



# CATHOLIC MARITIME NEWS

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## A Message from the AOS National Director

By Sr. Myrna Tordillo

Like many of you, I also would like to take time at the beginning of the new year to look back at the one that just passed. For the AOS in the United States, the year 2007 was a time of changes, challenges, opportunities and transition.

I would like to highlight some points. Towards the end of my message however, there is something equally important that I would like to inform and ask the readers of the Catholic Maritime News, so please keep on reading...

In January 2007 the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops appointed me as AOS National Director, a responsibility I was humbled to accept, recognizing my limitations amidst the vast and vibrant AOS network of chaplains and co-workers in some 61 U.S. ports and actively present in 47 Arch/dioceses. It is a graced opportunity as well as a challenge for me, since I also coordinate the national efforts of the Bishops in providing pastoral care for people on the move including airport workers and travelers, migrant farm workers, and circus and traveling show people. Every day is a learning experience and thanks to colleagues in the AOS who with their expertise and professionalism are patient to 'sail the seas' with me.

Thanks to the AOSUSA for its administration of a very successful Cruise Ship Priest Program, now on its fifth year. As a national membership organization recognized by the US Conference of Catholic Bishops, the AOSUSA through its President, Fr. Sinclair Oubre, has tirelessly worked hard to promote the work of the maritime apostolate, advocated for the rights and dignity of seafarers and other people of the sea, and maintain a high level of competence and professionalism through certification of AOS chaplains and team members. The AOSUSA through the Annual Conference, is a forum for continuing education and networking for its members. I invite more people to join the AOSUSA.

The AOS World Congress in Gdynia, Poland last June spearheaded by the AOS Vatican and the hard work of the local organizing committee, surpassed expectations of a very well organized and fruitful congress. The appointment by the Vatican of the new AOS Regional Coordinator for North America, Deacon Albert Dacanay who is AOS National Director for Canada will hopefully pave for more discussion and action to develop further the AOS in North America.

We also receive last year some very sad news, the passing away of Cardinal Stephen Fumio Hamao who was Past President of the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People. One of our seasoned and beloved AOS chaplains, Fr. Charles McTague of Newark passed away at the age of 87. NAMMA also lost one of its very competent board members, Rev. William Fleming who died of cancer.

The mandatory enrollment and issuance of TWIC cards for all ship visitors which begun in October 2007 and will continue in 2008 in all U.S. ports, even with the reduced application fee of \$132 will signif-

icantly impact the AOS chaplains and its team members' ability to pay, many of whom are volunteers in the ministry, except for a few who receive stipend from their arch/diocese.

As you already know well about the restructured US Conference of Catholic Bishops, the AOS National Office is under the Secretariat of Cultural Diversity in the Church effective January 1, 2008 and no longer under the Migration and Refugee Services. AOS will continue to be an important apostolate as part of the People on the Move Ministries, within the office of Pastoral Care for Migrants, Refugees and Travelers (PCMRT), of which I am the staff. With the implementation also came the budget cuts. Our office will continue the pastoral care ministries of migrants, refugees and travelers and make every effort to support the ministries and on going activities, because these are vital in carrying out the work of the Bishops and the US Catholic Church, in the evangelizing task and to reach out to all the faithful, including seafarers, the people of the sea and all other people on the move.

However, the 2008 AOS national office budget will allow for the publication of the Catholic Maritime News to three times per year. We do not want to reduce the number of times of publication. The CMN is an important tool that provides vital information of interest to members, affiliates and other readers in general. CMN is also a resource for those in the AOS and the maritime community to network and know what is happening in the maritime world and importantly with our AOS chaplains in other ports.

There are two possibilities to stretch out the CMN publication to more than 3 times per year, these are what I propose and ask that you will support:

I. For publication of hard copies:

1. The publication will be free to AOSUSA members and other AOS chaplaincies in the USA.
2. The rate for "other US subscribers" will be \$8/year.
3. The rate for North America other than the USA will be \$10/year.
4. All other international subscriptions will be \$20/year.
5. Bulk subscriptions will be
  - 5 copies \$25/year
  - 10 copies \$35/year

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## President's Column...

### Plans for Annual Meeting Underway

I want to invite all our AOS-USA members to join us for our annual meeting from April 1-4, 2008. It will be held at the beautiful Marine Institute of Technology & Graduate Studies in Linthicum, Maryland, just a five minute cab ride from Baltimore-Washington Airport, and the BWI Amtrak station.



This year is an election year, in which all our officers and Administrative Board members will be up for election. Sean Connaughton, the Director of the Maritime Administration, and Fr. Allan Figueroa Deck, the new director of the Department of Cultural Diversity have confirmed that they will be able to be with us. We will also hold a workshop on human trafficking, and Deacon Dacanay will direct the AOS Regional meeting for North America.

We will also be at MITAGS while the Ships Operations Cooperative Program (SOCP) is taking place. This is a very important seminar on the recruitment and education of the next generation of US merchant mariners. I will be working with the organizers of the SOCP seminar, and I hope that we can develop at least one joint session.

In the near future, we will be emailing all of our members specific information on reservations, transportation costs, etc. Please mark this date on your calendar.

**Mark your calendars for the AOS USA Annual Conference April 1-4, 2008**  
**Place to be announced**  
**(Will be held in Baltimore/Washington Area)**

### **Speakers include:**

Sean T. Connaughton - Maritime Administrator, MARAD  
Fr. Allan Figueroa Deck - Executive Director, Office for Cultural Diversity USCCB  
Deacon Albert Dacanay - AOS Regional Coordinator for North America & the Caribbean

Representatives from Migration & Refugee Services speaking on Human Trafficking

Representatives from the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People

### **Please Pray for:**

- Please pray for the repose of the souls of three seafarers who died; pray for the safety of the seven seafarers missing; and pray for the healing of the one rescued seafarer suffering from frostbite after a Bulgarian-flagged general cargo vessel, Vanessa, sunk in the Azov Sea on the Russia - Ukraine border on January 3, 2008.

- Fr. James P. Keating is still in the nursing home, and on dialysis 3 days a week. He is not doing well, and has mentioned several times that he would like to go home to Our Lord. He still continues to need are prayers, also he did celebrate his 83rd birthday on January 4th.

- Brother Jim Horan had surgery last week for a malignant melanoma on his leg. He will not be allowed to do active ministry for several weeks while recuperating.

# Message

from page 1

25 copies \$55/year  
50 copies \$90/year  
100 copies \$150/year

International bulk subscriptions will be figured separately by contacting the AOS-USCCB office.

The above suggested rates are a few dollars higher than the CMN subscription rate in 2001 when the AOS national office asked that subscription to CMN be paid. The higher rate is driven due to the increase in publication costs and postage. A tear off page for subscription is included in this publication.

II. Publish CMN electronically at other times in addition to the printed publication. I would like to ask your feedback if you would be willing to receive CMN by electronic form in PDF format.

This is a difficult decision to make and yet it has to be done. We hope that the readers will respond positively as soon as possible.

Please let us know at the National office (Margaret Marzec: tel. 202 541 3225; fax 202 541 5417; email: mmarzec@uscbb.org) or Doreen Badeaux, AOSUSA Secretary General, (tel. 409 985 4545; fax 409 985 5945; email: aosusa@sbcglobal.net).

I would like to thank Doreen who has been so generous with her time and talents in spite of her responsibilities with the AOSUSA, for the publication of the Catholic Maritime News.

Please allow me to conclude by saying, that at the heart of the AOS ministry in the USA is the welcoming reassurance by the AOS chaplains and the pastoral team members to seafarers and the people of the sea - regardless of race, color, or creed- to respond to the Gospel message, "I was a stranger and you welcomed me" (Matt. 25:35). The dedication, determination and hard work of the AOS chaplains and chaplaincy team are the strengths that insure continuity of the ministry to the people of the sea.

## US dependence on FOC merchant ships raises concerns

### From November 2007, Seafarers' Log

National security risks resulting from the United States' dependence on flag-of-convenience (FOC) merchant ships since the events of 9-11 continue to raise concerns in many circles.

J. Peter Pham, Ph.D., director of the Nelson Institute for International and Public Affairs at Harrisonburg, Va.'s James Madison University points out that these concerns are well-founded and further that the FOC arrangement-as well as the ships which sail the seas under its authority-poses a clear danger to America's national security interests. Foreign-flag ships in 2002 were estimated to be transporting 98 percent of U.S. commercial imports and exports, and many of those vessels fly FOCs, also known as runaway flags.

The United States also relies on U.S.-owned ships registered in at least five FOC states for military supply and support in wartime under a defense doctrine known as "effective U.S. control."

Under flags of convenience, a ship owned in one country is registered at relatively modest cost in another country, usually a poor nation that depends on the registry revenues for much of its income. In exchange for ship registry, some FOC states offer secrecy that often allows hidden title to a single vessel or fleet, and they generally do not tax shipping interests. Further, FOC states commonly shield vessel owners and operators from accountability in collisions, oil spills and other incidents. FOC states either cannot or do not enforce minimal operating, environmental, safety or social standards established by the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and the International Labor Organization (ILO) in the United Nations.

Pham, in his work, "An Inconvenient Flag:

Liberia's Ship Registry in the Age of Global Terrorism," scrutinized Liberia's maritime force. He found that while this West African nation essentially has no Navy or Coast Guard to patrol its 579-kilometer coastline, it still has the world's second largest merchant navy both in terms of vessels and gross tonnage. Ranking second only to Panama, Liberia's merchant fleet is comprised of 1,687 large ships amounting to more than 96 million deadweight tons. Included in this inventory of seagoing platforms are three barge carriers, 322 bulk carriers, 83 cargo container ships, 75 liquefied gas tankers, 397 petroleum tankers, 76 refrigerated cargo ships, four roll-on/roll-off vessels, 11 specialized tankers and 35 vehicle carriers.

After examining the fashion in which Liberia was able to grow its merchant registry from virtually nothing to the world's second largest, and what he described as the extremely lax policies and procedures under which it registers vessels under its flag, Pham said that Americans need some assurances that the vessels sailing the world's oceans are safe, high-quality platforms which meet common sense environmental safeguards, fair labor standards and basic security requirements.

"We need to know who owns them, who operates them, and who crews them, especially if they approach our shores or those of our allies," Pham said.

According to the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF), FOC crews typically are recruited from developing and less-developed countries including the Philippines and Indonesia, and, in a more recent trend, from former Soviet-bloc states in Eastern Europe. Many have no training, and many more are known to have fraudulent mariner documents and training certificates. Labor, clergy and human rights organizations worldwide have charged that FOC crews are easily exploited and often abused, working long hours for little pay under substandard conditions.

SIU Secretary-Treasurer David Heindel (who also serves as first vice chair of the ITF Seafarers' Section) during testimony earlier this decade before the U.S. House of Representatives Armed Services Committee stated that FOC vessels "have been linked to the registration of hijacked ships, phantom ships, fraudulent unreported and unregulated fishing, illegal alien smuggling, and most recently, to international terrorism."

Norwegian intelligence sources in late 2001 furnished the United States and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization with a list of 23 cargo ships linked to terrorism, or more specifically to Osama bin Laden and al-Qaeda. The ships' names, listed owners, likely cargoes, and flag states at the time of the House hearing remained classified.

In London, however, ITF General Secretary David Cockcroft declared that the possibilities were strong that the ships cited were registered under FOCs.

"We warned two months ago that ships could be used to transport explosives, terrorists or worse," Cockcroft said. "I am sure that most, if not all, of these vessels will be flying flags of convenience."

Cockcroft continued, "Corruption and lack of accountability are endemic in the FOC system, which is built on two pillars: no questions asked of shipowners and no questions answered to anyone else. When a ship is registered with one of these flags, a curtain of secrecy descends as valuable if you're a money launderer, someone who wants to sink a ship for insurance, or work its crew half to death before abandoning them unpaid in a foreign port. As long as governments and the United Nations turn a blind eye to the way FOCs allow criminals to operate anonymously, ships will be used to transport everything from drugs and illegal immigrants to the supplies used by the al-Qaeda men who blew up the U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania."



**J. Peter Pham, Ph.D.**

# Economic Impact Of The U.S. Flag Fleet Of Vessels In The Offshore Oil And Gas Industry

*(Editor's Note: On December 26, 2007, Doreen Badeaux, Donna Giroir and Fr. Sinclair Oubre traveled to Fourchon, Louisiana in the hopes of celebrating Mass for a crew on a flag of convenience survey vessel, and to bless the OSV Martin de Porres. Sadly, the survey vessel had sailed the evening before. However, the Martin de Porres and the Mother Theresa were blessed. They are part of what is known as the Holy Fleet of Abdon Callais Offshore. In talking with Capt. Kendal of the Mother Theresa, he noted that there were more than three hundred vessels at Port Fourchon on the day that were there. Most of these were US-flagged tugs and workboats. However, there are no seafarer welfare services in this major port. Please pray that the Diocese of Houma-Thibodaux will be able to establish an AOS center for thousands of seafarers who work out of Port Fourchon.*

*Last year, the Offshore Marine Services Association {[www.offshoremarine.org/index.html](http://www.offshoremarine.org/index.html)} produced a report on the significance of the industry for our country's industry needs as well as providing jobs for thousands of US mariners. Below are the highlights of their report.)*

The offshore oil and gas industry is supported by a number of different types of vessels, including offshore supply vessels (OSVs), crewboats, liftboats, tugboat and barges. There are roughly 1200 U.S. Flagged vessels that work in the offshore energy sector. About 12,000 U.S. citizens work as mariners on these vessels.

The fleet of offshore support vessels pays more than \$750 million per year in wages to crews.

The average workboat pays a total of \$700,000 to \$1 million in total wages per year.

The men and women who work in the offshore fleet pay more than \$40 million in state and Federal income taxes, or approximately \$105,000 for the total crew of an average vessel.

The average vessel pays more than \$39,000 per year in local property taxes. These taxes go to support local schools, build roads and fund local governments and law enforcement agencies.

Companies spend an average of \$325,000 per year per vessel on supplies, maintenance and repairs with local shipyards and



**Abdon Callais 150' offshore vessels the *Martin de Porres* and the *Mother Theresa*.**



**Capt. Kendal (left) and crew of *Mother Theresa* with Fr. Sinclair on bridge.**

suppliers. This does not include fuel costs, which are substantial, but are paid by the customer.

The total cost of annual maintenance, repairs and supplies for the offshore fleet is nearly \$700 million.

The average workboat spends roughly \$60,000 a year on groceries alone, an indication of the impact the industry has on non-maritime businesses in coastal areas.

The offshore vessel industry is engaged in a major rebuilding effort that will benefit local communities for years to come.

The industry has plans to build more than 150 new vessels in the next five years.

With an average price tag of \$10-to-20 million per vessel, the total cost of this rebuilding effort may be \$3-billion.

This will result in thousands of jobs at U.S. shipyards for the initial construction and then continuing employment for maintenance and repair over the life of the vessels.

In order to crew these vessels, the industry will require at least 1500 new mariners on top of the ongoing crewing requirements of the industry. These will be well paying jobs, requiring high-levels of skill and training.

## Merchant Marine

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### Don't knock the mercenary

#### Lloyd's List

MONDAY 31 DECEMBER 2007 -- There have been complaints about the mercenary qualities of modern mariners, mostly by people who can't find sufficient of them at a price they are prepared to pay. It is not a new phenomenon; look back to any industry where there is a labour shortage and you will find many of the same sentiments expressed.

Most recently, the website of the Shiptalk Jobs organisation focused on a paper given at the Lloyd's List Events Manning and Training Conference in Manila, where Wallem's John Wood raised the hackles of many with some hard-hitting remarks about mariners being more interested in their package than the job for which they are hired. Clearly an address designed to stir up the delegates, it seems to have succeeded admirably, although some might suggest he was a brave man to have made such remarks in the very centre of global manning.

But ship operators should perhaps be wary of criticising a process of rebalancing the rewards of seafarers, after a long period where they have remained very depressed. Rather than criticising seafarers for their demands for shorter tours of duty, better wages and conditions and far better connectivity with their families, owners and managers ought perhaps to focus upon the productivity increases there have been over the past 25 years or so. Manpower has been squeezed like a lemon during this period, costs have been ruthlessly pared down, with owners demonstrating a disturbing willingness to chase cheap crews all over the world. They have, regrettably, focused too much on cheapness rather than quality.

Now the chickens are coming home to roost, and there is an opportunity to put things right. After an era that has seen the effective death of company loyalty, maybe it is time for some resurrection to take place. Time for employers to value their seafarers rather more highly and to look at what can be done to select the very best, and encourage them to stay. And this is not about indulging mercenary propensities, but showing prudent good

### New Agreement Expands Opportunities for Americans

#### *First Agreement Signed to Use American Maritime Cadets on International Container Vessels*

Washington, DC—The U.S. Department of Transportation announced an agreement that will allow U.S. maritime cadets to serve on international container vessels. The training and experience they receive will give them more employment opportunities worldwide after graduation. There is currently a worldwide shortage of licensed mariners. U.S. federal and state maritime academies have geared up to train more students, but students need sailing time on working vessels to obtain the necessary licenses, and there are not enough opportunities currently available on U.S. ships.

The agreement, signed by Maritime Administrator Sean T. Connaughton and Ronald D. Widdows, Chief Executive Officer of APL Liner Ltd., allows sea tours for maritime academy cadets on board vessels trading internationally. Under the terms of the agreement, cadets from the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy and all six state maritime academies will be able to sail on board vessels operated by APL. This is the third such public-private agreement to be signed in the past six months, and more agreements are being negotiated. The previous two agreements were signed with Overseas Shipholding Group and SeaRiver, which operate tanker fleets.

"We are working to open up new opportunities to cadets and active mariners," said Connaughton. U.S. cadets have long had training opportunities on APL's U.S.-registered vessels. This agreement opens up opportunities on its vessels registered in other countries, Connaughton added.

APL is the first liner company to sign such an agreement. Liner companies provide regular service among specified ports. The agreement is available on the Maritime Administration web site, [www.marad.dot.gov](http://www.marad.dot.gov).

### US security inspections

From the November 2007 Mariscene Monthly Newsletter of the International Chamber of Shipping and the International Shipping Federation.

The ICS/ISF Chairman/President has written to the US Coast Guard highlighting concerns about some heavy-handed security inspections of visiting ships by the US authorities, ostensibly in response to intelligence reports. Apart from the lack of respect shown to some ships' crews, who have been corralled into single areas on board, ICS and ISF are very concerned about the safety implications of crew members being forced to disregard their watchkeeping responsibilities while in port. Such actions have the effect of alienating those seafarers that are in the frontline for ensuring that ships do not present a security threat, by implementing measures such as the IMO ISPS Code.

**For more information on Mariner Licensing and Documentation go to <http://homeport.uscg.mil> and select Merchant Mariners under the list of Missions**

**\*Effective October 1, the USCG National Maritime Center (NMC) has relocated from its prior office in Arlington, Virginia to a temporary office in Kearneysville, West Virginia. Plans call for a final move 4-6 January 2008 to the permanent location in Martinsburg, West Virginia.**

**Additional information regarding changes at the NMC may be accessed at What's New at the NMC: <http://www.uscg.mil/stcw/wnnmc.htm>**

# Merchant Marine

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## Professional Development Column ...

### Working Ashore and at Sea



**Capt. David Teel**

I trust that everyone has recovered from the holidays and did have time to spend with family or talk with them if out to sea. One event that I do want to talk about is that the U.S. Coast Guard National Maritime Center, where I am a staff member, is now fully operational. This may not mean much too some individuals, but if you are a mariner or work for a maritime company, this is significant news. The time needed for individuals to obtain their merchant marine documents and/or licenses has dropped significantly and the time needed to process MMLD or licenses will continue to get shorter. The long term goal is have a system set up so mariners can apply online, allowing the process to be done electronically. Good news for the maritime industry.

Any move or reorganization, regardless if the organization is private or public, is problematic. For example the work group that I manage has moved in and out two offices in the last three months. Then add the holidays into that and you can figure out that it has not been fun. Over my vacation to Missouri for Christmas and to the mountains for skiing, I had time to reflect on this moving and what it meant for me.

I have been ashore now for almost ten years, but I cannot rid myself of the shipboard frame of mind. The staff members that I work with all are former mariners, so I must say we dealt with the moves better than other work groups. Its not that we weren't complaining, we were complaining just like we would have done on a ship. I realized the difference was that we were working right up to the end and pack quickly. Then at the next office we unpacked quickly and started to work. It was if we were shipping out again; leaving home and joining a ship and then two months latter we are reversing the process. Bingo I had done this many times before.

It is not my point to bash to individuals who have not shipped out many times, but it appears to me that former mariners know indistinctly how to deal with this coming and going. Not all groups in our office were so efficient during these moves. The question to myself is what other talents do I, as a former mariner, have that can help me in my second career ashore? I will continue to ponder this mystery of the similarities between life at sea and life ashore.

Feel free to e-mail me at kps77@verizon.net with questions about training, advancement, or a career at sea.

*Capt. David Teel has 20 years sea service as a member of the American Maritime Officers' Union, including 7 years as Master in command of tankers and Roll-on/Roll-off vessels. He was Senior Deck Instructor at AMO's STAR Center and has worked for the last six years at the National Maritime Center as a Marine Transportation Specialist in the Course Instructor Approval Branch. He is a graduate of King's Point (USMMA) and has a Masters of Quality Systems Management from the National Graduate School.*

## Steering changes led to Crown Princess accident

MONDAY 24 DECEMBER 2007 -- US National Transportation Safety Board has issued a factual report on the Crown Princess cruiseship accident in which nearly 300 passengers were injured when the ship rolled violently on a voyage to the Caribbean.

A NTSB advisory stated: "When a display on an instrument panel showed a high rate of turn to port, the second officer disengaged the autopilot and took manual control of the vessel's steering system.

"The vessel was travelling at nearly full speed, about 20 knots, at this time. He turned the wheel to port and then to starboard and back several times, eventually causing the vessel to heel sharply to starboard.

"The sudden roll caused people to be thrown about or struck by unsecured objects, resulting in 14 serious and 284 minor injuries to passengers and crew members. The vessel incurred no damage to its structure, although unsecured interior components, cabinets and their contents were damaged."

The report is strictly factual and does not provide any analysis of the incident. This will be provided at a later date when the final report on the investigation is released.

## Second vessel positioned in China

By John McLaughlin

WEDNESDAY 12 DECEMBER 2007, GENOA-based Costa Crociere, which scored a significant first in Asia last year with the first vessel to homeport in mainland China, will increase its commitment to the region by positioning a second ship in Asia from March 2009, writes John McLaughlin.

The company is proceeding cautiously, despite the promise it sees in Asia's rising middle classes. It debuted in July 2006 with the Costa Allegra, one of its older vessels refitted for the Asian market at a cost of 12m (\$17.6m). The 1992-built, 28,500 gt vessel has capacity for 1,000 guests.

Costa's decision to beef up its presence will see the departure for the east of the 1991-built Costa Classica, another of the company's more venerable ships, though at 53,000 gt and with accommodation for 1,680 passengers and 590 crew, it will give the company considerably more heft in Asia. It was refurbished six years ago.

While the Carnival group company's mainland China venture encountered teething problems in its first year, it is being tracked carefully by its rivals.

The addition of the Costa Classica will allow Costa to offer more than 60 cruises in the region with a total of 85,000 berths. The company said more than 50,000 guests have sailed on around 100 cruises aboard the Allegra since its debut almost 18 months ago.

Costa said that new cruise offerings would target both the rising Chinese clientele and international cruise customers. The Costa Allegra will offer 30 cruises between November of 2008 and 2009 with departures from Hong Kong and Singapore.

The Costa Classica will debut on March 27, 2009 and sail on 33 cruises lasting from four to 14 days, with departures out of Singapore, Shanghai, Tianjin and Hong Kong.

## Merchant Marine

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# Meet the Mariner Interview: Captain Laurence V. Wade, Master, Training Ship *State Of Maine*

### Tell us about your personal/professional background.

I am a 1964 graduate of Maine Maritime Academy and actively sailed as a licensed officer for my entire career to date. I have sailed MASTER exclusively since 1971. I have been married now for more than 42 wonderful years. My wife Deanna and I have four daughters and 11 grandchildren. We live on a farm and still have a few animals for all to enjoy.



**Capt. Larry Wade**

### Tell us about your company/organization.

After retiring from commercial shipping, I worked as a port engineer and project manager in the maritime field and eventually became Master of the Maine Maritime Academy Training Ship *State Of Maine*. I also teach in

the Marine Transportation Operations program at MMA. As such I have the pleasure of going to sea with 275 or so students, staff, faculty and crew for a 60-day period each year.

### How has your faith helped with your professionally and personally?

Faith means a lot to me and I have endeavored to visit churches, cathedrals, and other edifices wherever I have journeyed. My faith has grown over the years and it has made for a stable life at home and away. I serve as a Lector and Eucharistic Minister at our home parish, Our Lady of Wisdom in Orono, Maine. (Newman Center) The pastor is also tasked as the Campus Minister coordinator for the Diocese of Portland and as such he is also in charge of MMA. He

is my source of consecrated hosts which I take on training cruise each year as I conduct my lay service on Sundays at sea.

### What do you have planned for the future?

This past cruise saw me being medically evacuated from the ship in the Mediterranean to a hospital in Sicily. I was then air lifted to my local hospital and after rehab I was back to teaching in September and full time on the ship in October. I had Viral Encephalitis and am now fully recovered, but it did make me reflect on the prayers and well wishes of the Maritime Community that I received during my illness. This is what I love to do, and I believe God meant me to pass on my Maritime knowledge to the next generation as well as to be an example and disciple as well as I can. I try to do this in every way that I can every day. What I cannot do is ignore my family, but after 41 years of children and now grandchildren, I have learned to balance my time for our mutual benefit. The Grandkids love to go to the ship with me to spend the day.

### Tell us how/you'd like to see AOS-USA help mariners.

I see more and more couples having a difficult time spending time apart. This does not have to be the hardship it is made out to be. Some education and counseling could help.

### Is there anything you can do?

I try every day and I do think prayer helps.

### Anything you'd like to say to our AOS-USA membership?

The vastness of the sea and the frailty of the vessels we journey on are well understood by us mariners in the face of a winter storm as we are tossed around. Pray that our families both at home and our other family of shipmates can work peacefully together.

## Crew crunch reaching crisis point

*(Editor's Note: Mr. Bowring has been a consistent advocate of improving the quality of seafarers life, and warning industry of an impending crewing shortage. AOS-USA thanks him for his ongoing advocacy for the mariner.)*

**By Neville Smith  
Lloyd's List**

SHANGHAI, Monday 26 November 2007 -- The maritime industry 'has no plan' to cope with the shortage of trained and competent crew and officers but has so far been spared the full effects of the crewing crunch, a leading industry figure has warned.

Hong Kong Shipowners' Association managing director Arthur Bowring told the opening session of the SeaTrans Asia conference in Shanghai that the crew shortage was a result of fleet growth in the past three years which had outpaced desperate attempts to plug the gaps, promoting junior officers and even seeing training staff return to sea service.

"How could we have predicted that so many units would be added to the world fleet in three years with almost no scrapping? Five years ago we were wondering if there would be enough money to replace the tanker fleet with double-hull ships by 2010 or whether adding one yard in Korea might upset the supply and demand balance," he said.

Mr Bowring added there was "always the expectation that we would muddle through because that's what we do, but fleet growth has turned this onto a crisis". The 'typical' reaction was to promote as many seafarers as possible but this ran the risk of bringing down far-reaching consequences on the industry.

"We have used up the buffer [of seafarers that could be promoted] and the real shortage is going to bite soon. Are we prepared? No. Do we have a plan? No. And as a result we risk the direct threat of new regulation."

He said the immediate result would be

'big business' for those selling fraudulent certificates of competency and that 'poaching and promoting' would continue as shipowners and managers struggled to cover their commitments.

"I don't see people discussing it. This is a crisis situation and we have to manage it. You wouldn't run a factory this way, you wouldn't run an airline this way."

Mr Bowring said that by next year the crewing crisis could be acute enough to prevent ships from sailing but owners unprepared to risk losing charter revenue might apply to their flag states for single or multiple trip exemptions to operate without the required complement.

And he warned that pollution incidents or casualties that found operational failures to blame might encourage pressure groups to make the case for more unilateral regulation, citing ships as a potential threat to the environment. "Some large containerships carry

See **CRUNCH**, page 8

## PIRACY UPDATES

### Malaysia Against Foreign Forces Patrolling Strait

LOCATION: STRAITS OF MALACCA  
SOURCE: WWW.THESTAR.COM.MY

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi welcomes foreign monetary and technical aid to enhance security in the Straits of Malacca. But he is against foreign forces patrolling the busy waterway. The United States had proposed that an international force, namely the US-led Regional Maritime Security Initiative (RMSI), patrol the Straits of Malacca. "We are strongly against any involvement of foreign assets to ensure security of the strait," said Abdullah in his keynote address read out by Defence Ministry secretary-general Datuk Abu Bakar Abdullah at the opening of the Lima 2007 International Maritime Conference at Awana Porto Malai here yesterday.

"The presence of stakeholders with differing interests at the (Lima) conference reflects Malaysia's commitment to being transparent and open about how best we can manage these issues (related to security of the strait)," he said. Abdullah noted that the strait was one of the world's key strategic waterways, as more than 600,000 vessels ply it annually, ferrying 30% of the world's trade and 80% of Japan's oil. "We are using this forum (the Maritime Convention) as a vehicle to inform the international maritime community that Malaysia is serious in its actions to ensure safety and security in the Straits of Malacca," he said. Abu Bakar later told newsmen that the ministry was looking into procuring better maritime patrol surveillance aircraft.

Malaysia Maritime Enforcement Agency northern region head First Admiral Zammani Mod Amin said that Malaysia and Indonesia were against having forces from outside the region manning the security of the strait. Singapore, which is a participant of the US-led RMSI, had been the "leading voice" advocating an external presence in the strait, he said. Lima maritime organiser HW Lima Sdn Bhd managing director Ahmad Dzhuri Abdul Wahab said the event had attracted eight warships and a submarine from eight countries. "We also have 150 exhibitors from 20 countries. This is the biggest ever maritime exhibition," he said.

*Piracy Updates are sent in by Andrew Mwangura, Coordinator of the Seafarer Assistance Program, in Mombasa, Kenya.*

## Crunch from page 7

as much fuel as a small tanker. If there is an incident which finds the certificates were there but the crew was not, it could be an excuse to retrofit double hulls to fuel tanks," he said.

Mr Bowring said the industry would weather the storm but should take steps now to avoid the situation worsening by at least acting to retain experienced crews. That meant improvements in pay and conditions, more direct employment and the kind of benefits that workers enjoyed by those ashore.

"We need to re-package the maritime career and that means pensions, direct employment and health benefits. But these things are in our interest. We shouldn't entrust our ships to people we don't know."

## Apollo buys Regent Seven Seas Cruises

By Rahita Elias

TUESDAY 11 DECEMBER 2007 -- US-based investment group Apollo Management has further expanded its portfolio of cruise ship companies, with the purchase of Regent Seven Seas Cruises.

This is Apollo's third cruise line acquisition this year. In April, it completed the purchase of Oceania Cruises. Then in August, it announced it would purchase a 50% share in Miami-based NCL Corp from parent Star Cruises.

The latest acquisition, at an undisclosed price, is expected to be completed in the first quarter of 2008. It is subject to various conditions including regulatory approval.

Regent Seven Seas Cruises will remain a wholly independent brand under its president, Mark Conroy, and continue to operate from its Fort Lauderdale, Florida, headquarters. Oceania Cruises will remain in its Miami headquarters, headed by its president, Bob Binder. Both men will report directly to Frank Del Rio, chairman and CEO of Prestige Cruise Holdings. NCL will remain a separate holding outside of PCH.

In a statement, Mr Conroy said that Regent Seven Seas Cruises would continue to operate as a stand-alone brand. He added, "Our core management team and key personnel on land and at sea will remain intact."

## Huge wave injures 5 on bulker

The two most seriously injured onboard the 48,400-dwt Grand Glory (built 2001) were taken to a Vancouver hospital for treatment. Reports say a 50-year-old seafarer sustained leg and back injuries while another 40-year-old had difficulty moving after injuring his spine. The Panama-flagged handymax was caught in adverse weather conditions about nine kilometres west of the Queen Charlotte Islands. Rescuers battled gale-force winds, poor visibility and large swells to reach the vessel with recovery teams dropped onboard by helicopter. The vessel was on time charter to Norden until last November. The fully-loaded bulker was en route to Japan from Washington state and has since continued its journey, it is reported.

(Source: Trade Winds)

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# Human Factor - Seafarers' Focus

**By Rajaish Bajpae**  
**President & Group Managing Director of**  
**Eurasia Group**  
**Advisory Board Member of**  
**InterManager**

I am sure that our august industry is bewildered by the unprecedented increase in the instances of failure of Human Factor among our seafarers, be it in the areas of shortage and escalating cost of officers, or training, skills and professionalism. From asset owners to underwriters and from ship managers to port state control, we are all concerned.

Deterioration of Human Factor among our seafarers need not, necessarily, be attributable, entirely, to some "new" demonic gene among our seafarers; they are as human as the best among us.

This is a profound subject, of enormous importance, to the future of sea-transportation.

Amid a vibrant array of stakeholders; at the core of sea-transportation are the ships and their equipment, both lifeless without intervention of human intelligence.

The technological advances of 21st century, which we see in every aspect of life around us, are a testimony to Human Ingenuity and Human Endurance, which are the footprints of a future where every natural adversity may be tamed by humans.

In this process, somewhere, seafarers have been confused with the hardware and software. It has been forgotten that seafarers are governed by the same genome as the stakeholders; imaginative, innovative, industrious, inimitable and untamable.

Seafarers can not be designed on architectural draft boards, nor programmed by roboticists.

Seafarers are not adversaries, but the principal stakeholders with similar virtues and frailties as other stakeholders. Seafarers, essentially, provide the human interface between the rest of the stakeholders and the vehicles of sea transportation.

Why, then, the hue and cry about Human Factor among seafarers? Why the corralling of seafarers as less than human?

Have seafarers received the same level of care and investment our industry makes in design and technology? While on the other end, are seafarers exposed to same level of stresses and abuse to which we expose our ships and machinery? Is it possible that seafarers have been, inadvertently, repressed into lower levels of human ingenuity and human endurance?

We need only look back a few decades; the answers are etched in history.

Human factor among seafarers is as good, or as bad, as nurtured by the industry.

Seafarers represent the human intelligence in the business of sea-transportation. For the intelligence of all stakeholders to be applied to hardware and machinery, the intelligence must, first, be imbued in the seafarers.

Seafarers need training, mentoring, humane treatment, sense of belonging, and above all, recognition and respect - a say in what they do and how they do.

Without this recognition they are reduced to the level of hardware & software, but with a will of their own, like a dismembered palm, crawling every which way !!

Is there any mechanism which considers the feedback from the frontline of human interface with machinery, oceans and environment, back to all stakeholders?

The cross currents of the influences of external human factor, bearing down on seafarers, are thicker than the sinews in a carcinoma.

Then, there are Trade Unions!!

Trade Unions are given recognition as seafarers' sole representatives. Has anyone ever questioned the basis of this recognition?

Do the Trade Unions representing seafarer interests satisfy ILO Convention, that "workers have the right to elect their own representatives, organize their administration and activities and formulate the policies of their organizations".

Has any audit body ever verified whether trade unions comply with the convention? The reality is far from the ILO mandate, as we all know.

Ships are built for 20-25 years of useful life, but guaranteed for one year.

Who, then speaks for the seafarers?

In reality, all industry stakeholders influence the working life of seafarers, except seafarers themselves.

I should now start wrapping up this litany with some finite indicators for the long and complex process of 'quick fixing' the human factor among our seafarers.

The ultimate measure of Human Factor among our seafarers is their competence.

Good competence reflects that the human factor is robust. But poor competence can have its origin in several contributory factors, not all of which are within conscious control of seafarers.

Development of competency is a complex and continuous process. It is like a relay race,

where an individual is the stick, which is passed on from one lap to another, each stick holder contributing to elevation of the individual to the next advanced level of competence.

If the stick fails to attain excellence, the fault should be found in the stick holders, rather than the stick.

Competence of our seafarers is a mirror for corporate social responsibility; not the bases for charge-sheeting.

The basic human values imbibed by the family during primary age and the academic performance up to entry into cadetship are normally tested by entry level criteria. But there are no international standards. Standards in one country may be set for ensuring the best and the brightest, while in others, the objective may be just to fill the seats for the academic year, come one come all!!

The next lap is the Formative years. Here again there is no international standard.

If STCW provides the standards, then why is there a wide disparity in professional knowledge and commitment among similar ranks of different nationalities?

Let us not forget that almost half of 90 or so private training academies in the Philippines were shut down after crack-down by the Commission on Higher Education, in 2001-02, bringing the officers production in the largest crew supplying nation down from 12,000 to 3,500 per annum. Can the industry absorb fluctuations of this magnitude? Among the 50 or so academies still operational, 4/5th do not come near the standards of 1/5th.

Some of major Asian crew supplying countries have local language as the medium of education. Some do not even consider English language as an entry level criterion.

Criteria for teaching faculty are not defined in STCW. National administrations have stringent to non-existent criteria, which ultimately reflect in the quality of seafarers. Many training academies in Asia do not have mandatory system of Training for Trainers.

There is no STCW defined mechanism for audit of training academies.

Knowledge is being confused with skills. Training is increasingly mixed up with onboard expectations; extension of training into onboard service has reduced emphasis on hands-on experience.

Ships are places of work, seafarers come to the ships trained, and then enrich their knowledge through working experience.

Training must remain ashore, albeit there should be a feedback loop to identify training needs during onboard service and incorporate the feedback for improvements in training standards ashore.

Do Training Academies take into account the training and counseling needs identified on board ships? There, is to date, no recognition of Human Factor in STCW.

As per statistics published by the Nautical Institute in January 2005, there were 50 IMO Model Training Courses for use by training establishments, which did not cover many other training needs. Owners and managers have taken it upon themselves to bridge these gaps in training. There were some 25 such courses identified by the Nautical Institute, the actual number is much larger.

My company has invested heavily in a training centre which runs 20 courses supported by simulators, trained faculty, classrooms and IT tools. On an average over 800 seafarers are trained, annually, in competence enhancement courses not covered by STCW.

The foundation of seafarers' competence lies in their formative training, but the standards of training have remained neglected at regulatory levels.

Then comes Experience, the most enriching factor in professional development, but, unfortunately, also the most bedeviled.

No cadet opts to embrace seafaring without single minded aspiration to rise to the highest rank.

Experience can not be switched on or switched off. It is not a function of conscious effort. Experience is a process of sensory perception, storage in memory and retrieval from memory. A process accelerated or retarded by the state of mind. Can anyone claim that he or she has control over his or her state of mind?

State of mind, is constantly vulnerable to positive and negative impulses generated by home, society and work place. More so, when home and society, are excluded by work place for months. Much more so when the work place has an even smaller population than a prison.

The experience factor is enabled by alertness, feel-good factor, empowerment, enthusiasm and productivity.

Repression, mistreatment, failure to perform social & domestic responsibilities, confused work culture, fatigue, etc. severely retard the process.

It is very common that the same individual, doing the same job, gains greater or lesser experience, as well as experiences greater or lesser efficiency of retrieval, depending on external factors.

The retarding factors, when persistent, lead to cynicism, disconnect and withdrawal, in severe cases, active negativity.

This is, in essence, the aetiology of depletion of Human Factor among our seafarers. Human factor, at individual level, may change in weeks or months, but such changes, in an entire community, can only surface from years and years of retarding factors. This is what we are seeing today; a culmination of cultural flaws in our industry.

Employers, regulators and all stakeholders must strive to make seafaring a joyful experience, it pays!!

Finally, mother of all Human Factors, is the Personality of our seafarers.

Beyond Training and the right climate for learning from experience, Personality of any work force thrives on Social connectivity, Fair treatment, Recognition and Respect.

Repression, prescriptive regulation, enforcement and criminalization beat the personality out of the most egalitarian cultures. The employee/employer divide we see in our seafarer relations today is reminiscent of the aristocrat and the proletariat of 19th century. The world has marched forward.

The aftermath of 9/11 has had a frenzied reaction, which has impacted our industry in a crippling manner, seafarers are reduced to prime suspects and some nationality of seafarers are denied entry into the United States.

Fair treatment has become a deterrent to development of human factor by its denial to seafarers in many new forms, not envisaged in the new consolidated ILO Maritime Convention, which in any case, may take a decade more to be ratified.

Recognition and Respect? Let us first consider if a Master or a Chief Engineer of a ship understands his position on the value chain of sea-transportation? Far from it. May I ask any serving Masters or Chief Engineers who are present in the audience today, to raise their hands...

There !! The recognition and respect our seafarers get is manifest in their total absence from seminars, workshops and conferences, which do not fail to debate Human Factor among our seafarers, but are rarely attended by seafarers.

Employers, with extremely rare exceptions, have historically engaged and treated seafarers as contract labor. We can talk all we can about curbing poaching, increasing retention, career paths and a whole bag of Santa's goodies for our seafarers. But, all this can not succeed until these grandiose schemes stop being carrots on the stick, and our regulators create judicious parameters for nurturing human factor among our seafarers.

It makes no sense that in the present age of technological developments, that seafarers should suffer the trauma of disconnection from family and society. Information technology has converted the world to a global village, but our seafarers continue to spend their lives in the blue wilderness.

V-SAT and broadband have brought 24/7 connectivity to sea, but there are not many takers. BIMCO has spent, may be 10-15 times more to organize this seminar, than what it costs to provide 24/7 connectivity to one ship for a month. The \$620 per ship free communication allowance, agreed in IBF agreements, doesn't come near spending even one hour of free time a day on video communication with one's son who is preparing for his graduation next week, or with one's wife whose baby is going to miss her father when she steps into the world outside the womb.

I wish to remind all stakeholders that we are, all, on the same side and we have to recognize seafarers as partners in progress.

Regulatory climate in shipping, particularly on board ships, has become totally unregulated. The very purpose of regulation is defeated when the sheer number of regulations, and cross regulations, and the compliance and proof of compliance, and numerous audits by numerous stakeholders, begin to shift the focus of seafarers from their work places to desks loaded with papers, files and computers.

IMO is not the only forum churning out regulations; there are EC, USCG, Oil Majors, Coastal States and others who have their own agenda.

Regulations would be, largely, superfluous if Training was impeccable.

STCW does not take onboard the new regulations, nor amendments to the old ones. There is no mechanism for seafarer briefing and refreshing of seafarers knowledge on new regulations.

Very limited access to internet at sea prevents seafarers from keeping track of important websites - IMO, Intertanko, ISF, Equasis, etc.

Regulations are necessary, but we have all learnt that prescriptive regulations are counter productive.

We have painstakingly understood that, to be more effective, regulations must be "goal based". The regulators must take the initiative.

Intermanager's initiative in developing industry-wide KPIs is a move in the right direction, and I appeal to all stakeholders to assist in fast tracking the KPI initiative.

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



## Upcoming Events For Maritime Ministry

### April 1-3, 2008 AOS-USA Annual Conference

Some of you have asked when your area is scheduled for the TWIC roll-out.

The latest schedule can be found by clicking the following link: <http://www.tsa.gov/assets/pdf/twicquarterlydeploymentschedule.pdf>

The TSA website is the best place to go for up to date info.

# Factor

from page 1

As I have mentioned and we all know, the technological advances we see in the 21st century are a tribute to human ingenuity and human endurance.

Humans aspire to excel in everything they do, and human nature is malleable, but untamable. More so, in seafarers who are trained professionals, with a high level of self esteem.

A load of prescriptive regulations sinks the ingenuity to compliance, and enforcement kills the aspiration to excel. Add indiscriminate criminalization, and passive fatalistic attitude turns into active negativity.

Detention without trial, encouraging whistleblowers, treatment as suspected terrorists hits at the core of self esteem.

Enforcement and criminalization are the two shames which have damaged Human Factor among seafarers, more than any other factor.

Criminalization is abuse, criminalization is criminal.

Young generations do not want to be part of a repressive and abusive industry.

The very future of sea-transportation is at stake. Before we start curing the Human Factor among seafarers, we must create a climate of trust and respect.

Human Factor among seafarers is at a low ebb and solutions must be found to turn the tide. Let me give it a try:

Depletion of Human Factor among seafarers is a culmination of decades of repressive culture.

Escalating wages are a cultural rebound, subsequent to reversal of demand and supply equation.

Solutions are indicated in a ground change of culture, sooner the better.

- Standardization of licensing and audit mechanism of Training Academies on international levels.

- Improvement in contents of Training by a mechanism of feedback on training/counselling needs identified on board ships.

- Consolidation of the entire gamut of training functions in Training Academies.

- Prevention of extension of Training to on board tenures.

- Recognition of seafarers as principal stakeholders and partners in progress.

- Involvement of seafarers in regulatory and legislative processes.

- Establishment of technology and procedures for information sharing with seafarers.

- Seafarers' attendance of maritime seminars, workshops and conferences.

- Standardization of Benefit schemes for seafarers - family welfare, social security, retirement, etc. - through ILO instruments.

- End to poaching. Wage policies enshrined in ILO Convention to be made mandatory.

- 24/7 internet broadband access for seafarers.

- End to blame culture. Rotation of Masters, Chief Engineer and shore-side Superintendents.

- Move from prescriptive to goal based regulations.

- Fast tracking of InterManager initiative in industry-wide KPIs.

- End to enforcement and criminalization of seafarers without trial.

Thank You