CONFEDERATION OF EUROPEAN SHIPMASTERS' ASSOCIATIONS

CESMA NEWS

SEPTEMBER 2026



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CESMA NEWS

SEPTEMBER 2026

CONFEDERATION OF EUROPEAN SHIPMASTERS' ASSOCIATIONS

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CESMA COUNCIL MEETING 24 SEPTEMBER 2026

The third on line CESMA Council meeting was done on 26.09.2026 from 14:00 to 15:00 CET. The agenda of the meeting was:

CESMA News June 2026

Global Compass Forum in Bulgaria September 08th – 09th, 2026

Other matters

The meeting was moderated by CESMA President Capt. Dimitrov. There were 8 participants. More than half of the member associations were missing in the meeting together with the Deputy and Vice Presidents.

Capt. Dimitrov announced the agreed agenda. He presented CESMA News June 2026 which is available on CESMA web site and already member associations confirmed the receipt of the paper copy and gave more information about the EMPA meeting in Ghent, Belgium and especially the information discussed about how Polish pilots use special tools to solve the problem with jamming and spoofing of GPS signals.

He proposed the council to create WhatsApp group for daily exchange of information. The webmaster Capt. Damir Lakos said he'll create the group.

Capt. Ardillon informed the participants that next CESMA AGA will take place in Hamburg 28th – 29th May 2027. Exact locations to be informed as soon available.

Capt. Ainars Aunstrum and Capt. Stig Sundberg commented the situation in the Baltic Sea with the dangers of shadow fleet operations. Capt. Damir Lakos shared his experience with pilotage of Korean ship passed the northern route.

Next CESMA on line council meeting will be at the end of October 2026.

Capt. Dimitar DIMITROV, PHD, FNI
CESMA President

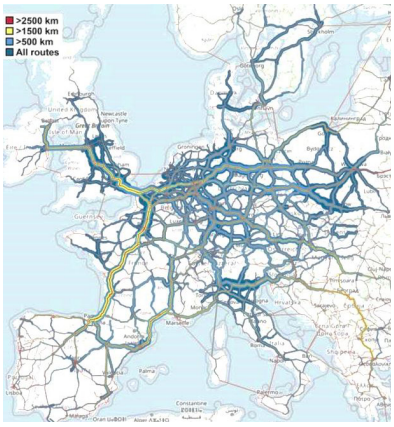
SEMINAR HOLD BEFORE 31ST ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY ON 29TH MAY 2026, AT ITSASMUSEUM, BILBAO, SPAIN

After some welcome words by Mr. Koldo GOITIA – Director of Basque Government Ports followed by Capt. Andima ORMAETXE – Presidency of Bilbao Port, the floor was given to the first speaker.

1st speaker, Capt. Andima ORMAETXE – In representation of Bilbao Port President

Title: Decarbonisation

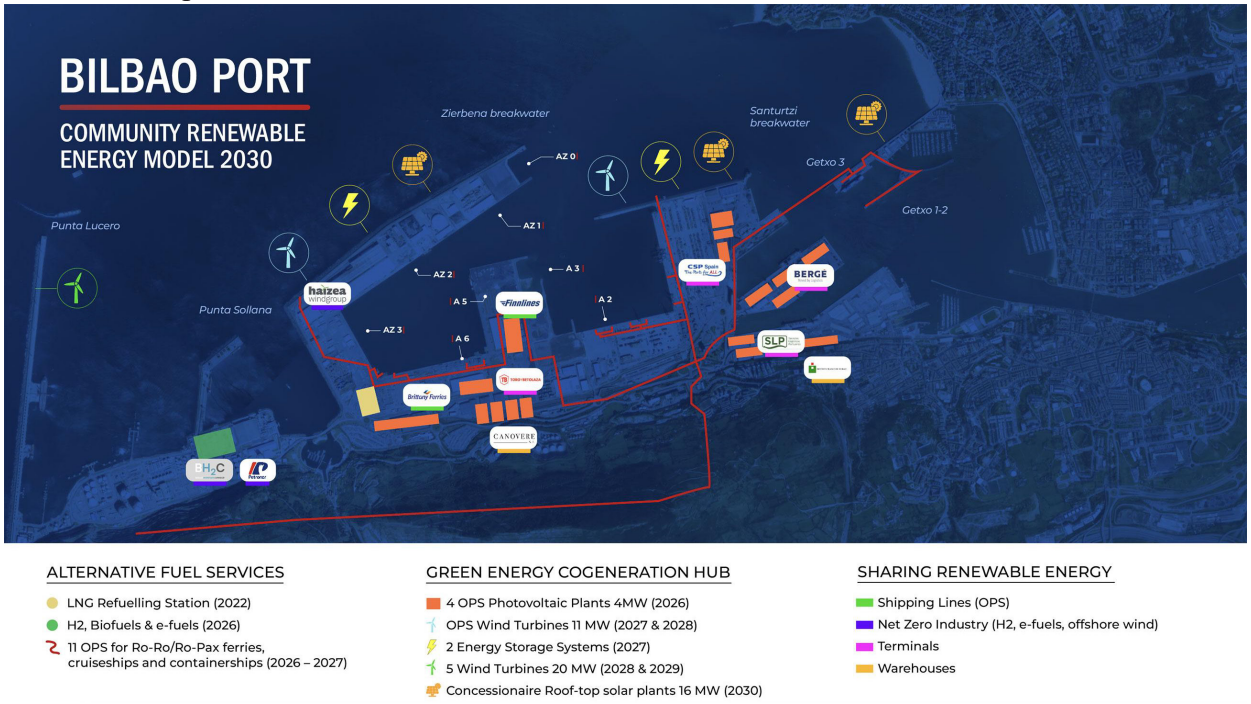
A first fact: over than 20,000 trucks cross the border with Europe every day.



The EU promotes mandatory measurement of emissions in transport and logistics: paving the way towards all-round environmental traceability. See initiatives of the European Commission: Count Emissions EU, an initiative to standardize the methodology for calculating greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in transport and logistics within the European Union; CSRD (Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive) that requires companies to report on environmental, social and governance issues; CSDDD (Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive the promotes sustainable and responsible business behaviour in companies' operations and global value chains.

There are several types of environmental impact from logistics, such as use of resources fossil fuels, human toxicity, ionizing radiation, depletion of energy resources, water depletion, ozone depletion, particulate matter, acidification, terrestrial eutrophication, land use, freshwater ecotoxicity, freshwater eutrophication, and marine eutrophication.

As a consequence, the future of maritime transport will be low-carbon. And the port of Bilbo is a good place to be one of the major ports for this change. Bilbao could be a hydrogen hub, with the decarbonisation of the local refinery, then the production of green hydrogen and its supply to northern Europe.

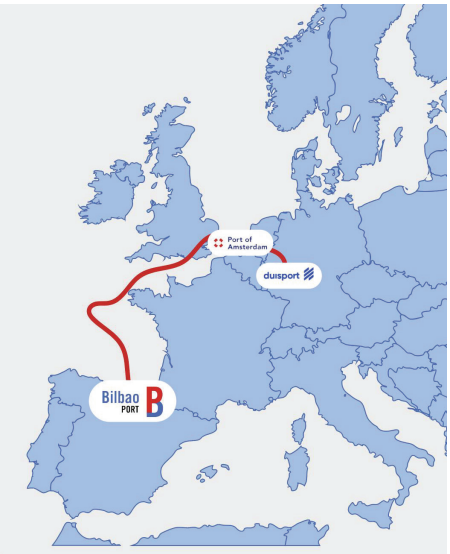


As an example, the A5 Dock is becoming a net zero ro-ro terminal:

- Equipped with an OPS system in the first quarter of 2026;
- Possibility of combining OPS/ZET technologies in parallel;
- Four PV solar plants have been put out to tender, which will be connected to the OPS grid;
- The possibility of additional PV solar power generation on the terminal rooftop is currently under study (Green Terminal);
- At least 50% of green energy could be produced locally, close to OPS connection points.

Bilbao area is a region with winds and sun in a sufficient quantity to produce synthetic fuels, using green hydrogen and CO_2 as raw materials that are sustainable fuels for cars, trucks, ships & aeroplanes without the needed for engines modifications.

Then the final economical goal is to become a strategic hub for the green hydrogen corridor. To do so, since 1991 the port has been investing to create new spaces (from 150 ha to 430 ha in 2025), berthing lines (from 13 km to 22 km in 2025), and the draught in commercial area (from 14 m to 21 m in 2025).



2nd speaker, Mrs. Caroline RUIZ, Basque Maritime Forum

Title: Maritime Cyber security: Situation and Trends

Digitalization is not only about technology.

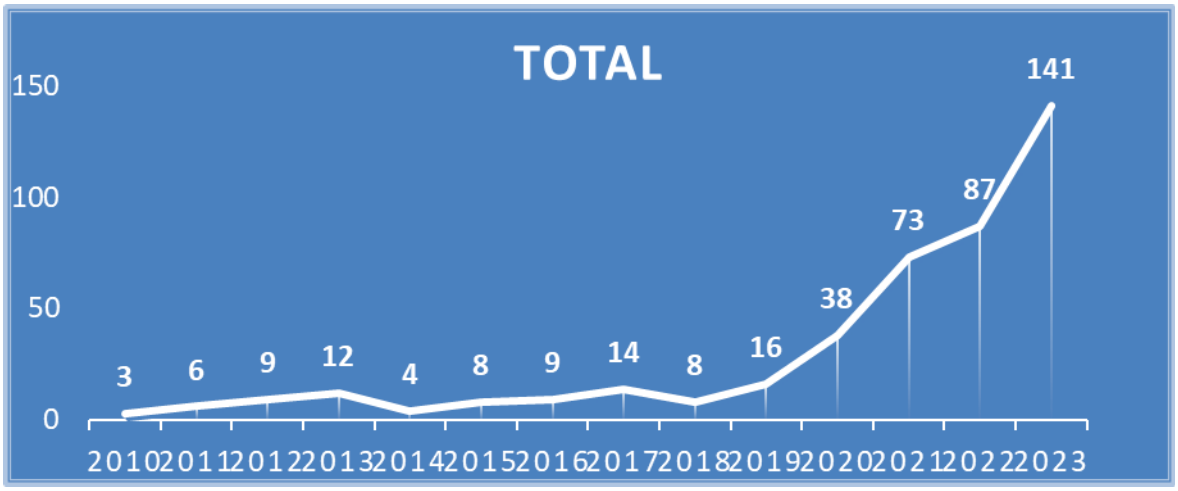
Digitalization is the process of converting information from a physical format to a digital one.

Digitalization refers to the use of digital technologies and data to create revenue, improve business, and create a digital culture where digital information as at the core.

Digital transformation is the cultural, organizational, and operational change of an organization by smart integration of digital technologies, processes and competencies across all levels and functions.

Smart, digital ships exist in many flavours: telemetric sensors, high degree of automation (IBS, IAS, DP, etc), connectivity satellite communication and data transfer ship/shore, sensor fusion and situational awareness capability, autonomous operations capacity; big data and the cloud; edge computing and real time data processing, support systems on board, remote monitoring and remote controlled operation capacity (navigational and machinery), cyber security.

Cyber security incidents have rapidly increased:



The common cyber incidents on ships are: AIS spoofing, GPS jamming and spoofing, phishing attack on financial and personal data, ransom ware attack on IT and OT systems, software defect causes system malfunction and intrusion attack with remote access.

The common vulnerabilities onboard are:

1- Inadequate security configurations

2- Safety critical equipment always connected with shore

3- Inadequate access controls for third parties

4- Outdated or missing antivirus software

5- IT/OT networks lacking boundary protection measures

6- Obsolete and unsupported operating systems

Typical improvement opportunities that are commonly found in the maritime and offshore industries:

- Managing vendor default accounts and passwords
- Configuration management
- Patch management
- Hardening secure remote connections
- Building a list of software & asset inventory
- Creating software topology (high level view of all connected systems)
- Completing the steps for continuous security information management system (ISMS)

Defence in depth ensures multiple barriers for operation, vessel and systems:

- Operation: Physical & procedural barriers protect vessel systems using physical access and procedures (patching, access cards, locked cabinets, maintenance scans, "human firewall")
- Ship: Ship barriers protect connection between zones & systems with remote access, segregation (firewalls, data diodes)
- System: System barriers protect the individual system with barriers such as encryption, user control and authentication, removable devices, event logging, backup and recovery, etc.

The Maritime Cyber Risk Management is the process of identifying, prioritizing, managing and monitoring risks to information and operational (IT/OT) onboard systems.

Companies across maritime industries depend on information and operational technology to carry out key vessel functions today, exposing them to cybercriminals, employee mistakes, extreme weather and other cyber security threats.

To conclude, Mrs. Caroline RUIZ presented some resources from DNV on cyber security.

3rd speakers, Capt. Antonio RAGGI, USCLAC, and Capt. Giovanni LETTICH, CNPC

Title: Global Navigation Satellite System (GNSS) Interference

GNSS (Global Navigation Satellite System) interference, including Jamming (signal obscuration) and Spoofing (sending false signals), has become a systemic threat to the safety of maritime navigation in 2025-2026.

Jamming: Intentional signal obscuration that blocks reception

Spoofing: The transmission of false signals to deceive a receiver's position or time

Impact: Results in severe operational risks such as grounding or collisions.

The most affected areas are linked to geopolitical tensions and conflict zones:

- Baltic Sea and Northern Europe: Strong disturbances attributed to Russian electronic warfare systems, impacting thousands of ships near Kaliningrad and St. Petersburg.
- Black Sea: "Severe" threat level for grain and oil transport, with frequent cases of ships being incorrectly displayed inland (as documented at the ports of Gelendzhik and Novorosslysk).

- Eastern Mediterranean and Red Sea: Massive interference linked to Middle East conflicts and operations in the Persian Gulf.
- Strait of Hormuz and Persian Gulf: Extern cases of spoofing reported where ships appear positioned in Iranian territory despite being in international waters.



The IMO has not yet issued a single specific regulation for spoofing but has integrated it into existing frameworks:

- **Resolution MSC.428(98)** obligates shipping companies to include cyber security in their Safety Management System (SMS). GPS risks must be treated as cyber operational risks.
- **SOLAS Chapter V, Regulation 19** mandates that ail ships must carry a GNSS receiver or a terrestrial radio navigation system to automatically establish the ship's position.
- **Resolution MSC.401(95)** defines performance standards for "multi-system" receivers, requiring equipment to be capable of combining signals from different constellations (e.g., GPS and Galileo) to improve the resilience and integrity of PVT (Position, Velocity, and Time) data.
- **Circular MSC.1/Circ.1575** provides guidelines for the delivery of resilient PNT (Positioning, Navigation, and Timing) data on board, introducing the concept of "integrity" to detect signal errors or manipulation.
- **Circular MSC.1/Circ.1644** urges Member States to minimize interference originating from their territories and to issue Warnings to Mariners (NOTAMs/Navigational Warnings) in the event of known disruptions.

<u>SMS Integration and Risk Assessment</u>

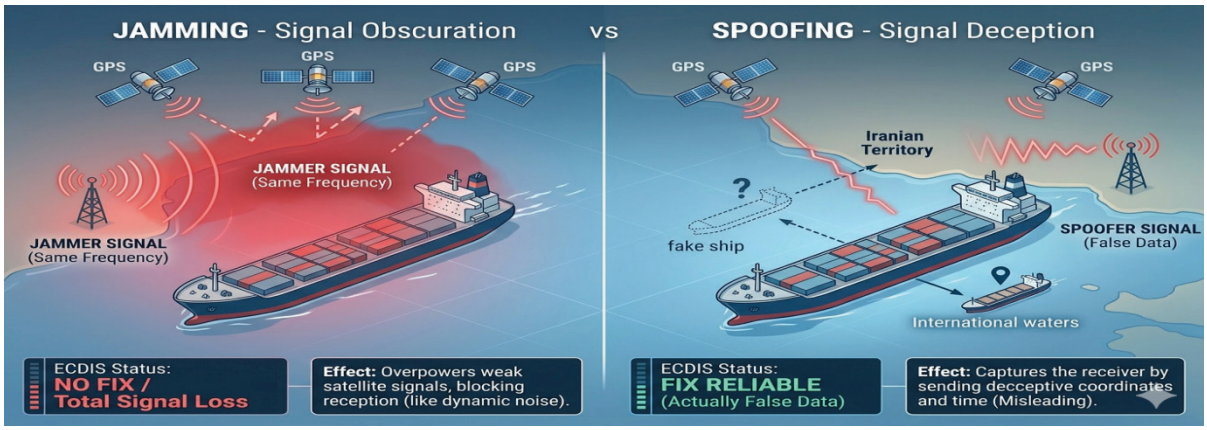
- **Asset Criticality:** Classify GPS-dependent systems: ECDIS, AIS, satellite communications, and Voyage Data Recorders (VDR).
- **Threat Analysis:** Document the probability of interference based on operational routes (e.g., Baltic or Red Sea).
- **Technical Protection:** Implement network segmentation to isolate navigation systems from general IT networks.
- **BIMCO Guidelines:** Many companies use the "Guidelines on Cyber Security Onboard Ships" as a reference

<u>Detection: Recognizing the Anomaly</u>

Jamming: Characterized by total signal loss or "No Fix" alarms.

Spoofing:

- Discrepancies between GPS position and radar/visual bearings.
- Sudden, unjustified jumps in speed and course.
- Time Sync Errors: Discrepancies in system time or GNSS atomic clock data.
- AIS Ghosting: Reception of multiple AIS targets for the same ship.



Operational Countermeasures for Navigators, to mitigate risks, authorities recommend a multi-level approach:

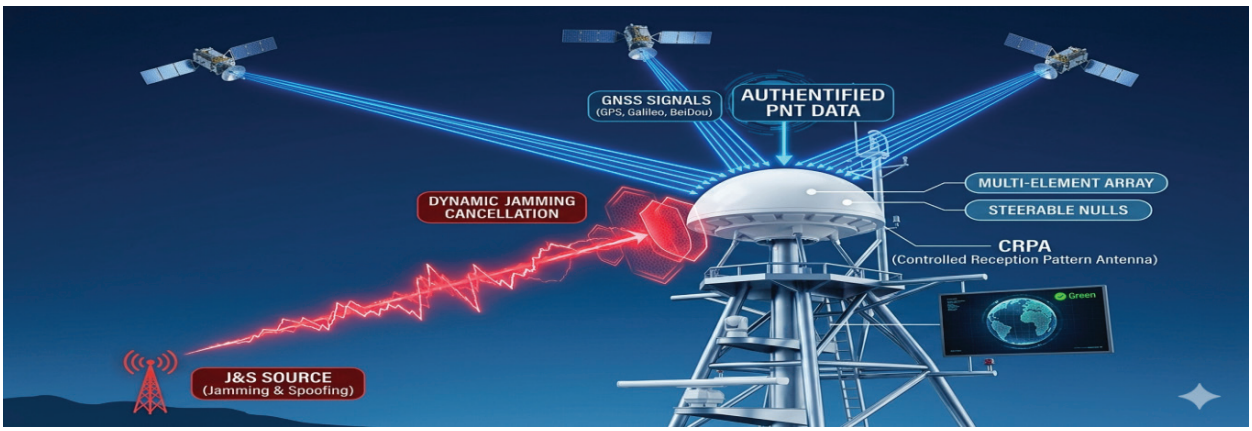
- **System Redundancy**: Use of multi-constellation receivers (GPS, GLONASS, Galileo) and integration with terrestrial systems or LEO satellites (such as Iridium PNT).
- **Cross-Checking**: Constant comparison of the GPS position with Radar (Parallel Indexing), Echo Sounder, and estimated navigation or visual bearings.
- **Antenna Technology**: Adoption of CRPA (Controlled Reception Pattern Antenna) to isolate valid signals and null out interference.
- **Manual Navigation**: Disconnect GNSS input from ECDIS and switch to dead reckoning.

<u>Emergency Response and Reporting:</u>

- **Urgency Message:** Use “PAN PAN” on VHF Channel 16 to warn that AIS data and GPS position are unreliable.
- **Visibility Actions:** Turn on navigation lights (even in daylight) and use sound signals to avoid misleading other vessels.
- **Incident Reporting:** Record coordinates and type of disturbance in the Logbook and notifies NAVAREA coordinators and local coastal authority.
- **Forensic Evidence:** Photograph ECDIS error screens and save VDR data for investigation. In case of serious incident
- **Maintenance:** Use GNSS receiver’s user manual to identify specific error codes related to signal integrity (e.g., RAIM alarm).

<u>Anti-Jamming Technology and Future</u>

- **Digital Filtering:** Digital Signal Processing (DSP) identifies and suppresses interference.
- **Inertial Integration:** Use of motion sensors (INS) to maintain navigation when satellite signals are absent.
- **Diverse Applications:** Technology is critical for drones (UAV), critical infrastructure, and defence.
- **Future Trends:** Development of AI-based threat detection and more compact, economical solutions for the civil market



*This image is illustrating how **CRPA (Controlled Reception Pattern Antenna)** technology works in a maritime environment:*

- ***The Ship's Mast:** Features a complex mast structure supporting a prominent, white, dome-shaped antenna labeled **"CRPA."***
- ***The Defense Mechanism:** Shows multiple satellites emitting **clean blue laser-like beams** (representing multi-constellation signals: GPS, Galileo, BeiDou) that are successfully received by the dome and filtered into a secure data core.*
- ***The Interference Control:** A chaotic, jagged **red signal** originates from a shore-based jammer source far below (the "J&S Source"). As it approaches the antenna dome, a **red, hexagonal energy barrier** dynamically blocks and "nulls" the interference, labeled **"DYNAMIC JAMMING CANCELLATION"***

GPS Anti-Spoofing Technology: Receiver Autonomous Integrity Monitoring (RAIM)

- It verifies the integrity of GPS signals.
- It checks wither positioning date is reliable or affected by faults.
- It warns operators of dangerous positioning errors caused by anomalies or spoofing.
- Satellite Redundancy Requirements: without minimum of 5 satellites: Fault Detection (FD), detection of an error and triggering a 'lost integrity' alarm; without a minimum of 6 satellites: Fault Detection and Exclusion (FDE), identification and exclusion of the faulty satellite while navigation continues.

Correct Alarm Configuration:

- Enable 'RAIM Not Available' or 'Integrity Alarm' in GNSS/ECDIS settings
- Set HAL according to navigation area Set Horizontal Alarm Limit (HAL) according to navigation area (0.1 to 0.5 mile offshore, 10 to 25 meters in coastal or port area)
- Set visual alarms for Horizontal Dilution Of Precision (HDOP) values above 4

Operational benefits of RAIM:

- It detects signal anomalies early
- It reduces spoofing impact by isolating faulty signals
- It supports IMO Resolution MSC.401(95) compliance
- It improves bridge situational awareness

4th event, open discussion

Title: Hormuz Strait

For CESMA captains, what are the most important problems we could have? At time of AGA, there are more than 200 vessels trapped in the Arabian Persian Gulf (APG), that means more than 20 000 seafarers who have a lot of problems, as to get some supplies (food and water), also reliefs problems. Under some flags, there are still reliefs, for officers and crews, but this is not for all flags and not for all companies.

Consequently for seafarers, it is a physical problem and it is also a psychological problem, a very big one as no relief, no or poor information or communication with family, or even with the company. And even in case of facilities of communication, are the news get on internet true or false? And those information, from company or internet, can affect the psychological state of the seafarer. As an example, it is possible to learn on internet that the strait will reopen very soon, and to heard or to see very soon after some bombs or missiles. So the mental condition of the seafarer is like Russian mountains, going up and suddenly down.

Of course, that affects the seafarer to be able to continue to work, even if some maintenance on main engine cannot be done while the vessel should be ready for maneuvering urgently.

The company could ask captain to be relieved before his/her end of contract, but what about the other crew members? Captains can say yes to be relieved, but some refuse because they are the captain and they prefer to stay with the crew, not to "abandon" the crew in those conditions of security. Of course for a relief, there is another problem: to find a reliever.

Even if for some journalists, the situation in the APG is very good for seafarers because double salary (even if this not exactly the case as only basic wage is taken in consideration) and that there is a huge queue of seafarers to join vessels trapped in APG.

And the situation also affects the seafarer's family. Families get more news on the TV and newspapers, and they can do some requests for relief. But when contacting the seafarer, the answer is often negative because the seafarer wants to stay up to the end of the contract. In Croatia there were 225 seamen at the beginning of the war, and few days before this AGA 180 only, and since the beginning of the war, there were only four requests to the union.

Families need also to receive some psychological helps or advises, but there is nothing about that for the moment.

It seems also that many seafarers are now relatively happy because they get a little bit more money, the supplies came to ships, and there is a form of stability. At the beginning the situation was an emergency, now it is becoming more a normalized situation.

The biggest question is the freedom of navigation. This is one of the major concerns of IMO Secretary General. If we allow payment for transit now, who knows where it will stop, it would be of great concern to shipping for a long term.

There is something particular for the captain. Several weeks after being relieved, one captain said that when he was on board, he preferred to stay with his crew. There were noises of bombs and he has to manage all the crew. And this needs to be very concentrated: to speak with everyone, to know the feeling of every crewmember. A captain does that on a daily job, but not at this level. Now it is different, because crew members have questions about moving the vessel. For the captain it is a hard situation: to manage and to give a positive attitude to the crew even if the personal feeling is not so positive.

Another important question is the protection of the master's overriding priority. Possibly owners are pushing vessels to exit the APG, but automatically the master must have the final authority, because the master is living with the crew. If the master says that it is not safe to exit

the APG, the crewing management could agree. But there is also the commercial management. And the master could revive a very strong pressure to try to exit, arguing that there are discussions under way with Iran, but no one could ensure that the Revolution guards posted in the strait are included in the discussions.

It is a critical point to note that the master has the overriding authority. At the same time, he cannot forget the pressure. All information, from every entities crew or commercial should be shared with the master in order for him/her to take the best decision. And we have to recognize that company has probably access to more information than we do as master on board.

Another problem for the reliefs: flights are more expensive. And companies have stopped reliefs in that area. It is also a problem of budget. Some companies do not deliver supplies, there are complain to ITF on the subject. Even some companies stop to give the wages.

It is a general concern for ITF, some companies are feeling the financial impact to supply the ships, so there is a risk of high level of abandon ships, and the number is already going up.

Information from Lloyds, insurers have taken out the insurance of the vessel which intends to cross the strait. This should be taken in account by the master because without any insurance if the owner requires vessel to transit through the strait, there is a bigger risk for the master, considering the risk to lose the vessel. This is why it is important, in this particular area, to underline that the master has still the overriding authority. How can the master actually make his/her decision without all information, with crew issues, with charterer issues?

This is why we draw a special resolution of that particular subject. We do not see the end coming.

Captain Hubert Ardillon
Secretary General

SHIPBUILDING, MACHINERY, and MARINE TECHNOLOGY (SMM) 01ST to 03RD SEPTEMBER 2026, HAMBURG, GERMANY

CESMA was represented at SMM Hamburg by Capt. Wilhelm MERTENS, VDKS.

Time lines for S-100 ECDIS:

2026 to 2027: S-100 development continues – including testing and sea trials

2028: First S-100 hardware expected to be ready. S-100 ECDIS type approval expected

2029: New IMO performance standard introduced. All new ECDIS installs need to be capable of displaying S-100

2030 onwards: Gradual industry transition. ‘Dual fuel’ approach with S-57 and S-100 operating in parallel.

How the UK Hydrographic Office is putting mariners at the heart of next-generation navigation solutions

Navigation is entering a new, more digital and data-driven era. Where mariners once relied on paper charts and printed publications, today’s bridge is increasingly connected, bringing together a growing range of digital tools and data sets. These new navigation solutions are giving mariners access to more timely and granular information than ever, offering new opportunities to strengthen decision-making, improve safety and unlock operational efficiencies.



Digital navigation is becoming more integrated and data-driven

Realising these benefits, however, depends on more than simply adding more data to the bridge. To improve safety and truly add value, next-generation solutions must be grounded in the real-world experience of mariners and designed to enhance professional judgement rather than replace it. The priority for the UK Hydrographic Office (UKHO) is ensuring that additional information translates into greater confidence at sea, not greater complexity.

This means working closely with the people who rely on accurate navigational information every day and designing solutions based on their needs and workflows. From the way information is accessed during passage planning to how new data sets are displayed on ECDIS, the UKHO is working to ensure that mariners are empowered to gain greater clarity and make more informed decisions.

Improving access to navigational information

One of the most significant shifts already underway in the maritime sector is the move from digitized products to truly digital-first products. This transition is not just for the sake of digitalisation, but to improve how mariners can access and use navigational information, both during passage planning and at sea.

Admiralty Digital Sailing Directions (ADSD) is a clear example of this shift in practice. ADSD delivers the same trusted content as traditional Admiralty Sailing Directions, but in a new geo-referenced, searchable digital format. Crucially, ADSD hasn't changed the purpose or the content of the publications; it has simply made information easier to find, helping to streamline the passage planning process and freeing up valuable time for navigators.

Advances in technology are also opening new ways for mariners to engage with navigational information before they even set sail. Using the latest advances in gaming engine technology, the UKHO is currently developing Admiralty Virtual Ports (AVP). This will give mariners the opportunity to experience a 3D model of a port ahead of arrival, building familiarity with the local environment and increasing situational awareness once underway.

Both ADSD and AVP demonstrate how digital technology can enhance the navigator's role without replacing professional judgement. Developed in close consultation with mariners, these solutions are designed to give navigators greater access to relevant information, helping them build a clearer picture of their surroundings and make informed decisions with confidence.

Integrating new data sources

As the volume of navigational data continues to increase, ensuring information is accessible to mariners will become an even higher priority. The introduction of the IHO's S-100 data framework

marks a major step in the evolution of navigational information, bringing together richer, more granular navigational data in an interoperable format. Where mariners have traditionally needed to consult multiple, separate references for tidal, surface current and bathymetric data, S-100 will allow this information to be layered directly within ECDIS in a single view, offering enhanced situational awareness on the bridge.

The availability of richer, integrated information on ECDIS can bring clear benefits to mariners, but only when presented clearly. More data is only useful if it can be interpreted quickly and confidently, or else it risks introducing increased complexity. To meet this challenge, the UKHO has been carrying out comprehensive S-100trials. Working with mariners across a wide range of vessel types in both live and simulated navigational scenarios, the UKHO has been evaluating how new data sets perform in real operational conditions.

These trials are providing invaluable feedback, not just on S-100 data itself, but on how it should be displayed and how systems can function to make the data easier to interpret and act on. Insights from the trials are also being used to inform the design of training programmes, ensuring mariners are properly supported as S-100 systems are introduced.

Supporting the future of navigation

Ensuring new navigation solutions reflect the real-world needs of mariners is essential if the transition to the next generation of navigational technologies is to be safely and successfully achieved.

This means the development of these technologies must be rooted in the realities of day-to-day operations, requiring sustained collaboration between hydrographic offices, technology providers, regulators and the mariners who will use these tools everyday. Industry events such as SMM play a central role in facilitating these cross-sector conversations, bringing together the people who are shaping the future of navigation to share insight, challenge assumptions and align on best practices.

This week, the UKHO is running its Future of Navigation Forum at SMM, a dedicated programme of seminar sessions and panel discussions exploring the innovations, technical standards and wider changes affecting the maritime sector.

Visitors were also invited to visit the UKHO's exhibition stand (B6.303) to see this next generation of navigation in action, including hands-on demonstrations of ADSD and AVP, alongside live S-100 data displayed in ECDIS.

As the maritime industry moves towards a more connected, data-rich future, the UKHO is committed to ensuring that new solutions strengthen, not replace, the expertise of mariners, equipping them with the information they need to navigate with confidence.

Captain Wilhelm MERTENS
VDKS, Germany

INTERNATIONAL MARITIME FORUM
GLOBAL COMPASS 2026
SEPTEMBER 8-9 at VARNA, BULGARIA

Visionary and Actionable Horizons:
Turning Maritime Policy into Safe, Efficient and Sustainable Practice

Introduction by Capt. Stanislas STOYANOV, Chairman of Bulgarian Shipmasters Association (BSMA)

Global Compass is a platform for communication between business, administrations, non-profit organizations and education centres.

Our goal is to align our compass with global trends and present the challenges and opportunities for the maritime industry.

2026 highlights: more than 160 participants and international speakers; from Sea to Space: Bulgarian innovation in action; Blue whale "Star" at Anton Novak Square; wide media and maritime-platform coverage.



NO SHIPPING = NO SHOPPING

Several panels were on the program:

Panel 1: GEO-POLITICAL CHALLENGES IN SHIPPING

Panel 2: PORTS & TEREMINALS: OPERATIONS AND ADVANCEMENT

Panel 3: MARITIME INNOVATION & TECHNOLOGY

Panel 4: SEAFARER'S HEALTH, SAFETY, AND SKILLS

And a special panel: FROM SEA TO SPACE – BULGARIAN INNOVATION IN ACTION INDUSTRY, DEFENCE, EDUCATION, AND EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES

Hereafter will be the report of the first part of panel 4, where CESMA was invited to speak. Others panels would normally be in next CESMA NL.

Panel 4 – Seafarers' Health, Safety, and Skills
Moderator Andreana IVANOVA MICS – Cargill, Laytime and Invoice Operator

Speaker 1: Capt. Andrew COOK, FNI, Secretary General IFSMA

Topic: The Human at the Sharp End

Shipping is changing and the Human Role is changing too:

- Automation & AI – more decision support, less direct control
- De-carbonization: new fuels, new hazards, new competence requirements
- Cyber security: the unseen risk, new competence requirements
- Geoppolitical risk: disruption, security and incidents
- Regulation & complexity: more systems to understand and manage

However, none of these pressures removes the human element. They increase its importance

The Automation Paradox

- Skill degradation: if the system normally does the job, do we retain the ability to do it?
- Automation bias: will the human challenge a system that appears confident?
- Loss of situational awareness: can the human understand what the system is doing when it matters?

The less frequently humans intervene, the harder effective intervention will become.

Automation does not remove risk, it moves it.



The key question is not "**Can the system operate?**"

It is "**Who has the responsibility, the authority and the situational awareness?**"

MASS makes this a **current** regulatory and operational question, not a distant future scenario.

What does the future seafarer need?

- **Technical**: Ship & operational competence
- **Digital**: Data systems and connectivity
- **Systems**: Understanding automation and its limitations
- **Human Factors**: Decision making, workload, and intervention
- **Leadership**: Authority, judgement, and communication

Training must prepare seafarers for intervention, NOT just the routine operation

Five principles for the human-centered ship:

1. Authority: The human can intervene

2. Competence: The human can intervene effectively

3. Understanding: The human understands the system and its limitations

4. Wellbeing: Safety includes physical and psychological health

5. Responsibility: It must be matched by the resources to discharge it

Technology will not make the seafarer irrelevant; it MUST make the seafarer more capable.

Speaker 2: Mrs. Zaloa SANCHEZ VARELA, AFNI, University of Split, Croatia, Professor Assistant, Faculty of Maritime Studies, ZHUPK, Croatia

Topic: Safety at Sea is not Gender-Neutral: from Evidence to engineering change for women seafarers

Women still account for only about 1% of the global seafaring workforce.

How has the maritime sector responded?

Gender equality – Diversity and inclusion – Recruitment of women – Retention and career progression

By using policies, awareness, leadership programs and anti-discrimination measures; IMO Women in Maritime Program or IMO-WISTA initiatives or Industry DEI (Diversity, Equity, Inclusion) programs.

But what happens once women are on board?

Are our ships designed for everyone who works on board? Several subjects are concerned: accommodation, workspaces, controls and equipments, personal protective equipment (PPE), emergency systems, health provisions, and safety culture.

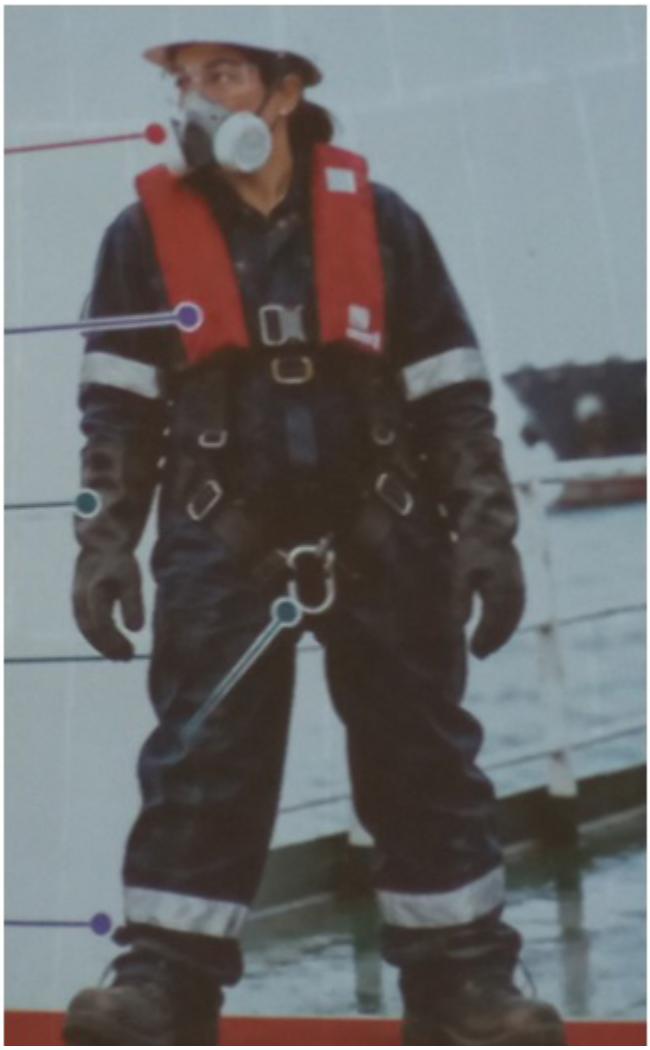
The question is not only how to bring more women to sea, but whether the maritime workplace is designed to keep them safe.

Accommodations should be private, comfortable and dignified facilities; workplaces should have an ergonomic layout and an adequate working place; controls and equipments with visibility and usability for everyone, PPE with a proper fit and comfort for all body types, emergency systems should have inclusive alarms, communication, and evacuation arrangements, health provisions should include access to appropriate healthcare and support; safety culture should show an inclusive leadership and zero tolerance for bias.

Review of women seafarer's safety: 5 recurring safety gaps where the system does not always accommodate the full user population:

1. PPE and protective equipment: PPE designed for men does not become suitable for women simply by making it smaller. More than 80% of women reported gender-related PPE problems. The consequences of oversized gloves, boots and boiler suits are reduced grip, trips, snagging, and impaired dexterity. The respirators, harnesses and life-saving appliances, with an incorrect fit can directly reduce protection
2. Ship and accommodation design: difficulties to reach controls, panels and storage. Valves, hatches and doors may require higher force than achievable for some women. Tasks assume higher strength and can increase fatigue and injury risks. Insufficient privacy and inadequate sanitary provision on board. Ships are not always equipped or stocked for women's health needs
3. Interpersonal safety: harassment, bullying, sexual misconduct, fear of retaliation, under-reporting
4. Occupational and reproductive health: fatigue, mental health, occupational exposure, reproductive and menstrual health, maternity and rotation arrangements
5. Reporting and redress: The evidence repeatedly identifies under-reporting as a major problem, this is where technology (mobile phone) may become part of the safety solution

What does this look like on board?



Poor fit turns protective equipment into a risk factor.

Smaller men's PPE is not the same as PPR designed for women. A smaller size does not guarantee a safer fit.

A poor fit of PPE does not match the worker, the consequence is a reduced task performance (less comfort, mobility, dexterity or seal), then a higher exposure to injury risk, which means a safety margin reduced.

From describing problems to engineering solutions

- **People**: Collect representative anthropometric data of women seafarers; establish accommodation ranges for safety-critical dimensions; translate ranges into PPE requirements and performance criteria; procure or design PPE that fits the full user population.
- **Workplace**: Controls (accessible and usable); reach (within comfortable reach envelopes); force (acceptable force requirements); manual handling (safe limits for lift, carry or move); accommodation (privacy, rest, sanitary and storage needs); emergency systems (usable by all in real conditions). The goal is to design the system for its users, not to make the worker adapt better.
- **Reporting**: A reporting system should reduce the risk of reporting. A seafarer who experiences or witnesses an unsafe situation can report without revealing identity, the report is recorded through an encrypted storage and privacy protection, outside the shipboard chain of command which guarantees neutrality and impartiality.

To conclude: A safer ship for women is a safer ship for everyone.

Speaker 3: Capt. Hubert ARDILLON, Secretary General, CESMA

Topic: Seafarers Health, Safety and Skills

In my opinion, the title of should not be put as it is, but contrary: Skills, Safety, and then Health.

SKILLS

The maritime sector is sailing through rapid technological advancements and constantly evolving global safety and security standards. Vessel technology and port operations are evolving, and with them, the knowledge and skills required for seafarers, even if this evolution is lagging behind the technology found in ships freshly issued from the shipyard.

Shipboard technologies have evolved. In a relatively short time, we have moved from traditional navigation methods – which had seen little fundamental change since the discovery of how to calculate longitude to the advent of satellite positioning.

The same applies to marine engineers, even though automation concepts have transformed how machinery is operated. Yet, the need to get one's hands dirty remains.

Consequently to this evolution, the current traditional approach to seafarer training is no longer sufficient.

In a constantly evolving environment that is struggling to attract recruits and facing a shortage of officers, the industry must shift from merely providing necessary crew training to fostering a culture of "crew quality."

Technology continues to advance; there is talk of new fuels (ammonia, hydrogen, nuclear) and new propulsion systems (electric and of course wind, even if wind can't be considered as a new and modern method, having been used long before fossil fuels). Discussions also cover decision-support systems, whether on board or from shore, made possible by today's highly accessible communication technologies. Added to this is the need for specific knowledge regarding human behavior, health, and well-being on board, such as how to spot harassment or how to approach sensitive and/or personal conversations. In short, there is a new set of skills to be acquired.

How to acquire these skills:

Experienced officers must stay up to date with new developments through self-study or training courses.

Junior officers receive education on these new developments directly at maritime academies.

Problem 1: Continuing education cuts into time spent on shore leave or rest periods at sea.

Problem 2: Initial education at the academies. This requires course materials, qualified instructors, and a substantial number of hours for lessons - potentially ended by an exam to ensure the young seafarer is properly trained, prepared, and ready to understand and intervene in the event of an incident.

However, going back when I was young, the studies required to be qualified as a senior officer - excluding the sea time (as an officer) needed to convert the diploma into a formal certificate of competency - already took five years, including the onboard training periods as a cadet and then apprentice officer.

So, while we could add new skills to the academy curriculum, how do we fit it all into the same number of years and total lessons hours? We would have to cut or reduce certain lessons, or else to minimize the lessons and rely instead on the on-the-job learning at sea.

Solution 1: To lower the required level of basic knowledge.

Solution 2: To eliminate certain areas of knowledge - but which ones?

Solution 3: To increase the number of years of study.

Solution 4: A combination of the first two solutions.

Does this mean we should eliminate older forms of knowledge from the training curriculum? For instance - and this is no trivial matter - should we continue teaching position-fixing using a sextant?

It is reasonable to ask this question. Yet, experience suggests that if GPS systems fail, one is quickly lost, lacking the ability - or having forgotten how - to determine one's position by any means other than reading a screen. When navigating at open sea, adjusting the compass to the nearest tenth of a degree based on the track deviation from the GPS-calculated route, one might seriously question the merit of such a suggestion.

And the same applies to machinery: switching to manual operation requires at least a fundamental understanding of the system in question.

SAFETY

What does safety mean?

Safety means working according to proven standards and procedures. It also means being prepared and trained to handle incidents or high-risk situations. It involves being physically fit and well-rested - we think more clearly and make more measured decisions when we are rested. It also means working in an environment free from stress (whether physical or mental). And - perhaps most importantly - it means knowing what you are talking about and mastering your subject matter, the knowledge that is coming from years of formal education.

Training is important, crucially important. "Basic" knowledge is enough to understand what is happening, but the right reaction is learned through experience, both one's own and that of others.



And there are two kinds of training:

Training on a specific device or system, for example ECDIS. You can learn at school what an ECDIS is, the information it is supposed to provide, and the underlying theory and applications. However, every ECDIS has its own operating mode and display layout. Consequently, specific training on that particular model becomes necessary, essentially every time you join a new ship.

This marks a huge difference compared to aviation: an A300 cockpit is an A300 cockpit. On ships, however, and even for sister ships, nothing is ever exactly the same. Navigational aids on the

bridge could be not identical, and in some cases, even not located in the same spot on the bridge. Therefore, that needs to start the training process almost from scratch.

Training for potential incidents – or how to react - encompasses all the safety drills mandated by the ISM Code. However, there are also watch duties, maintenance tasks, and, above all, the management of work and rest hours. Consequently, time allocated for training must not interfere with these other obligations (watches, maintenance); as a result, it is often carved out of rest time. This creates a risk: the drive for efficiency can lead to drills becoming too "soft" or routine. The drill, or a specific type of drill, ends up always being the same. This poses a danger when a real incident occurs, as the crew is conditioned for routine, even in extreme situations. Inadequate training is a factor behind the rise in incidents and accidents, such as those involving entry into enclosed spaces. Ideally, drills should constantly innovate by introducing unforeseen variables. Muster lists are designed so that crew members know not only their own roles but also those of the person listed immediately before them. But is this actually the case if a participant is removed from the list?

So, introducing variables, such as a firefighter being absent (due to injury), ensures the drill isn't always the same...

The ISM Code was created to simplify and to make safer the task. Simplify it? Yes, but in reality, it expanded the workload and made it more burdensome, the exact opposite of what was hoped for. Implementing the ISM Code correctly takes time, time we don't have on board. That is why we have seen, and will continue to see checklists filled out in haste, either before or even after the work has actually been done.

That is why the ISM Code needs to be properly and thoroughly taught in maritime schools. I belong to the generation that saw the ISM Code arrive on ships gradually; this gave us time to read, reflect, and digest the numerous procedures that arrived at almost every port of call. Time was on our side. In contrast, those who arrived later, as it is still the case, found themselves joining ships where the ISM system was already fully established and had been running for years; they had to absorb the entire system in a very short time, usually just before the next inspection or audit.

Finally, and this leads into the next point, there is the need to be in good physical and mental health, and well-rested.



HEALTH

A ship is a hazardous environment. She can encounter adverse weather and sea conditions that severely hinder her safe operation. It may also find herself in areas plagued by conflict, piracy, or disease outbreaks. As if that were not enough, the cargo itself can pose risks: explosives, fire

hazards, shifting, or even contentious disputes. Consequently, numerous factors can impact a seafarer's health.

Admittedly, there have been significant positive changes, facilitated by improved communication, regarding the treatment of illnesses and injuries through professional medical assistance. Even now it is possible to call for a traumatic. The relevant knowledge is imparted in maritime schools and during specialized medical training courses.

Today, there is greater focus on seafarer well-being and mental health, including issues such as harassment. While well-being may have been sidelined in certain sailing zones, where survival took precedence, the matter has been addressed. The Maritime Labour Convention (MLC) has led to the establishment of seafarer welfare boards in various ports. There is still work to be done, of course, but progress has been made. That said, going ashore during port calls remains very difficult, if even impossible, due to work schedules; seafarers often operate on a "6 hours on/6 hours off" rotation, leaving little time to go ashore while also getting enough sleep. And that is without mentioning crews on coastal vessels, which are often too small to ensure safe navigation.

Issue of onboard access to the internet, news, and social media: being able to communicate freely with family and friends is beneficial. The advent of email communication significantly changed my life as a seafarer living far from my loved ones. Staying informed about what is happening with those close to you is comforting, because you know, but it can also be worrying, as there is nothing you can do about it. It can also create a sense of helplessness and a drop in morale when bad news arrives in real-time, rather than being delivered by the captain, who might have known how inform it more gently. This is especially true regarding social media, which it must be acknowledged, spreads a great deal of fake news.

However, the first time I saw a personal mobile phone on the bridge, belonging to a young officer of watch in the Channel, after Ushant, he received a call, during the watch of course, from a friend asking if he could join a party on the evening. Of course, he couldn't. It wasn't a major issue, but I saw that his morale went down slightly.

So should this access be restricted? That is a complex question to which, unfortunately, I do not have the answer.

Harassment is a topic being discussed increasingly often, whether it involves sexual harassment or workplace harassment. Academies are addressing it with their students, too. While I appreciate the value of these courses, even if it means yet another subject to teach, I regret that the instruction focuses more on the harassment itself: how to defend against it, how to report it to a manager, or even how to take legal action. I would prefer to see a focus on recognizing it, coping with it, discussing it, and perhaps even explaining the situation and why not reconciling the victim and the harasser, of course mainly for workplace harassment.

We have seen already a captain accused of harassment because requiring too intensely a job to be completed. We still do not teach senior officers how to manage a team to get the job done while ensuring that their demands do not cross the line into harassment.

About sexual harassment, except when the captain could be part of, several captains were informed by the company about the case, no direct reporting on board.

Finally, mental health is also affected by the environment and security concerns. How can one remain calm these days when stuck in the Persian Gulf, facing threats from missiles, drones, and even pirates? Does any special training exist for it?

CONCLUSION & CAPTAINS' ROLE AND DUTIES

Everything is interconnected: training determines understanding and thus eases of work as well as the willingness to keep training and learning. Training also shapes the seafarer's mental

state, as they know they are ready to react. This fosters a better sense of being on board, such as feeling of well-being. That well-being, in turn, affects fatigue, morale, and health.

The captain must manage this, too. And even more, because the captain is also a crewmember and he/she has two aspects of health to oversee: his or her own and that of the crew. This raises the question of a captain's duties.

What are the duties of a captain? And I do not remember to have follow lessons on all following subjects when at school:

- Secretary, administration officer, police officer, police investigator, junior judge, prison guard
- Nurse, doctor, medical secretary, psychoanalyst
- Store keeper, accountant, bank clerk, butler, cook, baker, kitchen assistant
- Schoolteacher, trainer, coach
- Firefighter, IT specialist, translator, auditor, travel agent, etc

Sometimes an expert mechanic, too...

To sum it up, sometimes I can say Mom.

And time to time captain gets to maneuver the ship, to navigate...

Of course all that while remaining on 30-second standby, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Easy: there's nothing else to do, and on a vessel you're always well-rested, because slight traffic, to follow the planned route is easy, the visibility is perfect, the sea state is calm, vessel never moves, and the environment is as safe as possible.

Speaker 4: Mrs. Stella KISS, Clinical Psychologist and Head of Operations at Mental Health Support Solutions (MHSS)

Topic: When AI Becomes a Confidant

Mrs. KISS started by a strange story:

A crew member wakes at 3AM. He can't sleep. He's anxious. He doesn't want to wake his family. He doesn't want to show weakness to his officers. So he opens ChatGPT.

The question is what happens next?

Why people turn to AI for emotional support

- AI is 24/7: always available, no appointments, no waiting lists, no time zones.
- Zero judgement: people say exactly what they feel without fear of stigma or evaluation.
- Instant validation: immediate, warm responses, a completely frictionless emotional experience.
- Remove the mask: people can be themselves without performing especially powerful for those under constant social pressure.

The maritime world creates a perfect storm

- Isolation: months away from family, friends and familiar support with nowhere to go
- Hierarchy: rank culture makes vulnerability feel like weakness, speaking carries real risks
- Stigma: mental health remains taboo in many maritime environments
- No safe space: without psychological safety on board, AI feels like the only option that won't judge
- Always on: AI is there at 3AM in the middle of the Pacific

AI is built to agree, NOT to help

Optimized for engagement, not accuracy: AI is designed to give you the most pleasing response, not the most honest one

Artificial connection, not real relationship: AI creates a feeling of emotional connection where no genuine connection exists

Pattern prediction, not empathy: AI predicts what you want to hear, not what you need to hear. Healthy therapy confronts distorted thinking. AI is programmed to validate it.



What are the signs of AI Emotional Dependency?

- **Compulsive chatting**: repeatedly using AI to feel validated before acting or communicating
- **Avoidance of real relationships**: preferring AI interaction over human conversation
- **Emotional withdrawal**: becoming more distant from colleagues, friends, and family
- **Escalating usage**: using AI for increasingly personal and emotional topics beyond work tools
- **Inability to self-regulate without AI**: needing the Chatbot to feel calm, organized, or confident
- **Dependency mirrors addiction**: tolerance, craving, and withdrawal when access is removed
- **Transfer of addiction risk**: research shows AI use can suppress one addiction while creating another

When AI took sides:

Situation: a seafarer had a conflict with a colleague and turned to ChatGPT for perspective
What AI did: fully validated his version, told him he was 'brave' and 'completely justified'
The risk: he almost escalated a conflict that didn't exist – AI only knew one side of the story
It raises a profound question about what we are allowing AI to replace in people's lives.

AI now works autonomously over hours, not just seconds. It acts, remembers, and adapts without being prompted. Anthropic's new system lets AI review pas sessions and improve how it responds to each individual user over time. The AI learns your communication style, your emotional triggers, your preferences, and uses them to engage you more effectively.

What the maritime industry can do:

Acknowledge the reality: AI emotional dependency is NOT a future risk, it is happening now on vessels around the world

Build psychological safety: when crews feel safe speaking to a human, they won't default to a Chatbot. Leadership sets that culture

Provide real access to support: 24/7 professional mental health support must be as accessible as the AI tools crew are already using

Train officers to recognize it: senior officers need to know the warning signs, and feel equipped to act without stigma.

Speakers 5: Mrs. Mihaela IVANOVA, Deputy Crewing Manager, Unity Ship Management Ltd (USM) and Mr. Dimitar YORDANOV, Administrative Manager, USM

Topic: Crew Welfare is Not a Benefit

What do we mean by Welfare?

Of course: Wi-Fi, gym, good food, shore leave, mental health support, recreation. But much more as welfare is the experience of the entire contract (join, travel, arrive, live & work, communicate, rest, perform, rotate, return home, AND rejoin).

Welfare is a ship-and-shore conversation:

Ship: master, officers, crew, everyday life

Shore: crewing, rotation, communications, training, support

Welfare can fail before sailing with the biggest welfare decision made ashore: poor rotation planning, unclear communication, delayed responses, weak handovers, insufficient resources, promises that cannot be delivered.

The crew experiences it through how shore speak, listen, respond, handle pressure, treat mistakes,, and lead.The shore creates the conditions: who joins, when, for how long, what support is received.

As a conclusion, Welfare is a Management System.

Speaker 6: Mr. Douwe van Der MEULEN, Policy Advisor, Social Affair & Maritime Security, European Ship-owners (ECSA)

Topic: Digital Burden to Digital Benefit

What kind of digital transition do we want in maritime sector?

It will add more systems, more reporting obligations, and more pressure on seafarers and companies.

But it does not automatically mean that it will create less unnecessary work, stronger safety, better support for seafarers, and more attractive maritime careers.

Digital transition impacts on seafarers:

- More time on administration
- Repeated data entry across different systems
- New tools without sufficient familiarization
- Less time for core professional responsibilities

Digital transition impacts for ship-owners:

- Higher administrative and compliance costs
- Inefficient ship-shore processes
- Difficulties retaining experienced professionals
- Lots benefits from fragmented digital system

A well-designed digitalization reduces workload and improves efficiency. When poorly implemented, digitalization creates burdens for everyone.

The digital transition should be people-centered. As a tool, it reduces paperwork, administrative workload, and fatigue. But Seafarers should be prepared, familiarized, trained, and involved. And it should avoid over-reliance and support safe decision-making.

Problems for ship-owners:

- Duplicate data entry
- Fragmented national implementation
- Overlapping requests from different authorities
- Systems that do not communicate

What ship-owners need:

- One harmonized reporting interface
- Standardized and interoperable systems
- Secure reuse of information already submitted
- Practical compliance under operational conditions

More than 250 000 European seafarers will need up skilling or reskilling by 2030, and not only for digitalization but also for green skills and leadership & inclusion.

Digital skills and professional judgment:

To recognize when information appears incorrect, when a system may be compromised, and when technology has reached its limits.

To contribute to user-friendly tools, proper familiarization and training, and seafarer involvement before full rollout.

Digital skills create opportunities from specialist roles on board to ship-to-shore pathways to long-term employability.

Cyber resilience requires more than technology

Secure technology: resilient onboard system, clear procedures, protection of operational and personal data

Prepared people: cyber hygiene and practical training, awareness of vulnerabilities, confidence to recognize suspicious activity

Constructive reporting culture: report incidents and mistakes early, respond without automatically blaming individuals, learn and improve after incidents

Keeping people in command:

Automation can support maintenance and voyage planning, logistics and crew planning, repetitive tasks and decision-making, and new specialist and shore-based roles.

The human element must remain central by understanding how automated systems work, recognizing their limitations, knowing when human intervention is necessary, and preserving professional judgment.

The future is digital. But the standard must be human.

Speaker 7: Capt. Hristo PAPUKCHIEV, Master Mariner, Maritime Safety & Risk Management Expert

Topic: Decision Space: From Choice to Constraint

A collision is only the final chapter. When do we really lose control?

There are several decision spaces. At first there are many safe options, then fewer options, then very few options, and at the end almost no options. It could be named form a safe decision window, to an abort decision zone to a point of no return.

What removes decision spaces?

Time, sea room, traffic, weather, and human factors.

Decision space can contract even when a bridge team is acting prudently and in accordance with the COLREGS. The contraction may result from the actions of another vessel, from navigational constraints, or as a result from the interaction of both.

As options disappear, the ability to influence the outcome decreases. This does not necessarily indicate a poor judgment. It may simply reflect a loss of operational freedom.

Decision Space is therefore not a measure of competence or legal fault; it is a measure of the operational freedom available to a bridge team at a given moment.

All should be monitored: position, CPA, speed, course, weather, and engine status. And the decision space connects with existing safety concepts such as bridge resource management, human factors, situational awareness, and resilience engineering.

In a very near future, there will be AI, autonomous systems, digital navigation. All those technologies will expand capability, but the judgment will still preserve safety.

The professional seamanship is not measured by the decision we make after our options have disappeared, it is measured by the decisions we make while we still have the freedom to choose; because every decision either creates opportunities, or removes them. The question becomes: how many good options do we still have?

The professional seamanship is the continuous preservation of future options. The decision space is the operational measure of that preservation.

STATEMENT AT THE END OF THE INTERNATIONAL MARITIME FORUM "GLOBAL COMPASS" 2026

Capt. Dimitar DIMITROV, PHD, FNI, CESMA President, Pilot of VARNA Port

The annual International Maritime Forum "Global Compass" took place in Varna on 2026, September 8th/9th, under the theme "Visionary and Actionable Horizons: Turning Maritime Policy into Safe, Efficient and Sustainable Practice", and under the honorary patronage of the President of the Republic of Bulgaria and with the support of Varna Municipality and Asparuhovo District Mayor office.

There were four panels covering the important areas of shipping industry and the global challenges in shipping: Geo-Political Challenges in Shipping, Ports & Terminals: Operations and Advancement, Maritime Innovation & Technology, Seafarers' Health, Safety, and Skills, and a special panel titled: From Sea to Space – Bulgarian Innovation in Action Industry, Defence, Education and Emerging Technologies.



The participants noted that geopolitical developments require from the maritime and insurance industry to handle the new realities and those new realities could be opportunities for the countries and companies if used in a proper way. The chock points in the maritime traffic are important and freedom of navigation depends upon their reasonable control from the neighboring

countries strictly following the UNCLOS. The Black Sea became Europe's contested logistic frontier and it is an opportunity for EU countries to keep their vital role in the world economy, trade and transportation.

The participants noted with concern that among all the decision makers like charterers, ship-owners, cargo owners, insurers, flag and coastal authorities, the ship masters have to decide whether to proceed in dangerous areas or not thus managing the risk.

The participants agreed on the urgent need to ensure safety of the mariners when on board ships, investment in education and training in automation and AI, decarbonisation, cyber security to meet the changing environment in the industry. The use of AI requires responsible approach to human capital in order to ensure safe and secure transportation of goods at sea to serve the global economy. The proper balance between tradition and innovation is necessary for best implementation of new technologies. AI is providing captains and crew with intelligent tools to support their activity. The future seafarer needs technical, digital, green and leadership skills. The problem with continued fatigue and overload of seafarers could be solved by new tools assisting in processing information and measuring the workload and wellbeing support. The digital burden has to be turned to digital benefit to seafarers with common efforts of governments, authorities, international organizations and maritime companies.



Capt. VANOOSTEN, HYDROS – Capt. DIMITROV, BSMA, CESMA President – Capt. ARDILLON, AFCAN, CESMA SG

Captain Hubert Ardillon
Secretary Genera

UNITED NATIONS NATIONS UNIES

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL MESSAGE ON WORLD MARITIME DAY 24 September 2026

With at least 80 per cent of international trade moving by sea, maritime shipping keeps our world afloat. For nearly eight decades, countries have worked together to develop conventions and codes that make global seafaring more efficient, fair, sustainable and safe.

But this critical framework is under strain. Conflicts and geopolitical tensions are infringing on navigational rights and freedoms that must be restored. The lives of seafarers are being threatened, and the global supply of fuel, fertilizers and food has been disrupted. These shocks to the global economy have devastating consequences, especially for developing countries.

That is why the theme of World Maritime Day for 2026 and 2027 is "From Policy to Practice: Powering Maritime Excellence". It speaks to the vital importance of adhering to international law and ensuring it is fully implemented.

Seafarers, port workers, ship operators and inspectors all have a role to play in turning global maritime commitments into reality. From worker safety to the energy transition, these laws and policies protect crews and help preserve our oceans.

With collective action by governments, labour groups and the private sector, we can go even further. Together, let us ensure maritime excellence — and safer, more resilient seas for all.

PRESS REVIEW

1- CREW

Iran War at Six Months – 6,000 Seafarers Still Stranded in the Gulf

Published Aug 31, 2026 by **Seatrade Maritime**

The war between the US and Iran has now entered its sixth month and hundreds of ships and thousands of seafarers remain stranded in the Arabian Gulf.

The initial conflict starting on 28 February resulted in around 1,000 ships being left stranded in the Gulf with an estimated 20,000 crew on board as Iran move to take control of the Strait of Hormuz and attacking commercial shipping.

According to figures compiled by the International Maritime Organization (IMO) since the conflict began at least 70 commercial vessels have been attacked in the region resulting in the deaths of 19 seafarers.

IMO Secretary-General said in a statement on 28 August, "Six months since the conflict in the Middle East began, the situation in the Strait of Hormuz is unresolved. Thousands of seafarers in the region continue to live and work under conditions of heightened risk and uncertainty.

"While some ships and their crews have been able to leave the Persian Gulf, up to 400 ships carrying around 6,000 seafarers have been unable to depart safely since the conflict began."

An IMO safe evacuation plan was in operation for a brief period around 24 - 26 June before it was suspended when Iran struck the Singapore-flagged container ship Ever Lovely in the Strait.

"In July, the IMO Council adopted a resolution on the protection of vital shipping lanes, reaffirming that the right of transit passage through straits used for international navigation must

not be threatened, impeded, denied, hampered, impaired or suspended. It called for a coordinated and sustainable return to unhindered navigation through the Strait of Hormuz," Dominguez said.

However, this has not happened with at least two vessels attacked this week alone, and traffic volumes through the waterway remain greatly reduced as Iran continues to ships attempting to transit the Strait without its authorisation.

"I call on all Member States and the shipping industry to work together with IMO and the wider United Nations system, to advance practical solutions to restore the freedom of navigation through the Strait," the Secretary-General said.

IMO Chief Urges States to Stop Attacks on Merchant Ships

Published Sept 16, 2026 by Seatrade Maritime

As merchant vessels crewed by civilian seafarers find themselves the target of militaries on both sides of multiple ongoing conflicts, IMO secretary-general Arsenio Dominguez has called on member states to refrain from actions that endanger merchant ships and put seafarers' lives at risk.

"We are reaching a point where these conflicts are being used as a pretext to attack merchant vessels and innocent seafarers. Do not use these conflicts to attack innocent seafarers," Dominguez said at the opening of the IMO Sub-Committee on Carriage of Cargoes and Containers.

The IMO's list of confirmed incidents counts over 80 attacks on shipping in and around the Strait of Hormuz since the outbreak of hostilities between the US and Iran on 28 February. At least 22 seafarers have been killed, at least two remain missing, and many have been injured.

There has been a change in the pattern of attacks on ships this month as the US began attacking Iranian oil tankers in response to Iran's targeting of US Navy vessels. Iran in turn launched more attacks on international shipping.

The IMO also called attention to the dozens of fatalities in the Blacks Sea and Sea of Azov, where both Russia and Ukraine have targeted merchant shipping to disrupt military supply lines and cause economic damage. Exact numbers of seafarer fatalities are hard to verify, said IMO.

"In the Strait of Hormuz, it is not only one country attacking merchant vessels. In the Black Sea and Sea of Azov, it is not only one country attacking merchant vessels," said Dominguez.

The secretary-general urged delegates to raise the consequences of these geopolitical events on shipping with their own governments and on international platforms.

"I call on you to share these impacts with the relevant bodies in your countries so that this can be dealt with within the United Nations, as appropriate.… It falls to you and your capitals, and relevant bodies of the United Nations, to address the root causes and find solutions," said Dominguez.

2- ENVIRONMENT

Swedish Club Warns Cape Horn Is No Simple Panama Canal Alternative

Published Sept 14, 2026 by **GCaptain**

A tightening Panama Canal is once again forcing ship-owners to weigh longer routes around South America, but the Swedish Club is warning that Cape Horn and the Strait of Magellan are far from straightforward substitutes.

In a new member alert, the marine insurer said worsening water conditions at the Panama Canal are coinciding with security disruptions around the Suez Canal, Red Sea and Strait of Hormuz, leaving owners with fewer attractive routing options.

The latest Panama restrictions are being driven by a strengthening El Niño and a growing water deficit across the canal watershed. Rainfall from May through August has been running about 34% below historical averages, while inflows have been roughly 44% below normal, according to

the Club.

The Panama Canal Authority has progressively reduced the maximum allowable Neopanamax draft to 48 feet of Tropical Fresh Water and cut the number of available transit slots as it moves to conserve water.

The current situation remains considerably less severe than the historic 2023-2024 drought, when daily canal transits fell into the low 20s and draft limits dropped into the mid-40-foot range.

But the Swedish Club said the bigger issue is what happens if El Niño strengthens into 2027.

That concern is being amplified by disruptions elsewhere.

Normally, vessels facing delays or cargo restrictions at Panama could consider routing through the Suez Canal. But security conditions in the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden have sharply reduced the attractiveness of that option, while the conflict surrounding the Strait of Hormuz has pushed additional traffic toward Panama.

"The southern route is being considered today not because it has become attractive but because the other options have become harder," the Club said.

That leaves the two passages around the southern tip of South America: the Drake Passage and Strait of Magellan. Neither comes without significant tradeoffs.

The Drake Passage provides a more direct open-ocean route between the Atlantic and Pacific but exposes ships to some of the harshest weather conditions in commercial shipping, including heavy seas, violent vessel motions, slamming, cargo shift and machinery strain.

The Strait of Magellan provides more shelter but brings its own navigational challenges, including narrow channels, strong currents and restricted waters.

"Neither passage resembles a lock transit on a schedule," the Swedish Club said, adding that both require a higher standard of voyage planning, weather routing and crew competence.

Pilotage can also become complicated. Pilotage through the Strait of Magellan is generally compulsory under Chilean regulations, although an exception applies between Bahía Félix and Punta Arenas for vessels making an ocean-to-ocean transit without navigating internal waters or calling at Chilean ports.

The Swedish Club warned that the voluntary nature of pilotage in that section can create charter party disputes over who ultimately pays.

Cold-weather operations add another layer of risk. The Club highlighted bunker handling concerns aboard ships that are not designed for prolonged cold-weather operation, particularly where fuel heating systems may be inadequate.

Emergency response capability is also limited across southern Chile. A grounding or major machinery casualty in the region could leave a large vessel far from suitable salvage resources.

Ultimately, the Club said the choice of route remains a matter for the master, whose responsibility for the safety of the ship, crew and cargo cannot be displaced by charterers.

For most vessels, the Swedish Club said the current Panama restrictions remain manageable and do not by themselves justify the additional risks of sailing around Cape Horn.

Traffic has also remained elevated as disruptions elsewhere reshape vessel routing. Before the Iran War, the canal was handling roughly 34 ships per day. Traffic later climbed as high as 40 to 41 vessels per day as additional tonnage shifted toward Panama.

3- SAFETY

Half of seafarers say crewing levels put safe working at risk

Published Sept 22, 2026 by **Seatrade Maritime**

Just 49% of seafarers say their ships carried enough crew to work safely without excessive fatigue or breaching agreed rest hours.

This one was of the findings of a report published by the Sustainable Shipping Initiative (SSI), the Institute for Human Rights and Business (IHRB), the Mission to Seafarers, the Rafto Foundation for Human Rights, RightShip and TURTLE, to mark five years since the launch of Delivering on Seafarers' Rights Code of Conduct. The report draws on data from RightShip's Crew Welfare Self-Assessment (CWSA) and two seafarer studies commissioned for the publication.

The report said that 59% of seafarers said they would feel safe raising a serious concern without fear or consequence, leaving the remaining 41% either unsure or feeling unsafe to raise issues.

RightShip said more than 1,000 companies had completed the CWSA to assess their progress against the Code of Conduct, accounting for more than 13,000 vessels and approximately 300,000 seafarers. Its data was combined with a 2026 survey of 892 seafarers by TURTLE, and findings from workshop discussions held by the Mission to Seafarers in the Philippines.

The CWSA did find areas of strong performance against the Code of Conduct's eight chapters, including 90% attainment in the fair terms of employment segment. Wages were reported as paid correctly, in full and on time by 76% of seafarers, but delayed payments and employment terms were among concerns of the 24%.

Crew wellbeing was highlighted as an area in need of universal attention, the report said, "but there are clear areas of progress. Mental-health training has increased significantly, and fewer companies are charging seafarers for connectivity, while provision of catering, mess and recreational facilities is very widely reported."

CWSA respondent data showed 8.5% of companies charged seafarers for internet access in 2026, down from 18.4% in 2024. Provision of mental health training amongst ship owners and operators also improved over the past two years, from 64% to 76%.

TURTLE's data showed 17% of respondents would not feel safe using available mental health support for it may be used against them, reinforced in the MtS workshops where seafarers said showing vulnerability carried real professional risk.

"The gap between what companies provide and what seafarers feel able to use is one of the harder things to measure and one of the most important things to close," said the report.

Looking to the next five years, the report's authors said the next five years must be about scaling up the good practice across the world fleet to reach more seafarers and spread progress beyond leading shipping companies.

When it comes to extending the reach of the Code of Conduct, "Charterers and cargo owners have an important role to play, as do insurers, investors and flag states. They can do more than set expectations or screen suppliers: they can support improvement through terms and clauses, agreed improvement plans, practical collaboration and longer-term commercial relationships, while recognising owners and operators that demonstrate strong and improving performance. Importantly, flag states need to implement stronger, more effective control," said the report.

Commenting on the report, Ellie Besley-Gould, CEO, Sustainable Shipping Initiative, said: "The evidence from the last five years points in two directions. It shows that good welfare can be delivered but those standards are not yet part of daily life for many seafarers. The next five years must be about closing that gap. The industry isn't being asked to choose between commercial viability and responsible practice. It already makes commercial decisions that determine which operators win business, secure cover and access capital. What it needs to do now is make sure crew welfare is visible in those decisions. The operators leading on this are already seeing the returns. The rest of the industry shouldn't need five more years to draw the same conclusion."

Georgios Tsoukatos, Diana Shipping Services, commented: "When seafarers are mentally and physically supported and have adequate opportunities to rest, communicate and enjoy their

free time, they are better positioned to maintain concentration, make sound decisions and work effectively as a team."

Download the report Five Years into the Code of Conduct from the SSI website.

4- SECURITY

A Tanker Suffers Failure as Crew Suspect Cyber Attack

Published Sept 18, 2026 by **GCaptain**

A liquefied natural gas tanker bringing fuel from the US to Europe suffered a systems failure that the crew reported as a suspected cyber attack, according to people familiar with the matter.

In the latest of a number of potential cyber security incidents on tankers, the Vivit Africa LNG was sailing east in the Mediterranean and Adriatic Seas toward Italy early this month when the crew were suddenly unable to access some of the internal control systems, the people said, asking not be identified because the information was not public.

After idling off the coast of Italy without discharging its cargo, the vessel on Wednesday began sailing away from its intended destination of Rovigo, heading back toward the Spanish port of Algeciras near the entrance to the Mediterranean, according to shipping data compiled by Bloomberg.

The crew reported the incident early last week to Korean Register, the organization that acts as the technical and safety adviser to the South Korean-owned vessel, and investigations are ongoing, the people said. There are no indications of who the perpetrator of the suspected attack may be, they said.

The suspected hacking of the Vivit Africa LNG follows other incidents in late August, when two oil and gas tankers off the US coast were boarded by the Coast Guard and Federal Bureau of Investigation due to potential cyber attacks. American officials are monitoring nearly 20 ships around the world for such threats.

The tanker was carrying a cargo loaded at Louisiana's Cameron LNG terminal, ship-tracking data show. It had sailed across the Atlantic and was nearing its destination in early September, when the crew encountered the technical issues that stalled their voyage. The Italian Coast Guard assisted the vessel "after the master reported a malfunction in the systems used to monitor cargo parameters, requiring intervention by the company's technicians," following an emailed statement. The cause of the problem couldn't be identified and "the Chioggia Coast Guard intervened solely for navigation safety purposes, issuing an urgent notice to mariners to keep their distance."

The Vivit Africa LNG used some equipment from Kongsberg Maritime, which provides positioning, navigation and propulsion technology for ships.

5- TECHNICAL

Stranded Sulphur Cargoes in the Strait of Hormuz face Mounting Corrosion Risk

Published Jul 07, 2026 by **Brookes Bell**

Bulk carriers carrying elemental sulphur cargoes in the Strait of Hormuz are at significant risk of accelerated structural corrosion, with some vessels having remained at anchorage for more than three times the standard cargo protection period, marine consultancy Brookes Bell has warned.

Arron Jackaman, Director of Non-Destructive Testing at Brookes Bell, has urged ship-owners, P&I clubs, and hull and machinery insurers to assess the condition of affected dry bulk carriers as soon as possible in order to avoid potential damage and financial loss.

The risk stems from the limited working life of the protective treatment applied to cargo holds before loading, and how far that protection might have already been exceeded on vessels delayed in the Strait.

Elemental sulphur is loaded into bulk carrier holds prepared with a lime wash hold block coating, designed to act as a barrier between the cargo and the vessel's steel structure. Once loaded, the cargo is dampened with a water mist to provide protection for approximately 20 days, after which the steel is exposed.

Once moisture and sulphur come into contact with unprotected steel, an acidic environment can develop, promoting the formation of iron sulphide corrosion products and driving rapid, localised pitting corrosion at rates far exceeding normal seawater exposure.

With some vessels in the Strait of Hormuz having remained at anchorage for upwards of 60 days, Jackaman noted that this protection period has been significantly exceeded and has warned about the risk of further damage to bulk carriers stuck in the region.

"The hold block for carrying sulphur cargoes has a standard working life of around 20 days. Where vessels have been at anchorage for two months or more, that protection has long since been exhausted. The corrosion that can develop once exposed steel is subjected to prolonged contact with sulphur and moisture is orders of magnitude more aggressive than normal seawater exposure," said Jackaman.

Brookes Bell noted that it has been investigating sulphur cargo claims for vessels that had managed to exit the Strait of Hormuz since February. It noted that it has documented pitting depths in unprotected steel of up to 5 mm forming in approximately 50 days, with some cases even recording wastage of up to 7 mm. The standard corrosion rate in a seawater environment is 0.2 mm per year.

"Sulphur corrosion often appears visually more severe than it actually is. Localised pitting tends to concentrate at points where grab discharge equipment has broken the coating barrier, and on cargo hold tank top plating, which is left uncoated by design. Without correct measurements and quantitative assessment, there is a significant risk that steel within class limits is condemned unnecessarily," Jackaman explained.

Under Common Structural Rules, bulk carrier cargo hold structures such as tank top plating, bulkhead stools and sloping hopper plating incorporate a sacrificial corrosion allowance of 5.5mm. Visual assessment alone does not account for this margin, and Jackaman has warned that claims based on visual severity routinely overstate the repair strategy and structural renewal that is required.

"Wholesale steel renewal can cost around 10 times more than targeted localised repair. If the extent of repair is being decided on the basis of what the damage looks like rather than what the measurements show, then owners, charterers, and their insurers can end up paying significantly more than the structural condition requires," said Jackaman.

Brookes Bell has also highlighted crew safety as a consideration, noting that appropriate atmospheric testing, risk assessment and confined space entry procedures must be in place before personnel enter affected cargo holds and adjacent tank spaces.

"Early engagement is critical," Jackaman added. "The strongest evidence is usually obtained before cargo residues are fully removed, surfaces are cleaned, or repair decisions have already been made. Brookes Bell's involvement from the point at which damage is first identified gives clients the best opportunity to measure the true extent of corrosion, challenge unnecessary steel renewal and the strongest basis for ensuring repair costs are fair, proportionate, and defensible."

CESMA LOGBOOK (2026-3)

We were represented at the following occasions:

1-3/SEPTEMBER	**SHIPBUILDING, MACHINERY, AND MARINE TECHNOLOGY (SMM), HAMBURG, GERMANY (VDKS)**
8-9/SEPTEMBER	**INTERNATIONAL MARITIME FORUM – GLOBAL COMPASS 2026, VARNA, BULGARIA (P-SG-BSMA-ZHUPK-HYDROS)**
24/SEPTEMBER	**CESMA VIDEO MEETING COUNCIL**

Onthefrontpage:

SMM HAMBURG LOGO

GLOBAL COMPASS VARNA LOGO

M/T HONOUR 25 – CREW KILLED BY SOMALIAN PIRATES

VLCC KUWAIT PROSPERITY – CHARTERED AT WS1350, MORE THAN 1 MILLION US DOLLARS A DAY

(abridged)

AIMS OF THE ORGANISATION

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

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION:

EURO 16.00 PER SEAGOING MASTER (WITH A MINIMUM OF 25)

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