroleum berth and a steel mill. Google satellite imagery showed ship's berth and surroundings as follows:



During loading operations on 20 March, the vessel had logged down NE'ly Beaufort force 3 winds at 0400, S'yly force 3 winds at 1200 and SSW'ly force 3 winds at 1600.

Survey outcome

Based on sporadic distribution of contaminants on some vehicles and not on others, loaded on the same deck, we were able to safely say that contaminants were not deposited following loading.

Had the soot like contaminants were sucked through the vessel's ventilation system and deposited on the vehicles, we would have identified a pattern.

The presence of a steel mill and bulk carrier berths within the close proximity to where the SUVs may have been parked prior to loading, begs a question as to whether the contaminants were deposited prior to loading.

Due to speed of operations, it may have been quite possible for the crew,

not to notice the contaminants during loading. If required, lab analysis of the contaminants could be used to disprove vessel's origins and may help to link the steel mill.

Summary

It would have been ideal, if the crew were able to identify the stained condition of the cargo during loading but we all know, it is a practically difficult task due to manning levels.

Master was prudent in informing the owners in good time so that a P&I survey could be undertaken.

The consignees knowledge of the presence of a P&I surveyor to protect owners' liability alone may have prevented them from submitting an unsubstantiated claim.

Following few months' since our involvement, we learnt that there was no claim against the vessel.



The new navigation satellite systems – GPS on steroids!

By Capt Mehran Wahid

Four newly introduced or revamped navigation satellite systems will shortly be available for public use or are already operational with hugely upgraded capabilities some of which will be available to present Satnav receivers. They are the well known GPS constellation with newly upgraded satellites, the also well-known Russian GLONASS, the Chinese BeiDou and the recently completed European Galileo constellation of satellites.



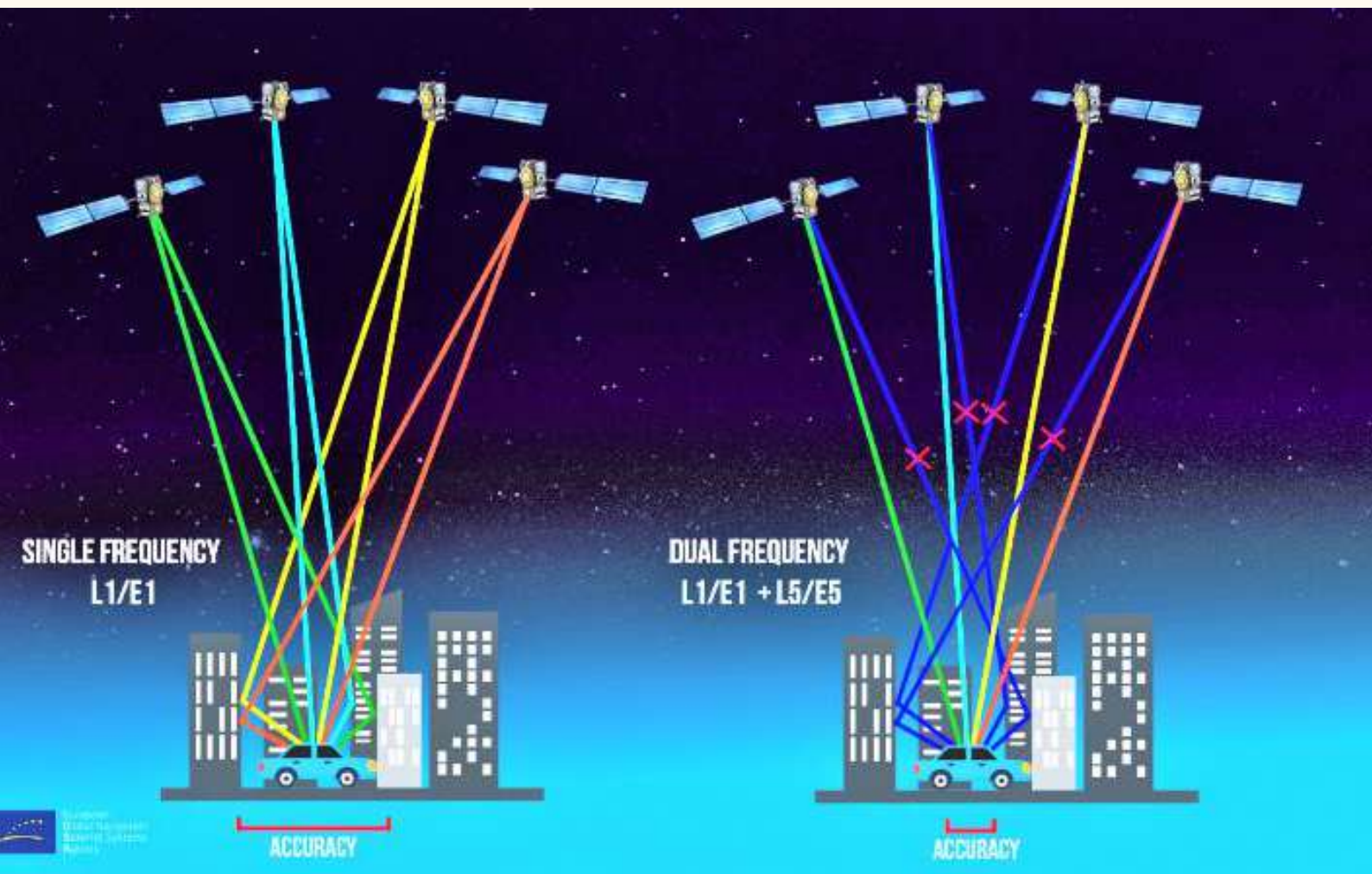
GPS Block III satellite - USAF

While the more recent systems are having a better capability than the old ones (such as GPS) which anyway are being replaced with newer upgraded

satellites as the old ones reach the end of their lives, the new satellites are far more accurate and are even said to have an accuracy of 1 metre.

Until now spoofing by hostile powers has been possible and there have been well documented cases of this happening at Novorossiysk in the Black Sea, in the eastern Mediterranean, the North Korean coast and even off Scotland. The new systems will however make this very unlikely at least for the military with access to a special encrypted signal capable of being focused to an area a few hundred kilometres across when needed. The new satellite signals will be more robust and make spoofing less likely.

The new satellites will use a signal called L1C which will be a common frequency for many of the various satellite systems. Basically, four satellites within range of a receiver will be enough for an accurate fix, but the more satellites there are in range, the more accurate will be the position. Thus when L1C is in use, the receivers will be able to pick up signals from more than just one system and in effect they would all act as a



System	BeiDou	Galileo	GLONASS	GPS	NAVIC	QZSS
Owner	China	European Union	Russia	United States	India	Japan
Coverage	Global	Global	Global	Global	Regional	Regional
Coding	CDMA	CDMA	FDMA & CDMA	CDMA	CDMA	CDMA
Altitude	21,150 km (13,140 mi)	23,222 km (14,429 mi)	19,130 km (11,890 mi)	20,180 km (12,540 mi)	36,000 km (22,000 mi)	32,600 km (20,300 mi) – 39,000 km (24,000 mi) ^[33]
Period	12.63 h (12 h 38 min)	14.08 h (14 h 5 min)	11.26 h (11 h 16 min)	11.97 h (11 h 58 min)	23.93 h (23 h 56 min)	23.93 h (23 h 56 min)
Rev./S. day	17/9 (1.888...)	17/10 (1.7)	17/8 (2.125)	2	1	1
Satellites	23 in orbit (Oct 2018) 35 by 2020	26 in orbit 22 operational 6 to be launched ^[34]	24 by design 24 operational 1 commissioning 1 in flight tests ^[35]	30 ^[36] 24 by design	3 GEO, 5 GSO MEO	4 operational (3 GSO, 1 GEO) 7 in the future
Frequency	1.561098 GHz (B1) 1.589742 GHz (B1-2) 1.20714 GHz (B2) 1.26852 GHz (B3)	1.559–1.592 GHz (E1) 1.164–1.215 GHz (E5a/b) 1.260–1.300 GHz (E6)	1.593–1.610 GHz (G1) 1.237–1.254 GHz (G2) 1.189–1.214 GHz (G3)	1.563–1.587 GHz (L1) 1.215–1.2396 GHz (L2) 1.164–1.189 GHz (L5)	1176.45 MHz (L5) 2492.028 MHz (S)	1575.42MHz (L1C/A, L1C, L1S) 1227.60MHz (L2C) 1176.45MHz (L5, L5S) 1278.75MHz (L6) ^[37]
Status	Basic nav. service by 2018 end to be completed by H1 2020 ^[34]	Operating since 2016 2020 completion ^[34]	Operational	Operational	7 operational	Operational
Precision	10m (Public) 0.1m (Encrypted)	1m (Public) 0.01m (Encrypted)	4.5m – 7.4m	5m (no DGPS or WAAS)	10m (Public) 0.1m (Encrypted)	1m (Public) 0.1m (Encrypted)
System	BeiDou	Galileo	GLONASS	GPS	NAVIC	QZSS

super-system giving far more accuracy than would be possible from a single satellite navigation system. This will improve reception even for city users who often have signals blocked by tall buildings – the reception from multiple systems will make ‘blocking’ far less likely and this ‘super-system’ can give greater accuracy.

The Chinese BeiDou system is said to be receivable by that country’s submarines which is not possible with the US GPS. The Galileo system is the only one of the major Satnavs however which is fully under civilian control although it also has an encrypted signal for military use which the UK will not have access to because of Brexit even though it was a huge contributor to Galileo. Because of this the UK is now seriously looking into having its own system – more good news for the common user with the possibility of additional satellites being available!

Meanwhile the Russian GLONASS satellites which have been somewhat lagging in number of satellites is also set to have a boost with more being launched in the next few years.

(Also with the new systems comes a remarkable capability on most smart

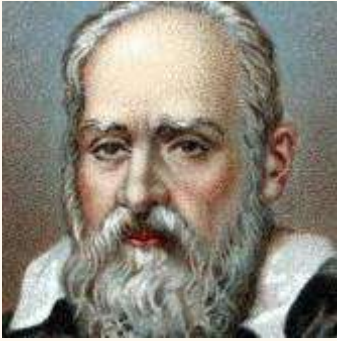
phones for position fixing and true north indication provided their software is kept updated and the often ignored calibration of the built in magnetic compass is carried out, namely the figure-of-eight swooping and tumbling movement required on the phone. These both detect magnetic north correctly. The internal electronics can detect the direction of the earth’s magnetic field in three dimensions and hence the magnetic north – and work out the latest magnetic variation for one’s position from the software updates. This is especially relevant as today the magnetic north is moving faster than before which mostly affects observers in higher latitudes. There are free apps available on Google Store to see which satellites are being received. Today’s smart phones are highly capable but poorly utilized!).

Main sources:

<https://www.newscientist.com/article/mg24532692-800-gps-face-off-why-countries-are-vying-to-rule-the-skies-with-satnav/>

And

<https://www.newscientist.com/article/mg24232360-700-the-north-pole-is-moving-and-if-it-flips-life-on-earth-is-in-trouble/>

Footnote: How I met Galileo

The above article on the new satnavs and the mention of the Galileo

system triggered off a memory of how I actually met someone named Galileo and then as I got up from my writing-desk at home and went to tell my wife who was in the kitchen about this, I realized readers might be interested to hear of it as well! It was in the late 80s (yeah 1980s not 1580s), when my ship was in Colombo Drydocks, so some of you may have met him too. I heard the dockyard workers referring to someone as “Galileo” and having already known a Sri Lankan carpenter on a ship with the name Hynesworth, I knew that some Sinhalese names were not what one might call typical, I asked them whether this guy’s name was really Galileo and they then laughingly explained to me that his name was actually Leo, but when ships were in docks he could often be found hanging around the ship’s galley for food, hence the name they had given him – “Galley Leo”!



IHM COMPLIANCE

BY Capt. Lalinda Namalarachchi

What do the regulations mean?

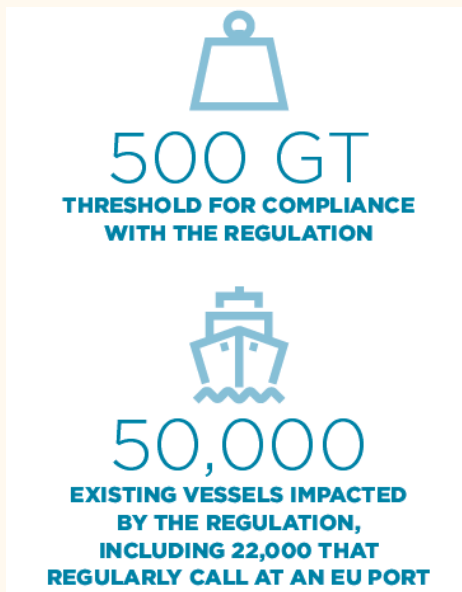
Every year, around 1,000 large ships reach the end of their useful life and are sent for dismantling to recycle the steel and equipment. The majority of this recycling takes place in dangerous, polluting conditions.

The European Ship Recycling Regulation (EU SRR – Regulation EU N°1257/2013) entered into force on 30 December 2013 to reduce the negative impacts linked to the recycling of ships. It requires both ship owners and yards to take a proactive approach to safety and environmental protection in ship recycling, with a major focus on management of hazardous materials.

Why did the EU introduce the regulation?

The majority of ships today are demolished in South Asia, mainly by grounding ships on beaches and dismantling them there, a practice

known as “beaching”. This is low-cost, but dangerous and polluting. In 2009, IMO introduced the Hong Kong International Convention for the Safe and Sound Recycling of Ships (HKC). It covers the design, construction, operation and preparation of ships, to facilitate sustainable ship recycling without compromising safety and operational efficiency.



The EU SRR closely follows the text of the HKC and is designed to facilitate early adoption of the Convention.

Who must comply?

All new and existing ships of 500 GT and above, either flying an EU Member State flag, or calling at an EU port, must comply with the EU SRR. It applies to all types of vessel, including submersibles, floating craft and platforms, self-elevating platforms, FSUs and FPSOs, as well as ships stripped of equipment or being towed.

What are the principle requirements?

The main focus of the EU SRR is the preparation of an Inventory of Hazardous Materials (IHM). All EU-flagged vessels must carry an IHM onboard, and corresponding International Certificate of Inventory

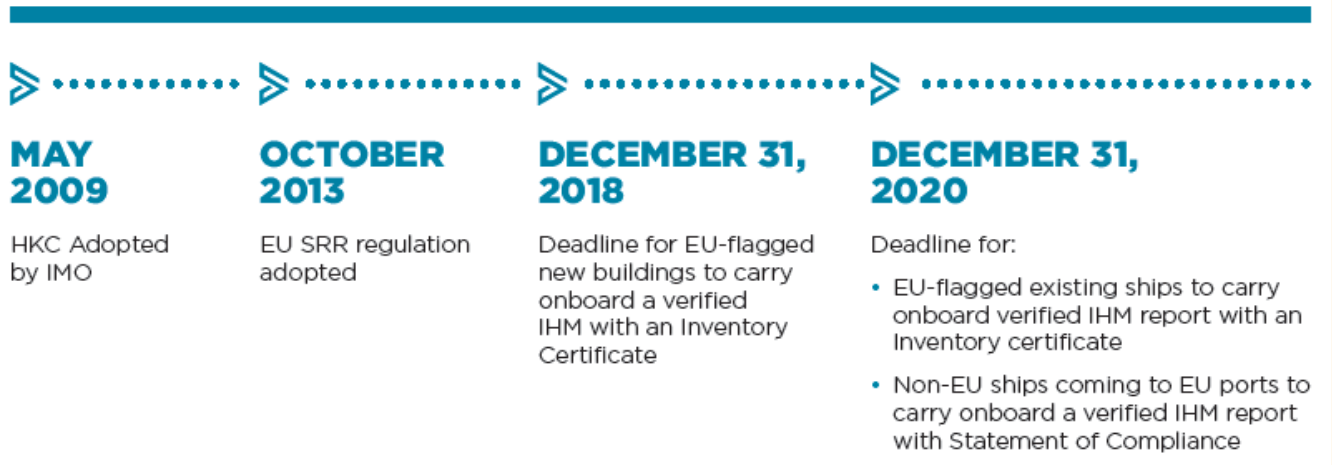
Principle steps in developing an IHM

The primary requirement of the EU SRR is the preparation of an IHM. This is comprised of three parts, required at different stages of a ship's life:

- Hazardous materials forming part of structure and equipment (Part I), required

REGULATION TIMETABLE

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of Hazardous Materials (ICIHM), or Statement of Compliance (SoC) for non-EU flagged ships docking in EU ports. In addition, the installation or use of certain hazardous materials will be prohibited or restricted (e.g. asbestos, ozone-depleting substances, polychlorinated biphenyls). Finally, before a final voyage to the recycling facility, a specific Ship Recycling Plan (SRP) must be prepared. EU-flagged ships can only be recycled at a shipyard certified and compliant to EU standards.

for newbuildings at the design stage and for in-service ships during their operational life.

- Operationally generated wastes (Part II) and Stores (Part III) to be included in the same IHM Manual prior to recycling.

The IHM lists, in a standard format, hazardous materials onboard that represent a potential risk to people or the environment, from asbestos, to heavy metals, to ozone-depleting substances used in construction materials and

equipment. It also details their location and quantities.

It is preferable to develop an IHM ahead of regulatory enforcement, given the expected workload and demand for quality IHM service.

As a qualified IHM Expert, my role in development of IHM.

Within my company, development of IHM is carried out by a five part procedure with the help of my parent company Bureau Veritas developed, PRAXIS software which will also be provided to shipowners to maintain the IHM compliance throughout the life of the vessel.

Our work is not limited to BV Classed vessels, IHM Part 1 we produce could be presented to any Class Society to obtain the necessary certification.

STEP 1: COLLECTION OF NECESSARY INFORMATION

Many hazardous materials can be found by reviewing the ship's documentation. As such, the first stage of IHM is collection and assessment of information and identification of which structure and equipment should be inspected and tested.

STEP 2: ASSESSMENT OF COLLECTED INFORMATION

Collected information should be assessed to cover all hazardous materials. Preparation of a checklist is recommended as an efficient method for developing the Inventory in order to clarify the results of each step.

STEP 3: PREPARATION OF VISUAL/SAMPLING CHECK PLAN

A Visual / Sampling Check Plan should be prepared for targeted inspection and sampling of equipment, systems and areas containing or potentially containing hazardous materials.

STEP 4: ON BOARD VISUAL/SAMPLING CHECK

An IHM expert goes onboard the ship with the pre-prepared Visual / Sampling Check Plan, performs inspections and collects samples for laboratory analysis. In the case of sister ships, a reduced quantity of samples can be considered once sampling on the lead ship is complete.

STEP 5: REPORTING

Based on the inspection and laboratory test results, we generate IHM Part I using an advanced digital reporting system and issue the necessary documents, making the ship ready for initial certification.

IHM certification can be provided by Bureau Veritas or any other Classification Society. Once developed, Bureau Veritas and BV Solutions M&O can help the shipowners maintain their IHMs throughout the ship's life.

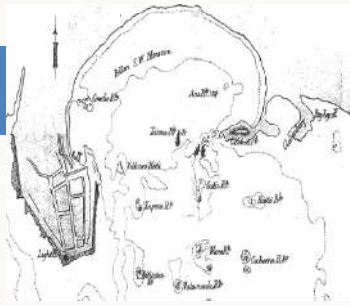
Few words about PRAXIS IHM.....

PRAXIS IHM is a user-friendly digital application designed to help BV Solutions M&O experts, selected HAZMAT laboratories and ship owners meet the IHM manual development and in-service maintenance requirements of the European Ship Recycling Regulation (EU SRR) and IMO Hong Kong convention.

With Praxis IHM, fleet managers can control and maintain multiple IHM Manuals, keep track of HAZMAT locations and record the quantity of transported goods. The digital interactive tool provides useful, reliable and traceable maintenance records based on easily catalogued drawing extracts and material declaration libraries.

PRAXIS IHM interfaces with Bureau Veritas survey and reporting tools, prompting survey requests and generating survey checklists for the

validation of HAZMAT changes recorded on board. As such, it keeps owners up-to-date and offers a simplified process for IHM certification.



Port of Galle – First transshipment Port in Ceylon

By Capt. Chandra Godakanda Arachchi

Galle, the capital city of the Southern province, which sometimes has been referred as the sleeping town of Sri Lanka, was once-upon-a-time the number one port in Ceylon for well over seven hundred years. Galle was the second most important port for VOC - Dutch East India Company during Dutch period with the Spice, Cinnamon, Pepper, Arecanut, Sappan wood (shipped to Persia) and Gems trade booming at the time. There was also an elephant export trade to India. The many famous personalities who have visited the Port of Galle during this period include Ibn Battuta in 1344, and General Cheng Ho. Colonel Henry Steel Olcott who founded many Buddhist schools in the nineteenth century such as Mahinda, Ananda, Dharmaraja, Maliyadeva, Sri Rahula in Kandy and Rathnavali Balika Vidyalaya Gampaha and Olcott Memorial High School arrived in Port of Galle on 01st May 1880. As per the numerous correspondence with the late

Baddegama Piyarathne Thero, Colonel Olcott in fact founded the first Buddhist school at Dodanduwa, Galle in 1869.

It is believed that Maldivian, Arabian and Chinese vessels along with vessels from Kerala and Tamil Nadu called at the port of Galle from the 11th century until Portuguese arrival in the 16th century. It was by accident that the Portuguese landed in Galle. History states that the vessel of Don Lourenço de Almeida (the son of the Portuguese Viceroy in Goa India) was waiting somewhere in the Maldives to intercept Moor vessels bound for Arabian ports, and got caught to a storm, drifted and landed unexpectedly in Galle in November 1505. That was the beginning of the Portuguese story in Ceylon.

The Port of Galle and its navigational information was closely guarded. The Galle Harbour Pilots were not allowed to leave Galle post-retirement, during the Dutch period, in order to mitigate the risk of navigational information secrets becoming common knowledge. That alone is a testimony to highlight the importance of international trade and Galle port during the era.

Initially the Dutch sent larger vessels from Europe to collect and bring cargo from the Asian region, which ran into some difficulties. Having then realized the importance of the trade in Asian region, VOC decided to have permanent headquarters and operate a central hub in Asia. The bigger European built vessels were employed for long distance voyages, such as to Europe and back. The smaller vessels built locally, such as the Dhoni did the short voyages in regional ports to and from Malabar (Kerala coast in Arabian sea), Coromandel (Tamil Nadu coast in Bay of Bengal) and other ports in Bengal. The change of administration from Portuguese to Dutch in 1640 saw the arrival of a large number of troops in the port of Galle, resulting in heavy fighting in and around the port. General Hulft arrived in Galle Port in 1655 with a fleet of vessels carrying 6000 soldiers and weapons etc. He then proceeded to Colombo and is said to have died during an inspection from a stray Portuguese bullet. Where General Hulft was shot dead is known as "Hulftsdorf" today. The Galle port had a boatyard, a carpenter shop and a furnace which was declared opened by the Dutch Governor in 1667.

The importance of the Port of Galle, located between the Arabian peninsula and East Asia, is well known; so the fortified town and the port was important for local trade. As the transshipment port in the region, the Dutch trade and shipping boomed until 1796, when the English took over the town and the port. The change of guard from the Dutch to English was much smoother when compared to the change in the previous administration, as there was virtually no fighting for supremacy.

There was a Flagstaff and a signal station during Dutch times, at the present end of Lighthouse street, where a diver takes the dive from the rampart. A Flag-man used to climb to the top of the Flagstaff to observe arriving vessels. Upon sighting a vessel, a flag is hoisted and a gun is fired as a signal for the Pilot to go out to bring the vessel in. The present "Lighthouse street" was then known as "Flagstaff street". It is interesting to note that a "Pigeon Post Service" commenced in 1850 by the Observer newspaper. A carrier pigeon which was released from the top of the lighthouse with news brought in by mail steamers from Europe and America to Colombo, is said to have done the flight in forty five minutes, arriving in the Observer Office in Colombo.

The approach channel to the Port of Galle was not the easiest as there were several submerged reefs covered with soft sand with rocky seabed containing 22 submerged rocks. This, combined with strong winds, heavy seas and swell during the South West Monsoon, had caused the wrecking of many ships from time to time. There are many wrecks in and around Port of Galle, of which a famous wreck was the “Avondster” (1659), which lost the anchor when in anchorage. It had perhaps anchored closer to the Fort during the South West Monsoon and run aground before breaking into two and subsequently sinking. The “Avondster” was loading cargo for India at the time of being wrecked. It is believed that a sailor on deck had noticed the vessel drifting during night and then called the Master who was slow to respond. It was too late by the time the Master was ready to drop the warp anchor. The “Hercules”, wrecked in 1661 whilst departing Galle with cargo bound for Batavia (present day Jakarta, Indonesia). A third vessel “Domin” arriving from Surat was wrecked in 1663.

It is said that the Dutch East India Company - VOC, ran into a bit of difficulties when a few of their ships were wrecked in Galle in that era. However, VOC is said to have subsequently developed different types of vessels suitable for the trade and voyages intended in Asia.

With the English calling the shots from 1796, the Port of Galle soon became an important port for them, as it was somewhat halfway on their long voyages to and from their new colonies. In the middle of the 19th century, sailing ships were replaced by steam ships. Steam ships coming into being saw the port of Galle become a hive of activity, to say the least. In 1878 alone, the port of Galle had 208 merchant ships calling for coal bunkers. The number of vessel calls was said to be three times that of Colombo port. In addition, there were numerous warships which called at the port of Galle in the same year. Crew from warships played music on the wharf for the music lovers in Galle. All this was a few years before the port of Galle started losing its business to the port of Colombo. Colombo was not even considered in earlier times for a port, due to the absence of a natural bay but Galle combined with having a natural bay also perhaps closer to Maritime Silk Route. Commencement of Tea plantation and tea

exports, the government building the first rail track to upcountry mainly for tea exports as planters preferred Colombo port being closer as the export port made the government to develop Colombo harbour.

The Port of Galle was the unfortunate casualty in the development of Port of Colombo from late 19th century with the shipping slowly moving away from Galle to Colombo with P&O mail steamers moved their office from Galle to Colombo in 1882. It is interesting to note Governor Sir William Gregory sold Queens House in Galle (was the headquarters of Dutch East India Company – VOC) in 1873 and purchased Queens cottage in Nuwara Eliya. It is said that it was Governor Gregory who was pushing to promote Colombo for a bigger harbour despite the Colonial Office advising him not to proceed with the project due to financial constraints. However, the continuation of ship groundings and wrecking, particularly of the vessel “Peshawar” during Governor Gregory’s time, combined with Shipmasters’ fear of approaching through the channel made it possible for him to push for Colombo Port. Governor Gregory laid the foundation for Colombo breakwater in 1875.

However, Galle harbour has a very rich history with heaps of notable interesting events having taken place during its heyday. Goods from all over the world were freighted to Galle for local use, as well as for transshipment. Just to mention, a few ships would bring wool from Australia to be transhipped via Galle to Europe, Apples on ice from America or the merchant vessels on China Tea trade. The Original lighthouse built in 1848 was an iron structure with a lantern. It is said that the lighthouse keeper lost his life in 1939 when the structure caught fire and he jumped from the top into the sea. The present lighthouse was built thereafter.

There were many high-profile shipping agency offices in Galle, with some having started their businesses in Galle. The John & Black company, who were the coaling agent for Clan Line, established in 1847 is said to be the oldest mercantile firm in Galle. Delmege Forsyth & Co. had an office in Pedler Street in Fort. Thomas Vilney and Co. originally established in 1852, when closing down, was taken over by Chas P. Haley which in fact the beginning of Haleys. Walker and Sons, which was initially established in Galle Fort in front of the old Post Office, was the oldest engineering company in Ceylon. Cargills and Co opened

a branch in Pedler street in Fort Galle in 1848. As a matter of interest, Dr. P.D. Anthoniz, who served with distinction from Galle, was the first surgeon to qualify from UK. The Clock tower was an addition to the Dutch Fort and it was built by a donor in the name of Dr. Anthoniz. Ananda Samarakoon was a teacher when he composed the national anthem and got students to sing in the Olcott Hall. The New Oriental Hotel used to be a busy place with seamen patronising and often fighting after drinks around the place. The police constables were not enough in number to control the fights between seamen.

The Port of Galle did not have a motor launch for the Pilots until about 1920's. A sailing boat was used as the pilot boat to take the pilot to ships. Upon the introduction of motor launches for the Pilot, the old pilot sailing boat was kept near the present Mercantile Seaman Training institute. Unfortunately, the Pilot sailing boat of much historical value seems to have disappeared with the Tsunami. The Author of this article, during his time as the DHM/Pilot in Galle Port, has read many letters of correspondence between the Master Attendants and

the Government going into even the first three decades of the 20th century, pertaining to the development of Galle harbour. These letters, which also are of historical value, have also disappeared with the Tsunami.

We as a nation should learn to preserve the historically valuable items in a safe place for the future generations.



Stories from the Web.....

Once upon a time there was a famous sea captain; we shall call him Captain Philip Anson. This captain was very successful at what he did; for years he guided merchant ships, from a world famous company, all over the world. Never did stormy seas or pirates get the best of him.

Captain Anson was admired by his crew and fellow captains. However, there was one thing different about this captain. Every morning he went through a strange ritual. He would lock himself in his captain's quarters and open a small safe. In the safe was an envelope with a piece of paper inside. He would stare at the paper for a minute, and then lock it back up. After, he would go about his daily duties.

Sailor Stories For years this went on, and his crew became very curious. Was it a treasure map? Was it a letter from a long lost love? Everyone speculated about the contents of the strange envelope. Sadly, one day Captain Anson died at sea as he would have wished. After laying the captain's body to rest, the First Officer led the entire crew into the captain's cabin. He opened the safe, got the envelope, and opened it. Lieutenant Commander Andrew Craig, the first officer and the ship's navigating officer, turned pale and showed the paper to the others. Four words were on the paper, two on two lines:

*“Port Left,
Starboard Right”*