

Flag Vanuatu Issue No. 12

Quarterly Newsletter from the Vanuatu
International Shipping Register



Summer 2024

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A warm welcome to the Summer 2024 edition of our quarterly newsletter 'Flag Vanuatu', intended for our flagged vessel Owners, Operators, Managers, Seafarers, Friends of the Register and Colleagues around the world.

We hope that our Newsletter will be equally well received in the company boardroom, the ship's messroom, and everywhere in between. Please feel free to pass a copy along to your fleet vessels, associates and friends so that it may be distributed widely in print or electronically. WE ALWAYS APPRECIATE YOUR FEEDBACK, COMMENTS, SUGGESTIONS, AND IDEAS.

Wishing all our readers a Happy Summer



In some places, summer is the hottest season, or the wettest season (with the most rain), and in other places, it is a dry season. Four seasons are found in areas which are not too hot or too cold. Summer happens to the north and south sides of the Earth at opposite times of the year.

The summer solstice, which occurs around June 21 in the Northern Hemisphere and December 21 in the Southern Hemisphere, is the day that is officially recognized as being the longest of the year. As the summer solstice arrives, the sun will be at its zenith, which is its highest point in the sky, and the days will be at their greatest duration.

Photo: Dany Island, Vanuatu, where it's an endless Summer!

Units of the fleet:

'AREQUIPA QUEEN'

V/L Type: Dry

Bulk/Supamax

Summer Dwt.: 51,024

Built: 2016

Call Sign: YJTG8

Class: Nippon Kaiji Kyokai (NK)

Owner: Stevens Line Co., Ltd.

P.O.R: Port Vila, Vanuatu



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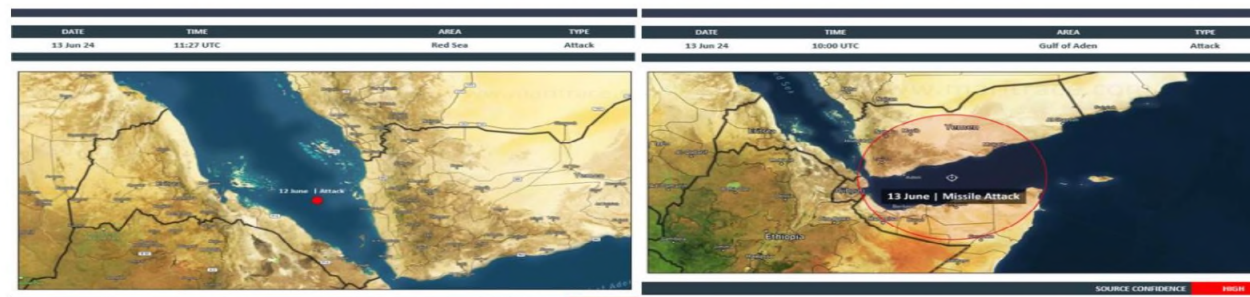
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Editorial

["Where thinking is isolated without free exchange with other minds and can no longer expand, delusion may follow" - Joos Meerloo]

Will escaping poverty eclipse the globalist's Net Zero Cult ?

Many believe that distant future historians will look back on our current times as lessons in what a dangerous muddle mass delusion, global inequality, waste, needless aggression, and



failure to protect our environment & wildlife from massive destruction and pollution (particularly of our forests, oceans and waterways) can make..

Meanwhile, it is said that "manias sweep almost everyone up in their whirlwinds and woe to anyone who has a different view or clings to logic". Social hysteria does not permit dissent.



In 'the West', the relatively recent social whirlwind of fighting '*manmade climate collapse*', amongst many other 'causes', might be an example, where widespread rational debate is not allowed over the 'settled science' (a paradox? – in the real world science is, by classification and very nature, never 'settled') and now vested political and financially masochistic beliefs dictating impossible national net zero carbon emissions targets, are vast and of industrial proportions, with potential to keep much of the developing world in poverty.

The so called 'settled science' on climate change has led to widespread climate anxiety in the developed world, particularly amongst the younger, more susceptible, minds, and well-off liberals who can afford luxury beliefs, and have no concept of what real abject, crushing poverty is.

It is probable that the future will actually be decided by the poorer people in Asia, Africa, Latin America and elsewhere who, if they think about it at all, find the 'climate emergency hysteria and extortionate sacrifices in the name of green policies 'to save the planet', of little significance when they have no work, their families are hungry and their children are ill and malnourished. Above all they want a proper home for their family, they want running fresh water, they want good healthcare, proper education and a prosperous society to watch their children grow in safety and with dignity.

They want to go about their lives, to sell what they produce and grow at a fair price, without ruinous taxes on transportation, eye watering tariffs, unrealistic and unaffordable barriers, corruption and restrictions.

Orwell famously suggested that the dystopian future he depicted consisted of 'a boot, stamping on a human face, forever'.

It has been noted that emerging economies need cheap, reliable and plentiful energy (if it be sustainable then all to the good) because cheap, reliable and plentiful energy is a vital key to develop and lift a poor or emerging economy. It matters not in the least to the very poor and impoverished, how many wealthy elites fly in private jets to Davos or climate summits around the world, not when their own loved ones are literally starving.

It is estimated that well over 700 million live in real poverty, the number driven to a large extent by the populous nations in East and South Asia, also Sub-Saharan Africa.



Those nations with large poor populations are, or should be, led by

pragmatists with a mandate to lift the population out of poverty as rapidly and comprehensively as possible.

The powerful and wealthy globalists are unlikely to be able to make them stay poor, or to deny them prosperity and growth through net zero policy.

Given that, currently, fossil fuels are the most important key to development and prosperity, until reliable and affordable alternatives are found and properly brought on-line, it has been contended that given the choice between abject poverty, watching ones family starve, or pressing a magic button daily to release huge plumes of greenhouse gasses into the atmosphere so those loved ones can live, eat, grow up and prosper, most of the poor would be hitting that button until their hands were bleeding!.. because they are caring human beings and they have families to provide for.

We all want clean air and good health for our fragile planet and to curtail any significant global warming that is man made. Many contend that 'climate change' plays a hand in keeping people in poverty, so while a measured humanitarian balance is necessary, a priority should always be to the immediate welfare and advancement of the population. **-Ed.**

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In Brief This Quarter

The Baltimore bridge incident - Situation update



The whole world watched horrified when the Singapore registered container vessel 'DALI' departing Baltimore en-route to Colombo in Sri Lanka, struck one of the supports for the Francis Scott Key bridge over the Patapsco River in the early morning hours of March 26th causing the bridge

to collapse and, sadly, killing six construction personnel who were working on the bridge at the time.

It was evident that the vessel had suffered power failures (electrical blackouts) just prior to impacting the bridge support.

The incident has been touted as one of the largest ever in potential settlement claims for the vessel's P&I Club.



The US National Transportation

Safety Board (NTSB) has issued a preliminary report into the incident, and a final report is scheduled to be published sometime in 2025, which we await with much interest.

'DALI' was successfully refloated on the 20th of May and shifted by tug boats to a container terminal berth, followed by an announcement the following day that limited port access had become available via the Fort McHenry Access Channel.

The full 213 m wide main shipping channel into Baltimore port will open on the weekend of the 8th/9th of June, some 75 days after 'DALI' struck the bridge support and operations at most of Baltimore Port, America's ninth largest, were suspended.

Plans are being drawn up to get a replacement bridge up and running by 2028.

The Red Sea is still a danger zone for seafarers

(Dateline 28th May 2024)

A Marshall Islands-flagged bulk carrier off the Yemeni coast took on water after being targeted with three missiles, maritime security and shipping sources have advised.

The ship issued a distress call, saying it had sustained damage to a cargo hold and was taking on water about 54 nautical miles southwest of Yemen's port city of Hodeidah.

Greek shipping sources said the vessel, named 'LAOX', was sailing to a port nearby to assess the extent of the damage. It was headed to the United Arab Emirates.

Its Greece-based operator Grehel Shipmanagement did not immediately reply to a request for comment.

The vessel was hit by missiles and sustained damage, reporting an impact in the water in close proximity to the vessel, according to the UKMTO, adding that the crew were reported safe and the vessel was proceeding to its next port of call.

Yemen's Iran-aligned Houthis have launched repeated drone and missile strikes in the Red Sea region since November, later expanding to the Indian Ocean, in what they say is solidarity with Palestinians.

The Geneva Dry 2024 conference

This 2-day conference, which purportedly brings together all elements of the commodities shipping sector in hosting 'the ultimate dry bulk shipping event',



came to a close on the 3rd of May at the Hotel President Wilson in Geneva, Switzerland. The conference was very well attended and, as always, brought together many of the world's most influential in the dry cargo shipping market.

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Posidonia 2024 Shipping Exhibition open in Athens

One of the world's premier shipping events, Posidonia in Greece, takes place between the 3rd and the 7th of June at the Metropolitan Expo, Athens. The event in 2022 brought close to 2000 exhibitors from 103 countries as the event returned to the international maritime events calendar.



Photo: Piraeus, Greece (Stock Photo)

Editor's Note: The Greek Shipping situation is considered important and relevant to the industry worldwide, and the biennial Posidonia Shipping Exhibition is of considerable interest, as the nation's maritime industry meet, talk and party. Greek-owned ships move everything, including crude oil and the fuels it makes, gas for power plants, finished goods, coal and ores that drive the global economy.

They are neck-and-neck with Chinese firms as the world's No. 1 owners of vessels that transport almost all global trade by volume.

Predictions for the 2024 Atlantic Hurricane Season



As the 2024 Atlantic hurricane season approaches, forecasts and scientific analyses predict a notably active period, potentially setting new records for

storm frequency and intensity. This year's hurricane outlook is influenced by a variety of climatic factors, with the potential to significantly impact the U.S. coastline and beyond.

Typically, the Atlantic hurricane season spans from June 1 to November 30. Over the past three decades, an average season has produced 14 named storms, 7 hurricanes, and 4 major hurricanes (Category 3 or higher, with sustained winds of at least 111 mph, capable of causing devastating damage to life and property).

This year, however, some meteorology experts are predicting a surge in activity.

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Seafarer happiness on the rise in Q1 2024, but challenges persist

(Dateline 1st May 2024) From the findings of the latest report by the Mission to Seafarers)

The findings show a positive start to 2024, with an overall increase in happiness from 6.36 in Q4 2023 to 6.94 out of 10 in Q1 2024. This period saw a positive trend in all aspects of seafarer happiness covered by the survey.

The Seafarers Happiness Index (SHI) is a quarterly survey undertaken by the



Mission to Seafarers, delivered in association with Idwal and NorthStandard P&I, and supported by Inmarsat. It offers vital insights into the sentiments and experiences of the men and women who serve at sea.

In contrast to the consistent decline observed in 2023, the Q1 2024 SHI report depicts a mixed but cautiously optimistic rise in satisfaction among seafarers. The positive shift reflects improvements in several areas. These include enhanced financial security through fair wages and timely payments, fostering job satisfaction and camaraderie through positive crew relationships, as well as improved connectivity facilitating better communication with loved ones. Conversely, the report underscores persistent challenges that will require systemic reforms to improve seafarer wellbeing. These challenges include addressing work-life balance issues such as extended contracts and limited shore leave, which contribute to excessive workloads, stress, and fatigue etc.

A pressing issue highlighted in Q1 2024 is the persistent allegations of fraudulent reporting of working hours, resulting in inadequate rest periods and compromised safety standards.

Seafarers are increasingly expressing unease and scepticism toward reported working hours' accuracy, with a reluctance to speak out against potential misconduct.

Thanking Corina Stoicescu, of 'Seanews' for an excellent overview

Somali pirate mothership reported hunting vessels in the Indian Ocean

(Dateline 9th May 2024) from the Shipping Press)

Reports have surfaced of a pirate mothership spotted operating in the Indian Ocean, some 1,000 km from the Somalia mainland.

According to 'Seagull Maritime Security' the mothership has been sighted about 650 km east of Socotra Island.



“Shipping companies and masters need to remain vigilant and increase their security on board their vessel as well as to report any suspicious activity through the necessary channels,” Seagull Maritime stated.

This sighting comes at a time when the Houthis are also extending their range of attacks to a similar area.

“Shipping is vulnerable to extortion and pirates may be emboldened by what is going on in the Red Sea. It could just be opportunistic, but we must be prepared for the prospect that we will see a period of renewed hijackings and piracy attacks at sea,” commented Captain Rahul Khanna, global head of marine risk consulting at Allianz Commercial.

Last month, Somali pirates were in the headlines after releasing a hijacked Bangladeshi ship, ‘Abdullah’, and its 23-strong crew after a \$5m ransom was paid. The ship was hijacked back in March during its trip from Mozambique to the United Arab Emirates.

Pirates from Somalia were quiet for six years but recently hit several vessels. Naval forces freed fishing boats seized by gunmen and thwarted other attempted attacks. A few months ago, Indian commandos boarded and recaptured the Maltese-flagged ‘Ruen’ seized in December, rescuing all 17 hostages.

As a result of the heightened security concerns for merchant shipping, prices for private maritime security guards onboard have shot up this year.

Loss of the Vanuatu-flagged cargo sailing schooner ‘De Gallant’

(Dateline 22nd May 2024)

We were deeply saddened to receive news that the U.S. Coast Guard has suspended its search for two missing crew members from the sailing cargo vessel ‘*De Gallant*’, approximately 20 miles north of Great Inagua, Bahamas. According to information available from the shipping press, the rescue operation, involving air and sea assets, spanned 44 hours from the initial distress signal and covered an area exceeding 3,700 square miles.

The U.S. Coast Guard Seventh District command center launched a search operation early Tuesday morning (21st May) after receiving distress signals from personal locator beacons. A helicopter crew located two life rafts carrying six French nationals.

The six survivors were hoisted to safety and transported to Coast Guard Air Station Miami in Opa Locka, Florida, reportedly in good health. However, two female crew members remained unaccounted for, prompting a continued search by the Coast Guard and the Royal Bahamas Defence Force.

‘De Gallant’ was a 90-foot schooner originally built in the Netherlands, owned and operated by the France-based Blue Schooner Company.

The company provides eco-friendly freight transport services between Europe and the Caribbean Sea, 'De Gallant' being one of several sailing vessels engaged in similar service.

It was confirmed that the vessel had departed Santa-Marta, Colombia on May 11 with a cargo of coffee, cocoa, and cane sugar destined for Europe.

While the investigation is still very much ongoing, preliminary information from the Blue Schooner Company suggests the vessel was hit by a "sudden and violent" storm, causing it to capsize and sink. Survivors reported donning survival suits and boarding life rafts as the vessel began to sink.

"This incident, which resulted in the loss of a well-proven vessel manned by experienced professional sailors, is a reminder of the dangers of navigation and the seafaring profession," the company said in a statement. "Our thoughts and attention go out to their families and loved ones."

We join Cmdr. Lindsey Seniuk, Coast Guard Seventh District command center search and rescue mission coordinator in echoing her sentiment. She said: "It is with heavy hearts we offer our sincere condolences to the families and crew that lost these two mariners. Suspending this case is one of the hardest decisions our personnel make. We are grateful we were able to bring home the six survivors and thankful for the assistance of our partners in the Royal Bahamas Defence Force."

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Feature

The race to decarbonize – Is the industry ready for a Global Carbon Tax?

As we move closer to the IMO's 2030 emissions reduction deadline, the shipping industry is under pressure to reduce its Green House Gas (GHG) output.



Following lengthy debate and many calls for action, a global carbon price on shipping emissions looks increasingly likely.

A 'carbon tax' has been a much-discussed measure that is close to becoming a reality in the shipping sector.

So, taking a closer look at how the industry is likely to be affected and what shipping companies can do to reduce their carbon tax liability while increasing sustainability:

In April 2024, the International Maritime Organization (IMO) confirmed it is considering ‘economic mechanism(s)’ to incentivize the transition to net-zero’, along with a ‘goal based marine fuel standard regulating the phased reduction of marine fuel’s GHG intensity’ (IMO, 2024).

Currently, the proposal is in its formative stages, with a ‘draft outline illustration of possible IMO net-zero framework’ underway. An economic mechanism, if passed, is likely to be incorporated into a proposed new chapter to MARPOL Annex VI, furthering and strengthening the sustainability of the industry in accordance with the ‘mid-term GHG reduction measures’ outlined in its Strategy on the Reduction of GHG Emissions from Ships (2023).

When will a Global Carbon Tax be introduced?

The latest announcement from the IMO doesn’t provide a deadline but very clearly a global carbon tax is not far off.

Speaking about the proposed measure, Arsenio Dominguez, the Secretary General of the IMO told the New York Times, “I’m very confident that there is going to be an economic pricing mechanism by this time next year.” While the exact nature of the economic pricing mechanism is yet to be confirmed, many industry professionals expect it to take the form of a global carbon price on shipping emissions. Essentially, shipping companies will be forced to pay a set fee per tonne of carbon that is emitted as a result of burning fuel, be required to pay a set fee per tonne of carbon that is emitted due to burning fuel.

Known colloquially as a ‘carbon tax’, the global carbon price will prevent shipping companies from using savvy strategic planning to avoid regional-specific regulations and national laws. Instead, a uniform economic measure will be applicable to vessels worldwide.



Who supports a global carbon price on shipping emissions?

Industry support for a global levy is increasing. Indeed, some IMO Member States have called for carbon-focused economic measures for decades. Reports suggest 47 countries support the introduction of a levy on GHG emissions – but this support is spread across four different proposals for the measure (Reuters, 2024). Despite significant support for a widespread, global carbon tax, notable objectors remain. **Some countries, such as Brazil and China, are against the proposed carbon fee, arguing the potential negative impact on emerging economies that are reliant on trade renders a carbon tax unfair.**

While a fee for CO2 shipping emissions isn't a sure thing yet, growing support from member states makes it increasingly likely. Countries have until September to decide whether to proceed with an emissions price and/or a new fuel standard and global initiatives appear to be the only way to achieve the IMO's ambition targets and avoid fragmentation of the market with differing national policies. So, if a global carbon tax is inevitable, what impact can shipping companies expect it to have?

How will shipping companies be affected?

First and foremost, a global carbon tax will increase the expenditure of shipping companies.

To what extent their OPEX will rise is dependent on the fee imposed on CO2 emissions. One proposal recommends a carbon fee of \$150 per tonne of CO2, although this lies at the more ambitious end of the proposed fee structure. As CO2 shipping emissions exceed 700 million metric tonnes per year (IEA, 2023), it's easy to see how even a relatively modest levy could generate a substantial amount of revenue. Although shipping companies will be directly affected by an 'emissions price', they are unlikely to suffer in silence. Shipping companies could simply pass on a percentage of their additional costs to their customers, thus limiting the financial impact of the levy. More than 90% of traded goods are transported via our oceans (OECD, 2024), which means everyone could feel the impact if shipping companies hike up their fees to account for the increased expenditure associated with the carbon tax.

Key Take-aways

- *A global shipping carbon tax will require shipping companies to pay a set price for each tonne of CO2 emission that is generated by burning fuel.
- *The levy is part of a 'basket of measures' designed to reduce mid-term GHG emissions in accordance with the IMO's 2023 GHG Strategy.
- *Impact assessments on proposed measures, including a carbon tax, are due to be completed by Autumn 2024.

The economic mechanism could be introduced as early as 2025.

- *A global carbon tax could help the industry to achieve key net-zero goals, including a 40% reduction in CO2 emissions per transport work by 2030 and net-zero GHG emissions from international shipping by 2050.



It is reported that the global carbon tax isn't intended to increase costs for customers, end-users or consumers, nor is it designed to stifle fiscal activities in emerging economies. Its aim is to motivate the shipping industry to reduce its CO2 emissions.

As we have seen at a national level and in other industries, regulatory and fiscal measures are arguably the most effective and efficient way to ensure environmental progress.

In lowering carbon tax liability, most shipping companies will not be content with simply paying a fee on the CO2 emissions they generate. Instead, they will seek additional solutions to minimize or eliminate emissions, thus enhancing the sustainability of the sector. In fact, many shipping companies are already implementing these solutions. From LNG power to new hull designs to increase sailing speeds, there are a variety of options available to today's shipping giants.

A seemingly obvious solution to the issue is a switch to alternative, low-carbon or zero-carbon marine fuels but this may prove difficult to implement in time for a global carbon tax. Although some shipping lines are incorporating dual-fuel engines on new building vessels, 'radical action is required to scale sustainable fuels' (Wartsila, 2024). The limited availability of market-ready low carbon marine fuels and infrastructure limitations at ports means it may be some time before alternative fuels can offer a universal solution.

Commentary – The Case for Methanol

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New Fuels to meet decarbonisation targets

(Dateline 22nd May 20-24)

From the Shipping Press. Thanking Quaim Choudhury for the basis of this excellent overview:

With more than 90% of global GDP now covered by a net zero target, the growing consensus to tackle climate change is matched only by a deepening understanding of the immensity of the challenge.

For the shipping industry, there's a real urgency to reverse the 20% emissions growth of the last decade and begin the essential but expensive task of decarbonising the global fleet, 98.8% of which, according to a 2023 report from UNCTAD, still runs on fossil fuels.



The first challenge is to overcome the huge inertia of an aging fleet, with an average ship age of 22.2 years. With over half the global fleet older than 15 years, many ships are either too old to retrofit or too young to scrap. Over time, the replacement cycle will change the fleet's emissions profile, as shipowners place orders for newbuilds that can run on cleaner fuels such as LNG (a relatively 'clean' fossil fuel), ammonia, and methanol. The clock is ticking to accelerate that pace of change, particularly as the IMO's enhanced Green House Gas (GHG) strategy for 2030 includes stricter targets to cut the carbon intensity of international shipping by 40%. Shipowners must act soon to transition their fleets because without clear investment signals the availability of candidate fuels will fall behind demand, creating further hesitancy and potentially disrupting the transition. Any new fuel, however, must meet the industry's expectations on Performance, Availability, Cost, Emissions and Safety.

Here, methanol has a head start because in terms of performance it's already a proven fuel, with methanol storage available in over 100 ports around the world.

Methanol's key advantage is that it's an easy substitute for diesel because it is a liquid fuel under ambient conditions making it easy to transport, store and bunker using familiar procedures. The cost of converting diesel engines to methanol dual-fuel vessels and installing the land-based infrastructure is significantly lower than other alternative fuels that require pressurization or cryogenics.

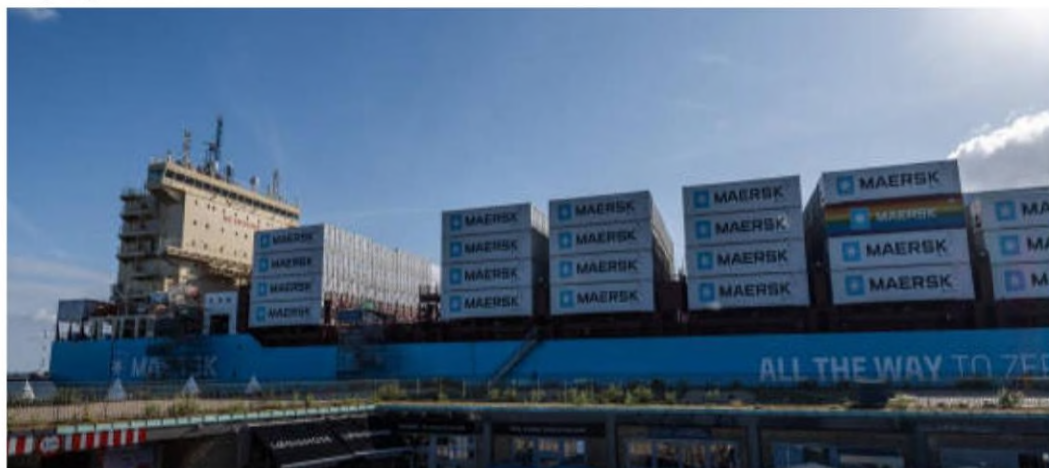


Photo:
'Laura Maersk'
The world's first
methanol enabled
container vessel

Fossil-based
methanol
(known as grey
or brown

methanol, depending on whether derived from gas or coal) burns cleaner and delivers a tank-to-wake CO₂ reduction of about 7% compared to diesel but performs worse on a well-to-wake basis. However, blue or green methanol (made from renewable biomass or via an electrolysis process), while expensive and still only available in limited quantities,

are chemically identical to conventional methanol, which means there are no future compatibility issues or further engine investment required by shipping companies, allowing a seamless, gradual transition to meet future well-to-wake emissions rules.

A safe transition

As a low flashpoint fuel, methanol does impose additional safety considerations in some instances e.g., during bunkering operation, which is the primary reason ABS decided to publish the first Technical Advisory on methanol bunkering providing guidance on the technical and operational challenges that must be overcome. The main methods of methanol bunkering are truck tanker-to-ship, barge/ ship-to-ship and land storage tank-to-ship. For smaller vessels that may run on methanol fuel cells, it's possible to provide the fuel in portable tanks.

Because of the low flashpoint and toxic properties, hoses and connections must be approved for methanol use and inspected periodically in compliance with the latest version of the IMO, MSC.1-Circ. 1621. The fittings and connections should be cleaned, tight fitted, quick release and a self-sealing type. Seals are to be in good condition, pressure-tested and hoses are to be recertified according to the above IMO circular. Any mobile facilities such as tank trucks, rail cars and portable tanks should conform to meet ISO and other standards for handling methanol fuel. For port operations, it's important to verify compatibility, transfer rate, vapor return arrangements, communications, Emergency Shut Down (ESD), and emergency procedures. The responsibilities and procedures are to be agreed upon and confirmed in writing prior to starting bunkering – a checklist is a good way to confirm compatibility and capture this information and ABS Technical Advisory includes sample checklists to help with this work. It's important the receiving and supply barge if applicable are safely moored and adequately fendered, with all due attention to tide and weather conditions not to mention surges from passing ships. Hoses should have sufficient slack to allow for any expected relative motion and the manifold arrangements, spill containment systems, and hose connections for the supply source and the receiving ship should be confirmed including emergency release (hose breakaway) arrangements.

(Good advice for all liquid bunkering operations, no matter what the fuel) -Ed.

Spark aware

Because of the low flash point, it's important to be particularly careful about potential sources of ignition. Road truck/ISO tanks and ship should be earthed with a bonding wire to protect from static electricity. Materials should be non-sparking, the risks of electrical arcing addressed, and careful consideration needs to be given to make sure both the supply source and receiving ship don't introduce any source of ignition into any hazardous area.

Vapor return needs to be carefully managed to ensure systems are compatible and have sufficient space, given that the estimated volume of vapor is 1: 1.4 times more than the cargo space volume it replaces. And both the supply source and receiving ship need to have inerting and purging capabilities. It's obviously vital to have firefighting and emergency procedures in place.

Safety is rooted in good communication. There needs to be compatible communications between the supply source and the ship so both parties can monitor the bunkering operation, and, if necessary, initiate an emergency shutdown (ESD).

A ship-to-shore link is to be provided to enable automatic and manual ESD of bunkering operations. The ESD should be capable of activation from both the bunker receiving ship and the bunker supplier, and the signal should



simultaneously activate the ESD on both sides of the transfer operation with no release

of liquid or vapor during this procedure. An ESD might be activated for a wide range of reasons, including an overflow in receiving tank, high tank pressure, a leak, vapor or fire detection, loss of ventilation in double wall piping, excessive ship movement, abnormal pressures in the transfer system or power failure.

At the manifold connection a manually operated stop valve and a remotely operated shutdown valve are to be provided. This remote valve is to be of the fail-close type, which closes on loss of actuating power, and be capable of manual closure and to have indication of the valve position. There are multiple industry standards and regulations that apply to emergency shutdown and related safety systems, and these are listed in an

Advisory, along with additional ABS recommendations . These include that systems are designed to accommodate surge pressures and that manual operation of the ESD system is possible by a single control on the bridge, safe control station and at least two strategic positions around the bunker manifold area.

The human factor

Crew training and certification are essential for safe methanol bunkering, with the minimum requirements outlined in the IGF Code and the Interim Guidelines for the Safety of Ships Using Methyl/Ethyl Alcohol as Fuel or the Seafarers' Training, Certification and Watchkeeping (STCW) Code for IBC Code Vessels. Formal training should include basic handling, including scenarios for leakage, spillage and fire. Personnel should understand methanol's properties, its operational risks and hazards, fire prevention and firefighting protocols, and importantly, clearly understand their roles and responsibilities, particularly in the event of an emergency. Only those with the proper training should be allowed into the designated safety zone for the bunkering operation, which is an ignition-free area with clearly defined boundaries, typically set by a risk assessment and determined by regulations.

For shipowners considering the fuel mix of their fleet, methanol passes the PACES test. It's a proven fuel, with existing bunkering infrastructure in some ports and more being built.

Making sure this bridging fuel is handled safely, particularly during bunkering, is going to be key to the ongoing displacement of fossil fuels in the global fleet.

We hope this Technical Advisory will help with this effort as the maritime industry steams towards IMO2030 and beyond.

[Local News and Features from Vanuatu](#)

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Call for participation in Vanuatu's Environmental Events

(4th June 2024)

Members of the public are welcome to attend the programs of the National Environment Week happening at USP, which started on the 3rd of June.. Acting Director-General of the Ministry of Climate Change and Adaptation, Rolenas Tavue Baereleo, said that there are interesting and important activities in the programs, including high-level panel discussions scheduled at the Emalus Campus USP conference room, and a high-level panel discussions was to take place at the Convention Center.

Head of the Maritime and Ocean Division at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Tony Tevi, also stated that all members of the public are encouraged to attend and participate in these events focused on the future of Vanuatu's ocean.

Photo: Acting Director-General of the Ministry of Climate Change and Adaptation, Rolenas Tavue Baereleo,



In related news, Dr. Filimon Manoni, the Pacific Ocean Commissioner, held discussions with Vanuatu's Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Hon Matai Seremaiah, in Port Vila. This courtesy encounter aligned with the Government of Vanuatu's invitation for the Commissioner to partake in the nation's weeklong festivities dedicated to environmental conservation and ocean advocacy.

Summer Activities in Port Vila

Focusing on our Capital City alone there are a multitude of places to visit and things to do, all within a single day excursion, here are some examples:



Sea Kayak Adventure



Perfect for those seeking an exciting yet serene encounter with our magnificent marine world. You'll paddle along the vibrant reef, explore Ifira and Iririki Islands Or you may like a river kayaking tour and experience the serenity of kayaking down a gently flowing freshwater river, surrounded by lush tropical forest. Enjoy a cool dip, and

have fun swinging on a Tarzan rope.



Blue Lagoon & Eden Tour

Discover a stunning blue lagoon, and visit Eden on the River on a day trip from Port Vila. Get to know the Pepeyo Cultural Village, enjoy a BBQ meal, and experience feeding turtles.

Glass Bottom Boat Tour & Snorkelling

Explore the Coral Reefs of Port Vila, onboard Vanuatu's largest Glass Bottom Boat.

Take a seat overlooking our unique glass bottom to explore the sights from below, while also viewing the Port Vila city and surrounding islands.



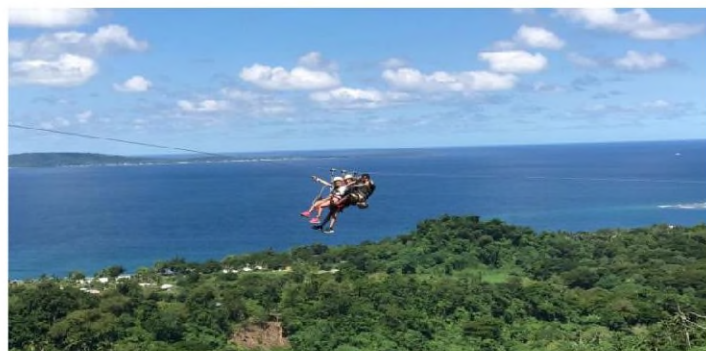
Vanuatu Jungle Skybridge



Experience an adrenaline rush at this stunning adventure park and cross the 120-meter Skybridge, located in a pristine rainforest canyon with an incredible ocean view.

Ride the Jungle Zipline

Explore the rainforest canopy as you fly high above the trees on a 1+hour zipline course. Fly over our canyon with views of our waterfall and the ocean. Take photos on the Skybridge. Amazing fun!



Port Vila City Tour



Discover the capital of Vanuatu on a guided tour of Port Vila. Learn about the island nation's colonial past, see popular attractions, and visit some of the bustling markets this town is known for. Encounter Port Vila life today, including the bustling Central Market and Mahitahi

Handicraft Market (sells Vanuatu-made handicrafts only).

Stops include lookouts, Parliament House, Council of Chiefs, Erakor landing, Independence Park as well as the market houses. The tour ends in town with a list of recommended shops and restaurants to discover.

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Recent Items from the Register

Items appearing in this section are summarized for general information only and for specific information and policy please always refer to our website and official circulars.

Your inquiries are always welcome. These may be directed to Vanuatu Maritime Services, Limited New York.



From the VMSL New York Safety Dept.:

Fleet Safety Letters

From our Safety Department in New York, recently issued:

Safety letters are applicable for the attention of ship-owners, ship managers, operators, Masters of Vanuatu-registered ships, and Recognized Organizations.

Attention is drawn to the following items on our website:

Fleet safety letter 01052024.GEN – Dated 1st May 2024

Re: Processing Fee Increase

Due to an increase cost of materials supplies there will be an increase of the processing Fee to \$45.00 effective 1 May 2024 which will include a QR Code for verification purposes on all electronic copies issued in the pdf format of any document by VMSL.

The reason for the QR Code on electronic copies is to shield the vessel from PSC issues regarding validity of electronic copies until the originals are placed aboard in accordance with our long standing FSL 121718.GEN.

Fleet safety letter 01042024.GEN – Dated 1st April 2024

Re: International Code of Safety for ships carrying industrial Personnel (IP Code)

With regard to the effective date of 1 July 2024 of the above mentioned code VMSL adopts the following procedure for compliance:

1. The following Recognized Organizations (ROs) have approval to survey Vanuatu Flagged vessels in regards to above mentioned Code:

- A. American Bureau of Shipping (ABS)
- B. Bureau Veritas (BV)
- C. DNV-GL (DNV-GL)
- D. Lloyds Register (LR)

2. Procedure to be followed:

- A. The RO will conduct the initial survey and submit the record of Equipment for Compliance with the International Code of Safety for Ships Carrying Industrial Personnel (IP Form) to VMSL-NY.
 - B. VMSL-NY will then issue the 5 year full term certificate.
 - C. The RO will conduct the annual interim surveys within the usual plus or minus the 3 month period most likely in conjunction with other surveys. The RO is authorized to make certificate endorsements for any annual/intermediate or periodical surveys.
 - D. The RO will repeat the process noted above for renewals.
-

Global Shipping News & Analysis

(Extracted from the Shipping Press, dedicated to the wellbeing of the worldwide shipping community, and all those.. 'who go down to the sea in ships, and occupy their business in great waters'..)

The Shadow Tanker Fleet – A setback for shipping's clean-up efforts

(Dateline 29th May 2024 - Reuters)



The growing shadow fleet of tankers transporting sanctioned Iranian, Venezuelan and Russian oil, is bunkering with the cheapest (high carbon) fuel available, thereby hindering industry efforts to use cleaner fuel to cut shipping emissions,

according to shipping data and sources.

The global shipping industry is under increasing pressure to use cleaner fuel to reduce both carbon and sulphur dioxide emissions and other pollutants and meet broader green targets.

Hundreds of tankers that are transporting sanctioned oil are posing a challenge since they are hard to track because of their opaque ownership and use of non-Western insurance and other marine services, and they have little incentive to follow cleaner shipping standards.

“You’re seeing greater numbers of ships that have found ways to circumvent sanctions by operating outside Western jurisdiction,” said Michelle Wiese Bockmann, principal analyst with maritime data group Lloyd’s List Intelligence.

“The dark fleet has gone on steroids. And the deceptive shipping practices that they’re engaging in are getting more and more complex and sophisticated.”

Those include dangerous ship-to-ship transfers of oil in international waters to avoid port state control scrutiny, falsifying ship identification numbers, tankers sending false information about their position, and the use of flag registries with lower standards of technical oversight and expertise, Bockmann said.

Lloyd’s List Intelligence estimates the shadow fleet had grown to around 630 tankers from 530 a year ago, to make up 14.5% of the overall global tanker fleet.

Some industry estimates put the number even higher, at over 800 tankers. The numbers increased rapidly following the Russian invasion of Ukraine in 2022 and Western curbs on Russian energy exports, which has led to ships being hit with sanctions.

Such growth has raised concerns about its environmental impact as well as safety and the effectiveness of sanctions, including a Western ban on shipment and trading of Russian oil priced above a \$60 per barrel limit. Under the so-called IMO 2020 convention adopted by the United Nations’ International Maritime Organization (IMO), ships have to switch to low sulfur fuel from the higher sulphur fuel diesel the industry has used for decades.

In Brief This Quarter (Strategic view)

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Panama Canal:

The Panama Canal Authority (ACP) will increase the current number of daily transits from 32 to 33, effective July 11. Furthermore, this number will increase to 34 as of July 22, following the current and



projected level of Gatun Lake for the coming weeks, and due to the arrival of the rainy season in the Panama Canal watershed.

Additionally, an increase in draft from 13.7 m to 14 m was announced, effective June 15.

The incoming new president of Panama has put water levels at the country's canal as one of his most important items on his agenda. Jose Raul Mulino will take office for a five-year term from July.

Alternative Fuels:

The demand for alternative fuelled vessels is showing substantial growth.

In a significant step towards environmentally friendly shipping, an innovative ship design for an **ammonia-fuelled** 3,500 TEU container vessel has received Approval in Principle (AiP) from classification societies, the American Bureau of Shipping (ABS) and Lloyd's Register (LR).

Meanwhile, in May 2024 alone, 33 new orders for alternative-fuelled vessels were placed, with **methanol-fuelled** vessels leading the pack, accounting for 23 of the total orders, according to DNV's Alternative Fuels Insight (AFI) platform. The majority of these orders are for the container segment, followed by bulk carriers and car carriers.

Methanol has been the standout, with 70 new orders placed in 2024, which accounts for 55% of all new orders for alternative fuelled vessels this year.

LNG-fuelled vessels continue to trail behind methanol, with eight new orders registered in the same period. The month also saw two new orders for ammonia-fuelled vessels, a promising sign of the rising interest in the fuel.

In Shipbuilding, we understand that South Korea's HD (Hyundai Heavy Industries Co. Ltd.) will set up operations in a former US naval base in the Philippines, an investment that may usher in the return of shipbuilding there.

A Philippine affiliate of US investment firm Cerberus Capital Management LP will lease a portion of a shipyard in Subic Bay Freeport Zone to HD Hyundai, the world's largest shipbuilder. HD Hyundai, which is also into heavy industry and energy sectors, will initially build offshore wind platforms in the yard.

In another story we understand that 'Trafigura' – a commodity trader, has placed an order for five VLCC newbuild tankers from China's New Hantong Shipyard – their first newbuild orders for VLCCs.

The first two new tankers are scheduled for delivery in 2026 and the remaining vessels in 2027, which will all be dual-fuel ammonia ready, the source added. It normally takes three years on average for vessels to be delivered from yards with the focus in recent years being on building container ships and LNG tankers due to sector booms.

In Container Shipping the sector has witnessed a record delivery of 1 million Twenty-foot Equivalent Unit (TEU) of container ship capacity in the first four months of 2024, an astounding 80% gain over the previous record, according to new figures released by BIMCO, the world's largest shipping association.

The gain follows a record 2.3 million TEU delivered in 2023, beating the previous all-time record by 37%.



The figures underline the rapid expansion of the containership fleet in the post-COVID 19 era, which has now grown 3.5% since the start of the year on top of last year's 8.2% fleet growth. The surge in deliveries has led to a decline in the containership sector's order book, which now stands at 6.1 million TEU, or 21% of the current fleet size,

still about double its size prior to the COVID pandemic.

Meanwhile, ([Dateline 3rd June 2024](#)) major liner operators are reporting severe terminal congestion in Mediterranean and Asian ports, resulting in extended waiting times at various ports, and liner schedules.

Since November, missile and drone attacks in the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden by the Yemen-based Houthis have forced services to reroute around the Cape of Good Hope. This has resulted in longer voyages and skyrocketing freight rates, despite a record number of new vessel deliveries.

Industry experts have been forecasting the ripple effects of rerouting around the Cape of Good Hope for months. These include bottlenecks, vessel bunching (where multiple ships arrive at the port simultaneously), and shortages of equipment and capacity.

A leading container consultancy has warned shippers of the very real prospect of spot rates surpassing \$20,000 per feu on the Asia-Europe trade.

Rates have leapt dramatically over the past month across the board to highs never experienced outside the pandemic era.

It appears that the **Crude Oil Tanker Market** is grappling with an ageing fleet of vessels which need to be replaced, posing a challenge as shipyards are focused on building other types of ships.

The crude tanker market, including VLCC 'supertankers', has remained strong in recent months partly due to longer voyages made by some vessels sailing via southern Africa amid Red Sea attacks by the Houthis, which has tightened availability.

In addition, up to 850 tankers are estimated to have left conventional trading to transport sanctioned oil including from Russia, Iran and Venezuela as part of the so-called shadow fleet.

In the **Offshore Energy Sector** Offshore drilling contractor Seadrill Limited reported a record day rate of USD545,000 for a one-well contract in the first quarter of 2024, the highest in the current cycle.

And *(Dateline Seoul 3rd June 2024)* South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol gave the green light on Monday to conduct exploratory drilling for potentially vast oil and gas prospects off the east coast of Korea, one of the world's largest energy importers.

There is a very high possibility the area contains as much as 14 billion barrels of oil and gas, Yoon told a press conference, citing a study that he said was reviewed by experts and industry groups.

The project, with an estimated cost of more than 500 billion won (\$363 million), will begin near the end of the year in the hope of finding energy reserves by the first half of next year, he said.

The site is off the southeastern industrial port city of Pohang, Yoon said, with an industry ministry official adding that the prospects are in South Korea's Exclusive Economic Zone.

The new prospects promise enough gas to fuel the country for 29 years and oil equivalent to four years of consumption, he added.

With minimal resources of fossil fuels, South Korea imports 99% of its coal, oil and natural gas supplies. Energy stocks in Seoul jumped on the news.

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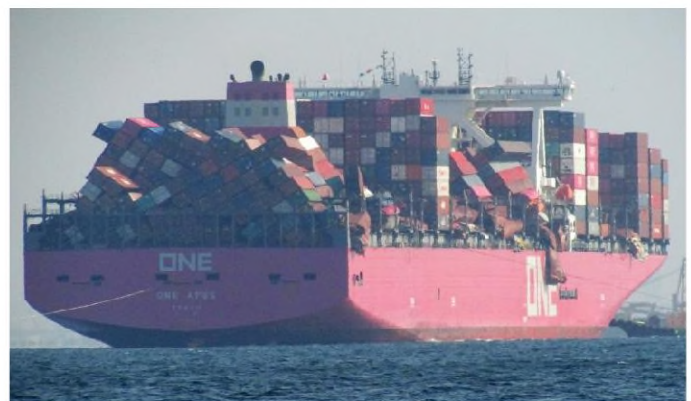
Late News:

(Breaking, late and ongoing news items which might be of interest to our readers)

New SOLAS Regulations – Reporting Containers Lost at Sea

(Dateline 3rd June 2024)

The World Shipping Council (WSC) has praised the approval of the recently adopted amendments to the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS), requiring mandatory reporting of all containers lost at sea.



The amendments were ratified last month by the International Maritime Organization's Maritime Safety Committee and are set to take effect from January 1, 2026. The changes aim to enhance maritime safety and environmental protection.

The new regulations have clear provisions for both the reporting by the Master of the Ship and for reporting details. The Master of a ship involved in the loss of containers must immediately report specific details to nearby ships, the nearest coastal state, and the flag State. For containers lost at sea, reports must be made as soon as possible, with updates as additional information becomes available. For observed drifting containers, reports must include the position and total number of containers spotted drifting.

It was reported that the average number of containers lost for the years 2020-2022 stood at 2,301 per year, a significant rise from the 779 lost on average each year during the previous three years (2017-2019).

A glimmer of hope from the Red Sea?

(Dateline 4th June 2024)



Closer international cooperation between naval missions in the Red Sea has reduced the number of attacks by Yemen's Houthis over the past week, according to Greek Shipping Minister Christos Stylianides in a recent interview. Greece is the home of the headquarters of the European Union's naval operation in the

Red Sea, which is dubbed "Aspides" and in Greek means "Shields."

"For us, it is a satisfaction that during the past week we see a notable reduction in the number and intensity of attacks. This is the reality," Stylianides said, speaking on the sidelines of the Posidonia shipping week in Athens.

"It is another proof that the international community with decisiveness can stop this."

Shipping has not seen such politically motivated attacks since World War Two, said Stylianides, a former EU Commissioner, adding that they have caused "tangible repercussions, geopolitically, commercially, legally, environmentally."

The recent reduction, he said, showed that Aspides and the U.S-led Operation Prosperity Guardian complement each other in helping restore freedom of trade in the area.

The Houthis have sunk one ship, the 'Rubymar', and seized another vessel. Three seafarers were killed in a separate attack.

Greece, which is leading the shipping sector in terms of tonnage, has also been affected, he said, adding that that was also a reason behind the country's decision to play a more leading role in the EU initiative.

Three ships hit by Houthis over the 8th/9th June weekend

(Dateline 10th June 2024)

An Antigua-flagged general cargo ship '*Noorderney*' was struck by a missile 83 nautical miles southeast of Aden and caught fire on Saturday. The fire was later contained. A second missile was sighted but did not hit the ship. Persons onboard small boats in the vicinity opened fire on the ship during the incident, according to UK maritime security consultants Ambrey.

Another incident 70 nautical miles southwest of Aden also took place on Saturday when the MSC-controlled 5,400 teu '*Tavvishi*' boxship was struck, with a subsequent fire onboard.

A third missile attack was reported on Sunday afternoon. The strike on the unnamed ship also resulted in a hit, but the vessel is proceeding to its next port of call. The incident occurred about 90 nautical miles to the southwest of Aden, near Djibouti.

On all three strikes, there were no casualties reported.

Another two ships were targeted on Friday, with no hits recorded.

More than 100 ships have been targeted by the Houthis from Yemen in their seven-month campaign against merchant shipping in a show of support with Hamas's ongoing war with Israel.

(Dateline 13th June 2024)

As we go to press, there is news of a missile attack on a bulk



carrier in the Gulf of Aden, with serious injury to one crew member:

The attack targeted the *M/V 'Verbena'*, a Palauan-flagged, Ukrainian-owned, Polish-operated bulk carrier that was carrying wood construction material from Malaysia to Italy. The ship was struck by two anti-ship cruise missiles fired by the Iranian-backed Houthis, causing damage and fires on board that the crew is currently battling.

The injured mariner received medical attention after being evacuated to a nearby partner force ship by aircraft from the *USS Philippine Sea (CG 58)*.

The United Kingdom Maritime and Trade Operations (UKMTO) reported earlier that a merchant ship had been hit by two projectiles, resulting in a fire. A third projectile later struck the vessel, causing minor damage. The crew, however, was able to control the fire and the vessel is now underway.

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We hope that you found this edition interesting and informative. **This Newsletter appears on our website, under the link 'NEW POST'**

Your feedback, comments and suggestions are always welcome, along with your contributions in the form of news, items of interest and photos etc. Please get in touch:

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Finally, as always:

Greetings from all of us in Vanuatu, VMSL and our Shipping Register worldwide. **Stay Safe and Well.**

Looking forward to your feedback, suggestions, comments, and contributions.

Back issues of our quarterly newsletter can be requested by email to the editor, who will be pleased to provide these online.

Why not mail us? – regular (snail) mail can be addressed to our Port Vila, New York, or Tokyo Offices, and any of our Assistant Commissioners and Special Agents worldwide. Envelopes should be marked: *'To the Flag Vanuatu Newsletter team'*.

Quotable quotes:

"Despite the challenges they face, seafarers continue to demonstrate remarkable resilience". – Rev. Andrew Wright, *Mission to Seafarers, Commenting on the slight improvement in the Seafarer's Happiness Index for Q1 (1st May 2024)*

"The world of tomorrow will witness a tremendous battle between technology and psychology. It will be a fight of technology versus nature, of systematic conditioning versus creative spontaneity." - Joos Meerloo – *Dutch Doctor of Medicine and psychoanalyst. 1903 – 1976. Author of several books including 'Delusion and Mass-Delusion.*

“The container market remains very tight with healthy demand, constrained vessel capacity, out-of-position boxes and congestion in Asia leading to a more frantic pace of bookings on the part of shippers and retailers,” - Jefferies investment bank - 10th June 2024.

“If you torture the data long enough, it will confess to anything” ,” – Pierre Aury - 10th June 2024 – the title to his article in the shipping press on all new tech and systems attempting to make shipping more efficient.



“Maybe this will crash the wifi network, but I would encourage people to pull out their phones and Google geologic hydrogen.” -Hamish Norton, President Star Bulk Carriers - speaking at the recent Geneva Dry conference on what is often referred to as ‘white gold’ or natural hydrogen, a potentially groundbreaking energy resource if scientific claims of multiple large deposits of possibly hundreds of years’ worth of energy reserves worldwide can be tapped into. – May 2024.

On Ammonia-Fuelled Vessel Design:

“To unlock the potential of sustainable ammonia as an alternative, low-emissions marine fuel, we must carefully address the safety issues on board and ensure a safe and healthy working environment for our seafarers and people in ports.” - Claus W. Graugaard, Chief Technology Officer, Onboard Vessel Solutions at the Mærsk Mc-Kinney Møller Center for Zero Carbon Shipping.

”The fundamental cause of trouble in the world is that the stupid are cocksure, whilst the intelligent have doubts” - Bertrand Russell, 1872 – 1970, British philosopher, logician, mathematician, historian, writer, social critic, political activist and Nobel laureate..



“Let China sleep, for when she wakes, she will shake the world” - Most often attributed to Napoleon Bonaparte, former leader of the French Republic, 1769 – 1821

Flag Vanuatu is a quarterly Newsletter, intended as a means of updating our readers on newsworthy/interesting items, important new legislation, policy, safety, and pertinent regulations. Brief snippets of ‘news’ also from our home country, The Republic of Vanuatu, and from the shipping community worldwide.

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Postscript



A Whale of a Job. .

Technology helping prevent ship whale strikes

Whales are magnificent, intelligent mammals whose life span can be as long as a human's. However, their lives can be cut short from impact by ships. As many as 80 whales are estimated to die each year off the West Coast of the US alone as a result of ship strikes, and about a third of all Right Whale deaths in the Atlantic are attributed to ship strikes. Sperm Whales in the Mediterranean are also listed as an endangered species, and ship strike is their leading cause of death. Whale avoidance will hopefully become top of mind for mariners.

As the world looks to new technologies to assist in whale avoidance, it is important to minimize impact on the whales and the environment.

As governmental regulations evolve, operating vessels near whales requires an understanding of the rules implemented to protect them. There should be strict adherence to safe practices that coincide with use of effective technologies.

NOAA (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration) of the US Department of Commerce, is taking steps to protect endangered North Atlantic Right Whales (NARW). They proposed rule changes in regard to vessel operation speeds around



these whales. Many other countries have similar regulations though the US is considered to have the most robust protections.

As with any marine regulations, it is the responsibility of the vessel operator to ensure that they are operating in accordance with local laws and regulations.

It is also important to consider other tools that can be used to detect and avoid whales such as 3D Forward Looking Sonar (FLS), coupled with above-water sensors such as radar and camera systems.

Some Whale Facts

There are two types of whales: baleen whales and toothed whales. Baleen whales, including **humpbacks** and **blue whales** have fibrous 'baleen' plates instead of teeth, which help them filter out and consume huge quantities of zooplankton or small prey like krill, fish or crustaceans. Whereas toothed whales such as **orcas**, **beluga** and **sperm whales** have teeth which enable them to feed on larger prey fish and squid.



Photo: Humpback whales

Humpback whales in the Southern Hemisphere do not eat for most of the year: They live off their fat reserves for 5 to 8 months each year, as they migrate from their tropical breeding grounds to the Antarctic to feed on krill.

All toothed whales have a 'melon' in their foreheads: It's a mass of tissue which focuses the whale's call, vital for communications and echolocation. Like bats, they use echolocation to 'see'.

There used to be thousands of blue whales in the Antarctic: Estimate to be over 225,000 before their exploitation in the 1900s, before the use of fossil fuel became widespread. Today, there are estimated to be less than 2,000 Antarctic blue whales left in the world.

The Antarctic blue whale is the largest animal on our planet: Weighing up to 180 tonnes (the same as about 36 elephants) and reaching up to 30 meters in length, they can consume about 4 tonnes of krill a day!

The marine community has to do something. The community hopes that someday Humpbacks will no longer be identified by their scars. It is the entire maritime community's responsibility to do what they can to protect our precious marine resources and sea life. There is technology that can help. It is time to look at what is available and how to incorporate it into navigation systems to limit the number of these tragic accidents.

Mariners might familiarize themselves with:

- How to spot whales
- How to determine whale species
- How to report sightings and to whom
- How to operate vessels safely around whales
- Relevant regulations in coastal areas and international waters
- Fundamentals of safe sonar operations around whales
- Understanding 3D FLS acoustics



Until next time then..

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