

The Mariners' Lifeline

NEWSLETTER OF THE AUSTRALIAN MARINERS' WELFARE SOCIETY (ABN 86 000 008 122)
Founded 1863 as the Sydney Sailors' Home. Volume 21. No 2. December 2022.



CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Hello and welcome to the December edition of *The Mariners' Lifeline*. Inside is a series of interesting and informative articles which will be of great interest to all readers. The stories can be described as falling within two general themes: current developments within the maritime industry, and the activities of AMWS.

The articles about developments in the industry include a description of the return of the cruise industry to Australia post-COVID; a summary of the activities of the Australian Maritime College and the importance of maritime training (an activity supported where possible by AMWS through our scholarship program); and commentary on the dramatic salvage of the stricken bulker *Portland Bay* by AMWS Councillor Tony Cousins. In particular, I want to highlight the two articles written by AMWS Councillor and editor of this newsletter, Martin Orchard: the first is a detailed report on the state of seafarer health, safety and welfare of seafarers globally; the second describes the risk of piracy to seafarers. These are important issues that impact directly on the work of AMWS. On a related theme there is an article by AMWS Councillor Llew Russell about the bi-centenary of our "fraternal" organisation, the Sydney Bethel Union.



David Parmeter,
Chairman of the
Australian Mariners
Welfare Society

In terms of the activities of AMWS, 2022 has been another very busy year. There is an additional article by Martin that summaries the contribution made by the Society to seafarer welfare, which is an excellent summary of the work we do. One of these involves traineeships on sailing vessels, and there is a firsthand account by Zoe, one of the young people we have helped gain this experience, of her voyage on the *Young Endeavour*. There is also an article about a new development involving the sail training vessel *One and All*. AMWS has been able to expand its involvement in this area through the goodwill of the League of Ancient Mariners and the generosity of one of the League's founders, Dr

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Robert Scott-Skirving. It is an interesting story. AMWS was also represented at the service held at the Merchant Navy Memorial in Canberra last October.

I want to thank everyone who has contributed to the activities of AMWS this year, especially the members of Council who willingly give up their time to contribute to this important work. I also want to acknowledge the great support provided by our Company Secretary, Stan Moriaty, supported by his daughter Jennie.

I wish everyone involved with AMWS a safe and enjoyable Christmas and look forward to catching up with you in 2023.

David Parmeter
Chairman



SEAFARERS' HEALTH & SAFETY: COVID-19/ UKRAINIAN WAR/HAPPINESS INDEX REPORT

Martin Orchard – Councillor & Editor

As reported in previous newsletters, the AMWS is a signatory to The Neptune Declaration which during the Covid-19 crisis has been urging Governments and international bodies around the world to address and implement four main areas concerning seafarers:

- Recognise seafarers as key workers and give them priority access to Covid-19 vaccines.
- Establish and implement gold standard health protocols based on existing best practice.
- Increase collaboration between ship operators and charters to facilitate crew changes.
- Ensure air connectivity between key maritime hubs for seafarers.

From May 2021 until July 2022, The Neptune Declaration issued a monthly indicator providing reliable data with regards to crew changes and vaccination levels for seafarers based on data collected from ship managers who are collectively responsible for over 100,000 seafarers around the world.

Since July 2022, the monthly indicator has been converted to a quarterly indicator.

For the quarter ending in October 2022, the percentage of seafarers onboard beyond the expiry of their contracts was 3.3%, compared to 4.2% reported for July 2022. In May 2021, this figure was 5.8%.

For the same quarterly period, the percentage of seafarers onboard for over 11 months remained as that reported in July 2022 at 0.3%. In May 2021, this figure was 0.4%.

The contributing ship managers have highlighted the following key developments

that have had an impact on crew changes in the October quarter:

- Fewer crew change restrictions, flight cancellations and lock-downs.
- The situation in Ukraine is still causing delays with crew changes.
- China remains the main challenge due to continued severe restrictions and lock-downs. Non-Chinese seafarers are still prohibited from being relieved at Chinese ports.
- Japan also maintains a strict protocol requiring review and approval of crew movements upon arrival at the first Japanese port.
- Some countries, i.e. Brazil, still refuse to disembark non-vaccinated crew.
- Stronger recruitment efforts are reported to ensure the rotation of crew.

With regards to seafarer vaccinations, in the quarter ending in October 2022, 92.8% of seafarers had been vaccinated from the sample compared to 89.3% in July 2022. This vaccination indicator commenced in August 2021 when only 15.3% of the sample of seafarers were reported as having been vaccinated.

The IMO (International Maritime Organisation) reports that the ongoing armed conflict between the Russian Federation and Ukraine continues to present a serious and immediate threat to the safety and security of crews and vessels operating in the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov. The IMO has established an Emergency Task Force to coordinate efforts to mitigate the security and safety risks to shipping, ports and seafarers.

Additionally, the Joint Coordination Centre (JCC) was established in July 2022 in Istanbul, and comprises representatives from Ukraine, the Russian Federation, Turkey and the United Nations. The JCC facilitates the implementation of the Black Sea Grain Initiative which recognises the importance of the global food security, and dependence by many nations on the supply of grain, other foodstuffs and fertilisers produced in the region.

One of the JCC's functions is to monitor the movement of commercial vessels and ensure the compliance with the procedures developed for shipments to and from Ukraine. Another function involves the inspection of vessels conducted by joint inspection teams under the auspices of the JCC.

Turning to the welfare of seafarers, the global headquarters of the Mission to Seafarers (MtS) in London has published the findings of their Q3 2022 Seafarers' Happiness Index Report.

This most recent survey provides evidence that during this reporting period, globally, seafarers were much happier with their access to shore leave and more certain about crew changes. However, restrictions to shore leave remain in some countries. This result should be viewed in a broader context for it indicates a return to a degree of 'normality' after the last two years of Covid-19 restrictions.

Another factor that was highlighted as a key issue to seafarers is connectivity. Seafarers indicated that they were happier having the facilities to contact their family and loved ones whilst at sea during the period under review. Good quality

wi-fi access has a positive effect upon seafarers' mental health, as well as assisting with the social cohesion amongst the crew on board vessels. However, some seafarers reported their frustration with slow, expensive and poor-quality wi-fi provided on some vessels.

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And whilst access to shore leave, crew changes and connectivity are the key factors in increasing seafarers' happiness, the survey highlighted two areas where the basic needs of seafarers are not being met.

Food was an area in which seafarers complained about the provision of fresh quality food on board, and the standard and level of training of some catering crew.

Another factor that drew complaints from seafarers was the time needed and mental state required to keep fit. Seafarers reported feeling tired and stressed due to a high workload which impacted upon their ability to keep fit. Some vessels do not include gym facilities, or even suitable onboard space to enable seafarers to exercise.

Overall, this latest MtS survey indicates that seafarers are generally happier with their time at sea than in previous survey periods. But some areas of concern remain which require additional efforts by the industry to address.

In Australia, the situation surrounding crew changes in all States has almost 'normalised' to pre-Covid levels, reflecting some of the positive trends mentioned above in the latest Neptune Declaration.

The AMWS will continue to engage and work alongside maritime bodies in Australia and overseas to ensure that life at sea and ashore for seafarers continues to improve, and is maintained at the highest standards. The mental and physical condition of seafarers will continue to receive AMWS' highest priority.



CRUISING RETURNS TO AUSTRALIA WITH RENEWED PURPOSE

A two-year absence has allowed cruise lines to plan a recovery with the long-term in mind.

By Joel Katz

Managing Director Australasia, Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA)

The sight of P&O Australia's *Pacific Explorer* sailing into Sydney Harbour back in April was an emotional moment for many after cruising's two-year absence.

The incredible scenes on the harbour that day were a reminder that Australia is still one of the world's most passionate cruise markets and is ready to seize the opportunity that comes with cruising's global revival.

Among the spectators on land and in boats were many of the thousands of



*Joel Katz
Managing Director Australasia,
Cruise Lines International
Association (CLIA)*

people whose livelihoods depend on cruise tourism, all celebrating the chance to reassert their place in Australia's \$5 billion-a-year cruise economy.

Since then, other ships have made their return down under – one or two at first, and now more. Over the summer season of 2022-23, more than 40 international cruise ships are scheduled to sail in Australian waters, visiting dozens of destinations around the country.

It has been a careful and meticulously planned revival, underpinned by a comprehensive industry-wide response to Covid-19.

Even as borders were closing through the first months of the pandemic, cruise lines were already working with medical experts to redefine how we cruise.

Scientists, epidemiologists and other respected medical advisors had begun a complete bow-to-stern review of cruising, looking at every aspect of the cruise experience to decide how it might need to change in response to Covid-19.

The result is the most extensive set of new health protocols to be found in almost any industry, allowing a careful resumption of cruise operations that began in some countries as early as the second half of 2020.

In Australia, these measures include testing and vaccination requirements for passengers and crew as well as extensive protocols covering aspects like distancing, sanitation, ventilation, and response procedures.

Cruise ships have enhanced medical facilities on board and staffing for potential Covid-19 isolation and treatment. There are detailed response plans in place and close cooperation with health authorities for reporting and management of suspected or confirmed cases.

No setting is immune to the virus, but there are processes in place to reduce the risks of Covid-19 getting on board and for dealing responsibly with cases that do appear.

The experience around the world has been that serious illness due to Covid-19 is rare on cruise ships. In fact, rates of hospitalisations due to Covid-19 are between 30 and 80 times lower on cruise ships than they are on land.

Having risen to the threats of the pandemic, the international cruise industry is now firmly focused on other challenges ahead.

Around the world, cruise lines are investing billions of dollars in new ships and new technologies that make sustainability the priority in cruising. The issue has become the most critical topic of discussion in cruising – at every level from the board rooms to the shipyards.

This has been building for some time and there are already many important developments pioneered by the cruise sector.

New alternative fuels, new sources of clean energy and new ways to protect our marine environment are already a reality and delivering results, but there is still more to achieve.

CLIA cruise lines recently announced new emissions targets that will set the standard for cruising into coming decades and help drive further investment in sustainable operations. Ocean-going CLIA members are now pursuing net zero carbon cruising by 2050 and are working on the technological advances needed to achieve this – not just for cruising but for the wider shipping sector globally.

Around the world we are seeing increasing use of low-emission transitional fuels like LNG and technologies like exhaust gas cleaning systems which make big reductions in cruise ship emissions.

LNG fuel produces zero sulphur emissions, 85% lower nitrogen oxide emissions, almost 100% fewer particulate emissions and a 20% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions.

The world's first LNG-powered ship was introduced at the end of 2018, and by 2027 LNG will power more than half the new capacity of the global cruise fleet. Importantly, LNG is also a transitional fuel, which means LNG-ready ships can adapt to a future generation of fuels that will bring further benefits in coming years.

These new fuels will require a considerable amount of research and development, but we already see potential alternatives on the horizon. Cruise lines are embarking on joint ventures with fuel companies and other developers, and we are seeing more investment in future fuels and power sources like biofuel, methanol, ammonia, hydrogen, hybrid propulsion and electric batteries.

Cruise ships are also maintaining a focus on reducing waste and recycling. In some cases, cruise operators can repurpose up to 100% of waste generated on board by removing, reusing, recycling, and converting waste to energy.

Other advances protect the waters ships sail upon, like the advanced wastewater treatment systems now in use aboard most cruise ships. These systems will be used on all new ships on order and can treat wastewater to a higher standard than systems used in many coastal cities.

Efforts to achieve greater sustainability also extend into social and economic areas, where the cruise industry is working closely with communities to develop responsible tourism management practices that maximise economic benefits while minimising other impacts of visitation.

At the same time, cruise lines are working in developing countries to help create business opportunities and support charitable efforts in areas of health, education, conservation, and wildlife protection.

The cruise industry represents less than 1% of world shipping, but we aim to be leaders internationally when it comes to reducing emissions and protecting the

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environment.

Cruise tourism brings enormous benefits to communities around the world, but our aim is to ensure these benefits can continue in a way that is sustainable and provides lasting results.



SYDNEY BETHEL UNION CELEBRATES A 200 YEAR MILESTONE

Llew Russell – Deputy Chair SBU

One hundred and forty people attended the celebration at the Australian National Maritime Museum in Sydney on 16th November to mark an extraordinary anniversary.

The Sydney Bethel Union currently provides financial support to the Mission to Seafarers (MtS) in the ports of Sydney, Newcastle, Port Kembla and Eden which

approximates around 50% of their costs. In addition, the SBU provides and maintains the accommodation for the Sydney MtS.

In welcoming the guests, Llew Russell, Deputy Chair of the Sydney Bethel Union (and a Councillor of the Australian Mariners' Welfare Society), said that very few organisations in Australia can point to two hundred years of continuous service.

In November 1822, the Reverend William Cowper raised the Bethel Flag on a ship in Port Jackson to signify a Sunday service to other vessels in the harbour, and in the following month the SBU Society was established. This was only three years after the Bethel Union was established in England.

An excellent replica of the Bethel Flag was displayed at the event thanks to the generosity of Warren Cardwell.

Appreciation was expressed for the generous sponsorships provided by NSW Ports, the Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA), the Port Authority of NSW, Perpetual Trustee Company Limited and the Maritime Museum.

Daina Fletcher, Head of Strategy and External Relations at the Museum, warmly welcomed guests on behalf of Ms.

Daryl Karp AM, Director and CEO of the Museum, and congratulated the SBU on achieving such a remarkable milestone.

This theme was carried forward by Marika Calfas, CEO of NSW Ports, Mick Kinley, CEO and Board Member of AMSA and Philip Holliday, CEO and Director of the Port Authority of NSW. All speakers emphasised how important providing for



Peter Jansen, Chair of MtS Sydney, and Clive Goodwin, Chair of SBU, in front of the Bethel Flag.

Photograph by Nadja Leffler, MtS Sydney.

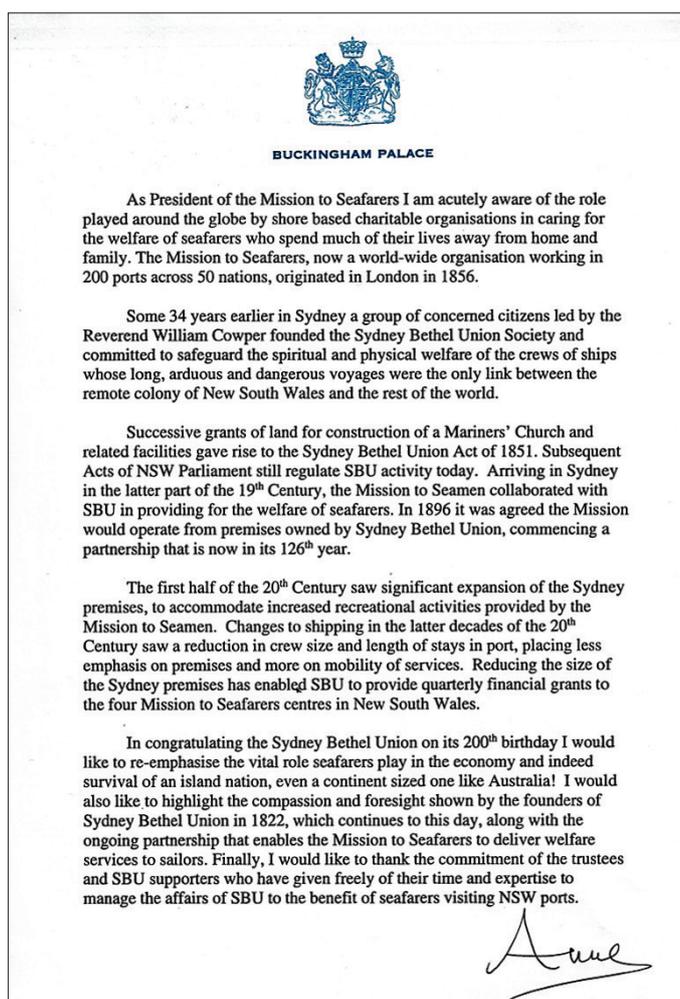
seafarers' welfare was for an island continent like Australia, relying so heavily on international maritime trade for our economic welfare. There was also recognition of the important role the Missions played during the Covid-19 restrictions including the provision of care packages and facilitating vaccinations.

As well as referring to the above points made by the Guest Speakers, Clive Goodwin, the Chair of the SBU, said the SBU had been honoured to have received a letter from Her Royal Highness The Princess Royal, President of the Worldwide Missions to Seafarers which he then read out to the assembled. (The text of the letter appears below).

The chairman welcomed former trustees – Graham Lightfoot, (also Councillor of the AMWS) Peter Lovell and David Field – and some of the descendants of former Trustees who were present. In addition, the Chairman paid tribute to the work of the current trustees: Llew Russell, David Parmeter, (also Chair of AMWS), Derek Lightfoot, Shane Hobday and James Cowper, a direct descendent of Reverend William Cowper. The Chairman also acknowledged the excellent support from the Secretary, Stan Moriarty, and accountant, Jennie Miles.

At the conclusion of the formal part of the evening, the SBU Chairman invited the assembled to raise their glasses in a salute to the next two hundred years.

A worthy celebration of an historic event.



SAVING THE ‘PORTLAND BAY’ – GOOD LUCK OR GOOD MEASURE?

Tony Cousins – AMWS Councillor.

Much has been written about the heroic efforts of the tugs that recently saved the bulk carrier *Portland Bay* from disaster. In this article Tony Cousins looks a little deeper, to see what can be learnt from the incident and how to mitigate the risk of future marine casualties in Australia.

Many pundits have expressed opinions about why the *Portland Bay* found herself dragging anchors onto a treacherous lee shore in extreme conditions south of Sydney in early July. AMSA and ATSB will deliver their findings in due course, but the simple sailor’s take is, as long as there are ships putting to sea, they will continue to break down.



Tony is an Australian Master Mariner and former Managing Director of PB Towage and Smit Lamnalco Australia. He is currently a Non-Executive Director of the Victorian International Container Terminal (VICT), and previously served on the AMSA Advisory Committee.

Some may point the finger at foreign flag ships. While no ship owner is beyond reproach, the operators of the *Portland Bay*, Pacific Basin Shipping, are a leading international player with some 250 ships employing over 4,000 seafarers.

Interestingly, Pacific Basin also invested in the Australian towage sector, employing many Australian seafarers in the heady days prior to the GFC as the owners of PB Towage. The company was subsequently acquired by Smit Lamnalco and in an uncanny coincidence, it was a former PB Towage tug, the *SL Diamantina* and her gallant crew that first responded

to save the day for the *Portland Bay*.

In the experience of the author, Pacific Basin is a professional owner and operator of a modern, well-maintained fleet. Considering the result, it is apparent the seamanship demonstrated by the Master and crew of the *Portland Bay* should be lauded along with the tugs.

Seamanship, the art of doing things properly and safely at sea, looking after your ship so the ship can look after you, is a long time in the learning. Not surprisingly it takes time to learn respect for the ocean. Seamanship is not just acquired deep sea, plenty of yachties have it, fishermen won’t last long without it and generally, tug crews have it in spades.

They have to. On most harbour tugs in Australia, there is a crew of three, the tug master, an engineer and a deckhand. The best crews operate as highly efficient self-managed teams, without the historical demarcations and industrial angst that have contributed to the demise of the Australian flag merchant fleet over the years. They largely manage, maintain and operate their tug themselves. It is not a high-profile job in the port pecking order, but it is a good job and most tug crews sit pretty comfortably with the working-class tag of a seaman.

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The saying goes that working on harbour tugs is 98% boredom and 2% way too much excitement. Tugs put themselves between big ships and danger. Massive forces are in play, helping ships in and out of port is at times a heavy contact sport. Obviously, the tugs are built for it, however, all tugs are not the same.

Some tugs are specifically designed for sheltered waters work, but harbour tugs can also be multifunctional, incorporating bow and stern winches that allow them to provide berthing assistance in port as well as towing capability in open waters.

It was just that capability, multipurpose harbour tugs with the capacity to deploy a line over the stern and experienced, willing crews that came to the rescue of the *Portland Bay*.

When Sydney VTS made the call to the duty tug in Port Botany, advising a ship was in distress and asked if they could help, the skipper did not hesitate. It was apparent fellow seafarers were in serious trouble and they “had” to try and help. *SL Diamantina* and her three-man crew mobilised post-haste to find the *Portland Bay* practically under the cliffs with a petrified crew, some of whom were looking to abandon ship.

The Master of the *Diamantina*, in communication with the shore-based salvage experts calmly assessed the situation, spoke to his crew and went to work. Despite their tug being patently ill equipped for the job, they got a line up and successfully arrested the movement of the *Portland Bay* towards certain peril and, notwithstanding multiple broken lines and reconnections, managed to hold her until the calvary arrived a few hours later.

The cavalry consisted of two more multipurpose harbour tugs, *SL Martinique* and *Bullara*, with the benefit of a few short hours preparation, heavier gear and additional hands. The *Martinique* took over from *Diamantina* and was soon joined by *Bullara* and together, with guidance from the incident control team ashore, they managed to inch *Portland Bay* clear of the coast to then anchor off Cronulla. *Bullara* lost her towline that evening and it was left to *Martinique* to hold the ship under static tow as the East Coast low persisted overnight, throwing everything at the stricken vessel and brave tug holding her off the beach.

It was still blowing when more help arrived the following afternoon, in the form of *Svitzer Glenrock*, a designated Emergency Towing Vessel (ETV) from Newcastle under the direction of the Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA). *Glenrock* is set up for just this work, well equipped with a full complement of well drilled ocean towing crew, she soon had a second line up to the casualty and everyone could breathe a little easier.

AMSA is responsible for national arrangements for emergency towage to provide assistance to vessels in danger of grounding, sinking or causing pollution. There are three tiers of emergency towage capability under the National Plan for Maritime Environmental Emergencies. Level 1 is a dedicated emergency towage vessel patrolling the Great Barrier Reef, Level 2, harbour tugs with ocean towing

capability that normally work in port operations and Level 3, vessels of opportunity that can be directed by AMSA to assist as required.

The AMSA Emergency Towage system, which works in conjunction with state maritime authorities, is generally acknowledged as world class, but given the size of the Australian coastline, there is no guarantee a vessel in distress will be reached by an emergency towage vessel of any description in time to prevent a disaster.

While we cannot control the weather, a port's capacity to respond to a marine casualty on their doorstep should not be left to chance.

Sensibly, most ports in Australia regulate towage. Port Authorities can specify tug numbers, specifications and service standards through a towage licence. Very fortunately, for everyone, the Port Botany towage licence calls for 24/7 manned tugs and ocean towing capability.

However, this is not the case in all Australian ports.

This has to be a key learning from the *Portland Bay* incident, that it is highly likely that a designated ETV will not reach a disabled vessel in time and the nearest port should ensure they have emergency towage capability within their harbour tug fleet that can provide a first strike response and buy time until help arrives. All ports should ensure they are prepared when their time comes.

That preparation includes experienced seafarers, willing to put their personal health and safety at risk to help others, but how can you ensure you have the right people in the right place at the right time to respond to such emergencies?

Fundamentally, the answer is a vibrant maritime industry that is investing in training of local seafarers at every level, from tinny to tanker in domestic, coastal and international trades. Arguably, all are part of a strategic fleet.

Without this sovereign capability, Australia is at risk of losing the ability to successfully respond to incidents of this nature, not just onboard the tugs, but in key roles across the ports and shipping network. These essential maritime skills cannot simply be imported, without the risk of critical decision-making being made without the context and in-depth local knowledge that, along with seamanship comes from years in the industry.

The *Portland Bay* was brought safely to berth in Port Botany on day three of the incident. The system worked and, with a healthy dose of good luck and a fair degree of good measure, a catastrophe was narrowly averted. Well done to all concerned, particularly Engage Towage, Svitzer, United Salvage, the Port Authority of NSW and their incident control team, including the Harbour Master, Pilots and Sydney VTS who, together with AMSA, all played their critical part in what was a well-coordinated, professional response.

But the biggest respect has to go to the tug crews, who literally risked their lives to save others. The seamanship they displayed was nothing short of incredible, a

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credit to themselves and their industry which hopefully serves as a reminder that those skills must be developed and preserved while all ports need to ensure they are ready, willing and able to respond to maritime emergencies when, inevitably, they next occur.

This article first appeared in the Daily Cargo News' September 2022 magazine, and appears in this newsletter with the DCN's permission.



THE AUSTRALIAN MARITIME COLLEGE (AMC)

Co-authors at the Australian Maritime College, University of Tasmania:

- *Dr. Samrat Ghosh – Associate Head of Future Students Course Coordinator (Batchelor of Nautical Science – Year 3) Senior Lecturer, College of Science & Engineering, Centre for Seafaring & Maritime Operations (Ocean Seafaring).*
- *Stephen Hurd – Director, Centre of Seafaring & Maritime Operations – Senior Lecturer in Marine Craft Operation.*
- *Elizabeth Vagg – Chaplain and University Associate.*

The Australian Maritime College (AMC), a specialist institute of the University of Tasmania, was established by the Commonwealth Government in 1978 as the national institute for maritime and maritime-related training, education, consultancy and research. The Commonwealth Department of Transport (DoT) and State Marine Authorities had already developed a Code of Uniform Shipping

Laws, which encompassed survey and manning requirements as a basis for marine legislation in all States and territories.

At the same time, the United Nations, recognised the need for a more highly regulated shipping industry with international standards. A survey on the training of seafarers and the adequacy of training facilities in selected countries in the Asian-Pacific region, including Australia, was conducted taking into account the development of modern shipping techniques.

While some institutions continued to provide aspects of training at the local level, the Australian Maritime College was seen as pivotal in providing a modern, comprehensive, quality educational and training experience across all levels of certification, using the latest equipment and technology.

The International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (STCW) came into force in 1978 and was updated in 1995, focussing on the importance of the human factor in protecting lives, equipment and the environment, through the provision of high quality education and training for seafarers.

Shipping continues to be an important part of the supply chain moving



Dr. Samrat Ghosh

commodities around the world. With changes in technology and an urgent need to limit pollution and the emission of green house gases, ongoing research and the effective training and education of skilled personnel remains paramount.

AMC offers exciting opportunities to work aboard vessels through their certification courses which not only lead to a Certificate of Competency (recognised by the Australian Maritime Safety Authority or AMSA) but also a Bachelor's degree (Bachelor of Nautical Science or Bachelor of Marine Engineering). The Certificate of Competency or CoC helps students secure employment as seafarers on board ships to secure sea-time and progress further in their careers which leads to positions like a ship's Captain or Chief Engineer.

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The courses are offered in a blended learning model where students have the option of doing the first eight weeks face-to-face in classrooms or fully online from the comfort of where they are situated. The last four weeks are completed on the beautiful campus in Tasmania (Launceston) where students can experience the world-class facilities such as bridge and engine room simulators which add to the experience of learning. AMC is a 'one-stop' shop where enrolling students can complete main units of learning as well as mandatory short courses (recognized by AMSA) like fire fighting and survival at sea. The consultancy division of AMC (AMC Search) also delivers autonomous surface vessel and underwater vehicle training.

A number of defined entry pathways are available into this course. These pathways recognise that students may be commencing the course with existing experience and/or qualifications or intending to apply for specific professional licences or Certificates of Competency. Students entering the course via alternative pathway entry points should contact a Student Adviser via U.Connect@utas.edu.au for individual enrolment advice.

Student testimonial from Lewis Gibson (AMC Alumnus):

"I just love how different every day is – on any day, I could be climbing a Navigation Mast, entering an enclosed space, or navigating some of the busiest oceans in the world. These are only a tiny number of my work-stories, and if you look at the other benefits of a seagoing career (equal time leave & plenty of money!) you are able to pursue the most incredible leave adventures".

Students graduating from the AMC begin an illustrious maritime career which is not only limited to employment on ships but equips them with skills and knowledge which prepares one for diverse and rewarding careers in Government organizations, shipyards, shipping companies, etc.



AMWS' CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS SEAFARERS' WELFARE

Martin Orchard – AMWS Councillor & Editor.

The AMWS continues to monitor the effects on seafarers' welfare caused by the war in Ukraine and the lingering Covid-19 pandemic.

As reported in our last newsletter in June 2022, earlier this year AMWS contributed \$20,000 to the Seafarers' International Relief Fund (SIRF) which provides emergency support to seafarers and their families devastated by the war in Ukraine, and is administered by the International Seafarers' Welfare and Assistance Network (ISWAN) based in UK.

As well as monitoring the above challenges, AMWS continues to provide assistance and relief towards the welfare of past, present and future seafarers in Australia through the following channels:

- Provision of subsidised home-unit accommodation for ex-seafarers of modest means.
- Annual grants to the Mission to Seafarers and the Apostleship of the Sea (Stella Maris) in recognition of their offering a 'home away from home' for visiting mariners at 39 centres around the Australian coast.
- Project grants to assist with the upkeep and improvements to these centres including, but not limited to, IT facilities, storm damage, maintenance of the stations' buses to transport visiting seafarers between their vessel and the local station.
- Offering maritime scholarships to those studying to become qualified seafarers. Plus tall-ship training experience to young people aged 15-19 years who meet AMWS' eligibility criteria.
- Representation on the Australian Welfare Council whose role is to ensure the provision of appropriate welfare services for all seafarers visiting Australian ports.
- Membership of the Sydney Port Welfare Committee.

During the nine months ending 30th September 2022, the AMWS distributed grants to various seafarers' welfare organisations, individual Mission to Seafarers and Apostleship of the Sea stations around the Australian coast and scholarships totalling almost \$196,000.

The AMWS will continue to monitor seafarers' welfare in Australia and other areas of the world, and provide financial relief to seafarers as and when it is felt appropriate.



THE AMWS TREVOR HOWARTH MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

Zoe recently successfully completed voyage 9/22 on 'Young Endeavour' which was sponsored by the Salvation Army, and funded by the Sydney Cove Rotary Club and the Australian Mariners' Welfare Society as part of their joint Trevor Howarth Memorial Scholarship scheme

This is Zoe's voyage report:

Arriving at HMAS Platypus with a cold breeze shifting past to the west, splashed past with the sight of the Voyage docked at the wharf. Greeted by the captain and welcomed aboard by the staffies made the youths feel unshy and allowed to start their boat journey.



AMWS Councillors Alan Tait and Graham Lightfoot wishing Zoe 'Bon Voyage' at HMAS Penguin in Sydney prior to her departure

A special smoking ceremony was conducted by an aboriginal relative and we were infused with the smell of eucalyptus and tea tree leaves.

Drifting and departing away from the wharf with a smile, travelling past the Harbour Bridge and towards HMAS Penguin. It was a cold night but a way to meet other people that are from other places in Australia.

Hitting the high seas and wind bringing the tides higher caused a bumpy start ride up north to Queensland. Raining and Sun beaming days configured the starting days of the Voyage. Planning and outlining goals on which to achieve within the Voyage can help become a guideline to an achievement.

Anchoring close to a beach known to be close to an old and historic prison has a reflective afternoon sunset which brings the sight of Kangaroos along the warm and golden sand.

Departing away and heading up north with a few rough and windy nights brings joy and laughter to the youthies on board. Photographs and recordings taken of dolphins jumping up high and travelling along the Voyage current, alongside whales in the distance, brings a lot of joy and excitement to the youthies who were up on deck at the time.

Watching sunsets that are beautiful, eating together as a watch crew and observing the early morning sunrise creates a sense of happiness for the trip. We all became closer as friends and turned into the Voyage 9 family.

A shower of heavy rain came down when the Voyage anchored in Noosa Beach. It rained heavy and stopped at one point to bring out the calm sun which brought locals to the beach. A place of memories and captures of the beautiful coast had to be waved goodbye as we headed towards Brisbane through Command day, and an exciting last night filled with a night disco, song, ending video and a poem.

Being together on a Voyage for 10 days and ending with smiles, memories, photos, good times, good vibes and good moments brought the crew together and we made it to Brisbane and left the Voyage as it stood at HMAS Moreton to know that a reunion would be a time to continue on with the sailing journey, even if this one was completed.



THE NATIONAL MERCHANT NAVY WAR MEMORIAL

On 23rd October, 2022, maritime representatives gathered at the Merchant Navy Memorial on the shores of Lake Burley Griffin in Canberra for the 31st Annual National Merchant Navy War Memorial commemoration.

The Australian Mariners' Welfare Society was represented by Paul McGrath, a AMWS member and the first Chief Executive of the Australian Maritime Safety Authority, who is seen here preparing to lay a wreath on behalf of AMWS.

The Chair of the Merchant Navy Memorial Fund, David Field, described the centrepiece of the Memorial in the following words: 'The installation in bronze on the National Merchant Navy War Memorial, Kings Park, Canberra, of the names and respective ships of the 862 Australian Merchant Mariners that sacrificed their lives for their country in WW1 (184) and WW11 (678). As a result, the National Merchant Navy War Memorial now records, for the generations that follow, the individual names of those who demonstrated such cold courage and heroism in taking merchant ships into harm's way.'



THE LEAGUE OF ANCIENT MARINERS AND DR. ROBERT SCOTT-SKIRVING

David Parmeter – AMWS Chair

AMWS has recently had the opportunity to set up a new cadetship program in conjunction with the League of Ancient Mariners (LoAM), and supporting the sail training vessel 'One and All' which is based in Adelaide.

This has come about because the LoAM had been bequeathed the amount of \$17,500 by a Dr. Robert Scott-Skirving.

Dr. Scott-Skirving was born in Scotland in 1859, and was apprenticed in the Merchant Navy in 1875 in the sailing vessel Tantallon Castle bound for Adelaide. On his return voyage to Britain, Dr. Scott-Skirving developed the beri-beri disease which led him to enrol in medicine at Edinburgh University in 1876. Having gained a medical degree, Dr. Scott-Skirving returned to Australia as ship's surgeon on

the migrant ship Ellora, and was appointed medical superintendent at the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital in Sydney in 1883. From thereon, he had a long and most distinguished medical career as physician, consultant, surgeon and lecturer.

In 1903, Dr. Scott-Skirving co-founded the League of Ancient Mariners. The sea remained 'his greatest love'. He maintained his Master's Certificate, sailed his own yacht until his eighties, and in 1931 published a manual entitled 'Wire Splicing for Yachtsmen'.

Dr. Scott-Skirving died in 1956 leaving an amount of £50 to LoAM which had grown to \$17,500 when the estate recently distributed its funds. The LoAM executive decided the best use of the funds would be to support a cadetship for seafarer training and requested AMWS to manage this activity on their behalf. The proposal by the LoAM Board was that the bequest be topped up to \$20,000 and transferred to AMWS to administer as a cadetship in the name of Dr. Scott-Skirving and the LoAM.



Dr. Scott-Skirving

Coincidentally, while considering this very generous proposal from the LoAM, AMWS Councillor Tony Cousins asked if AMWS would consider supporting a cadetship program to be run on the STV 'One and All'. Consideration of this proposal raised some interesting issues for the AMWS Council. On one hand, AMWS is severely constrained in providing training opportunities by the requirements set out in its Constitution, that the beneficiaries be the children of seafarers of moderate or less than moderate means. However the Constitution does allow AMWS to make grants to charities and the 'One and All' is a Registered Charity.

The outcome of the discussion of these interconnected issues is that the LoAM has kindly gifted \$20,000 to AMWS and, going forward, AMWS will make a grant each year to the 'One and All', equivalent to the cost of a cadetship. Furthermore, the grant to the Adelaide-based 'One and All' – the Port that Dr. Scott-Skirving sailed to as an apprenticed seafarer in 1875 – will acknowledge the LoAM and Dr. Robert Scott-Skirving.



PIRACY AT SEA

Martin Orchard - AMWS Councillor & Editor

In their latest piracy report, the International Maritime Bureau (IMB), the specialised department of the International Chamber of Commerce with global responsibility for the fighting of crimes related to maritime trades and transportation, reported that global piracy and armed robbery incidents had reached their lowest levels since 1992.

The IMB report in the first nine months of 2022, 90 incidents were reported globally. Of this total, 85 vessels were boarded, there were 4 attempted attacks

and 1 vessel was hi-jacked. In many of the cases, vessels were either at anchor or steaming when boarded, with nearly all incidents occurring at night.

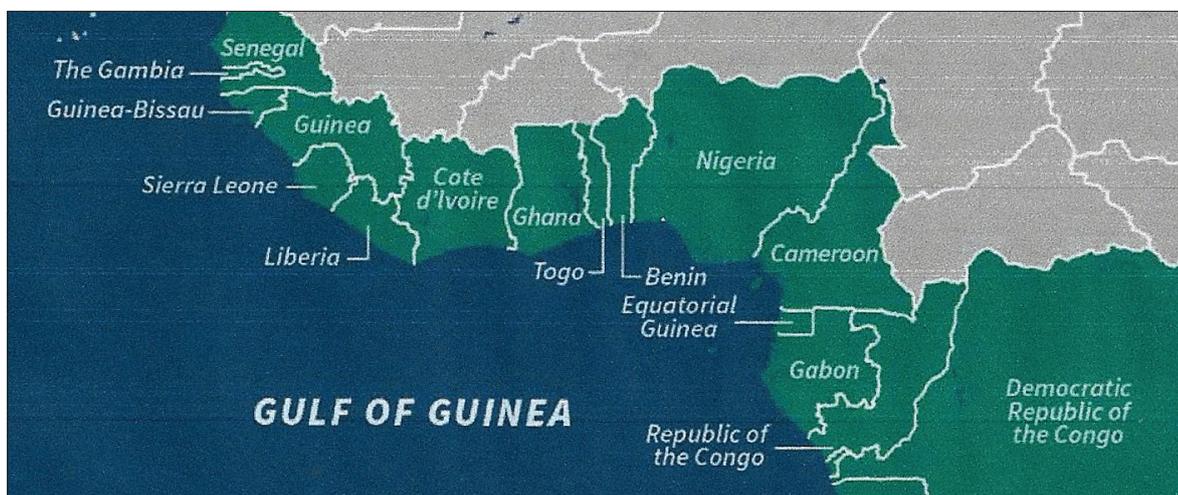
Of these 90 incidents, 13 occurred in the Gulf of Guinea region off west Africa compared to 27 incidents reported in that area during the same period in 2021.

Whilst commending the efforts of the coastal authorities bordering the Gulf of Guinea, Michael Howlett, IMB Director, stated there was no room for complacency.

In Asian waters, the Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery (ReCAAP) reported 41 incidents occurring in the Singapore Strait during the period January to September 2022, compared to 22 incidents during the same period in 2021. The Singapore Strait remains an area of concern. However, there has been a decrease in the number of incidents in the waters bordering India, Indonesia, the Philippines and Vietnam.

Two areas off South America remain areas of concern. In the nine months from January 2022, 8 incidents were reported from Callao anchorage in Peru compared to 15 during the same period in 2021. In addition, there have been 5 incidents reported during the first nine months of 2022 at Macapa Anchorage, Brazil, including one in August 2022 where 6 security and duty crew were assaulted and tied up by perpetrators who boarded a bulk carrier at anchor.

The above reports provide a welcomed decrease in the number of armed robbery and piracy in some waters around the world, although the situation in the Singapore Strait remains concerning. However, the AMWS' focus on the safety of seafarers in all areas of the globe remains steadfast, and will remain so until this scourge is finally eliminated.



AMWS' WEBSITE

Stay in touch with the AMWS' many ongoing activities by visiting

the website: www.marinerswelfare.com

or Facebook: www.facebook.com/marinerswelfareaus

or 'Australian Mariners Welfare Society'.



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