Issue 1 2017

SCMS LINK

The Society of Consulting Marine Engineers & Ship Surveyors
Unit 5, Prospect House
7 Ocean Way
Southampton
Hants
SO14 3TJ

Tel: +44 (0)23 8001 6494
Email: sec@scmshq.org

President's Note

Most surveyors have like myself, have investigated or experienced some unusual incidents and casualties during the course of their careers, some of which, no doubt, are best kept to themselves for fear of ridicule, embarrassment or litigation.

As a young surveyor I was called out to a small German Captain/owner vessel that had been damaged on a drying out berth on the River Trent and was suffering leakage into the cargo hold.

On attending on board I was advised by the Captain that he had everything under control but as a result of the incident the crew, consisting of the mate (the captain's wife) and two others had missed lunch, however they had managed to stem most of the leakage by making a temporary repair to the hole which was located in way of the vessel's bilge plate adjacent to the margin plate.

The cause of the incident was found to be a foul berth and that the vessel had grounded on a length of pipe which had punctured the bilge (the previous vessel had loaded scrap on the berth). The pipe was subsequently recovered and kept in my garage for several years in case it was required for evidence, the temporary repair, however, was photographed and I believe subsequently disposed of by the crew, I know not where, as it proved to be the missing lunch consisting of a shoulder of pork which had been stuffed and wedged into the hole to stem the ingress! – the vessel was saved by its bacon so as to speak.

On another occasion, I was called out to a propeller fouling that had occurred to a barge on the canal system near Knottingley. The initial report was that the engine had stopped dead as a result of being fouled by a bit of railing, on attending at Harkers yard I witnessed the barge being towed into the yard with about 30 meters of railway line extending through the propeller aperture between the stern frame and the rudder. The railing had originally been attached to the canal embankment as a fender but had evidently dropped off some years before and had never been recovered.

Finally, and as some of you will know, I once worked as a staff surveyor to a fishing vessel insurer and used to attend their insured vessels around the UK and Ireland conducting condition and loss prevention surveys.

On one occasion I attended on a fishing vessel in the south west of Ireland, possibly Baltimore I can't remember exactly, and it doesn't really matter, however one of the defects found was that the wire pulls for the remotely operated fuel trip valves had rusted through and it was recommended to the skipper that same be renewed as a matter of urgency so that, in the event of a fire he could shut off the fuel and prevent it feeding a conflagration.

About a year later I was attending on board another vessel in the same port when I was called across by the skipper of the first vessel, who proudly showed off all the rectified defects, culminating with the remote trips, to which he pointed and said "look, they won't rust through now"- and to be sure, they wouldn't –the wires had all been renewed in synthetic fishing twine!

Mike Eckles

Editor's Note

By Norman Finlay

(for comments and future articles, please contact Norman at normanfinlay7@gmail.com)

WANTED for next issue of **LINK in May 2017**.

Technical articles—Reports of interesting or unusual events—Things or events which have taken place that could be of interest. There must be a lot of stories out there which could be of interest.

Adverts—full page £ 100.00—half page £ 50.00—quarter page £ 25.00

FEMAS Update

The main project occupying the FEMAS Executive Council at the moment is a review of professional standards used by the member associations. This was also reported in the last LINK Newsletter. Progress is being made and meetings are scheduled to be held throughout this February. At the conclusion the professional standards will be set and new member associations who wish to apply for FEMAS membership will need to comply with these. We have one potential new member on standby at present waiting for the conclusion of this exercise.

Regarding the BREXIT situation, the FEMAS Statutes and Bye-Laws are being updated so the FEMAS membership of SCMS, when the UK leaves the EU, should not be affected.

The European Shipping Week event will take place at the end of February, the Federation is a Supporting Organisation for this important occasion which is being held for the 2nd time in Brussels. For further details visit their website www.europeanshippingweek.com.

Paul Owen, FEMAS Secretary and SCMS Hon Member

www.femas.info

==========

Certifying Authority News

From the SCMS Certifying Authority Committee Chairman

It seems only a few weeks since the last issue of the Link Magazine! The CA side of the SCMS has been as busy as ever generating certification with very short turnaround times mainly due to some scrutineering being carried out directly at HQ.

I recently attended the annual gathering of Certifying Authorities at the MCA with Stuart and Nick where many items of interest were discussed which will result in a number of new Examiner Advice Notes being issued shortly. We will also be publishing various Guidance Notes on the SCMS Website aimed at vessel owners/operators on subjects such as lifting devices, survey regimes and preparing vessels for survey. If you have any suggestions for Guidance Notes for owner/operators or for Examiners please feel free to contact HQ and we will see what we can do.

I have been asked to address the Small Craft Surveyors Forum training day held at Seawork in June which, I hope, will further raise the profile of the SCMS as a Certifying Authority within the surveying industry. In a similar vein there are now moves to try and formalise the minimum standards of qualification and experience of Code Vessel surveyors with a long term goal of having formal accreditation and recognition with titles such as *registered, accredited* or *chartered* marine surveyor.

The CA Committee has co-opted three further members to widen the areas of expertise available to it and has pleasure in welcoming Simon Oakes, Marcus Lankford and Graham Slack to the next meeting in February.

The new website contains a wealth of information and should be your first port of call for current advice notes, forms and guidance. Please make sure you check in regularly for updates.

Thank you.

Paul Johnson FCMS, Chair, SCMS Certifying Authority

Codes up- date:

Workboat Code: Despite constant pressure we are no nearer having the Code published than we were this time last year but it has been made clear to the MCA that it is imperative that the Code is published as soon as possible. Hopefully we will have good news soon.

Blue, Yellow and Red Codes: these are being revised but are not making as much progress as had been hoped. We think that it will be this time next year before they will be ready to publish.

Under 500 ton Code: the basic draft of this Code has been put together by the MCA, The Workboat Association and SCMS and is now going out to Industry for consultation. With goodwill from all sides it could be ready by this time next year. This type of Coding could be of interest to some of our big ship Surveyors who currently are not involved in Coding.

Over 12 passenger Code: This Code is complete and can be used for offshore vessels carrying more than 12 **Industrial Personnel**. This can be done on a one off basis with the surveys carried out by Class but Interested Surveyors can obtain further information from the SCMS office.

SCMS Membership Update

New Members

Alan North	United Kingdom
Scott Wiltshire	United Kingdom
Chris Gladish	United Kingdom

New Associate Members

Ochuko Onorimuo	Nigeria

New MCA Code Examiners

Guillermo Gefaell	Spain
Graham Slack	United Kingdom
Jim McDonald	United Kingdom
Tom Jackman	United Kingdom
Peter Burbage	United Kingdom
Robert McConnell	Republic of Ireland
James Smith	United Kingdom
John Ross	Malta
Marien Vos	The Netherlands
Amos Federico	Gibraltar
Karl Pizzey	United Kingdom

Revalidated MCA Code Examiners

Capt. Ed Geary FCMS	Spain
Mark Borkett FCMS	Thailand
Capt. Mehmet Albayrak	Istanbul

Resigned from SCMS

Nicolaas Zwijnenburg	The Netherlands
Kaare Ronsberg	United Kingdom
Capt. Leo Vincent	Singapore
William Steadman	United Kingdom

SCMS Benevolent Fund

The SCMS have a Benevolent Fund. It is a registered Charity (No. 230286). The majority of the fund is invested in shares with the COIF Charities Investment Fund and as of 31 December 2016 the value of the shares stood at £241,962. There is also a SCMS Benevolent Fund Current bank account which on the same date had £6478 in the account.

The SCMS Benevolent Fund is mentioned in the Bi-Laws and Articles: *"to assist necessitous members, and the widows and children or any other dependent kindred of deceased members, to act as treasurer and distributor of any benevolent fund or funds which may be contributed by members or others for these purposes, or any of them and to make any contributions out of the surplus assets or income of the Society from time to time to any such benevolent fund or funds;"*

The purpose of the fund is to help SCMS Members or their family when they are in financial distress. The SCMS Council consider claims made to the benevolent fund and where Council agree to the claim, awards of up to £5000 per year can be made from the charity fund to help Members or their families who are in financial distress.

Previously awards have been made to allow the wife of a dying Member, who had been his carer during the illness, a respite holiday. Also grants have been made to retired Members who have had long service and are struggling financially in a charity home.

This year when we sent out the Invoice for the annual Membership fee we included a section for voluntary donations to the fund so that the fund can be topped up and not rely on share value increases to replace the donated money during the year. Thank you to those who did make a donation.

If you wish to make a call on the SCMS Benevolent Fund then please write into SCMS c/o the CEO giving the details of the Member and of the financial distress so that Council can consider the request at the next Council Meeting.

==========

Apologies

In the last edition of Link we published an excellent article written by Mike Tillman entitled 'Royal Research Ship Discovery'. Unfortunately we failed to acknowledge Mike's input, for which we apologise. Thank you to Mike for providing the piece, and to those who pointed out our mistake.

We wish Mike a speedy recovery after his recent operation.

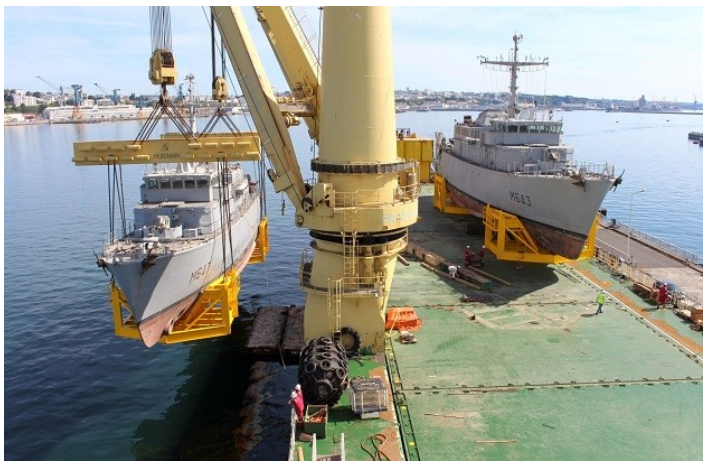
==========

The Transport of 2 French Mine Hunters

By Lionnel Parant, France

The following three photographs are from a project that I supervised in 2015. It was the transport of two French Mine Hunters (600 tons - hull in GRP) on board the Jumbo Jubilee.; the two vessels were in operation for a few months in the Persian Gulf. The voyage was the return trip from Brest (France) to Abu Dhabi (UAE).

This was a fascinating project due to the many difficulties and challenges presented. In particular, these warships are relatively old (about 30 years old), the hull is made of GRP/FRP (thus very fragile) and the trip in winter is rough (proper lashing required). Moreover, at the beginning of the lifting the sea state must be very calm (less than 50 cm). The loading of one mine hunter lasts about four hours (not including the lashing). If you wish other photos of the operation, feel free to ask. We plan to redo this project in the beginning of 2017.



Now and Then

By Euan Davidson

My eldest grandson recently commenced his career in Marine Engineering as an Engineer Cadet, and has now finished his first periods of sea-going training on an Offshore vessel, which made me cast my mind back to when I joined my first offshore supply vessel as Chief Engineer way back when in 1971, on a vessel built in 1966. I thought it may be of interest to members to draw a comparison between the designs and technology available now compared to that in previous years, and so am kicking off what is hoped to be a regular feature covering a wide range of categories and sectors, by comparing an example of current offshore vessel design with that of a typical vessel of 50 years ago.

2016

Vos Partner

Flag	Dutch
Built	COSCO
	Guang Dong, China
Year Built	2016
Owner	Vroon Offshore Services
Length Overall	83.40 m
Breadth Moulded	18.00 m
Length B.P.P.	79.55 m
Design/Max Draft	6.00 / 6.70m
Deadweight (Design/Max Draft)	3,300 / 4,200 t
Gross Tonnage	approx. 3,650 t
Propulsion System	Diesel Electric
	2 x Azimuth Thrusters
Engines	2 x Caterpillar 3512
	Diesels, 1,630 kW each
	2 x Caterpillar C32
	Diesels, 990 kW each
Stern Thrusters	2 x 1,600 kW Schottel
Bow Thrusters	2 x 880 kW
Emergency Generator	130 kW

1966

Collection Ko Rushman

East Shore

Flag	British
Built	Cochran & Sons, Selby, UK
Year Built	1966
Owner	Offshore Marine
Length Overall	52.35 m
Length B.P.P.	46.33 m
Breadth Moulded	11.69 m
Depth / Draft	4.73 / 4.19 m
GRT / NRT	669 / 232
DWT	965 dwt
Main Engines	2 x 4SA Lister
	Blackstone ESSL 8
	2 x 800 bhp
Gearing	Flexible coupling with single reduction reverse gear
Auxiliary Engines	3 x 85 kW
Propellers	2 x Fixed pitch
Rudders	2 x Spade
Bow / Stern Thruster	1 x 110 hp / -
Service Speed	12 Knots
Derricks	2 x 15 t
Emergency Power	24v batteries

Now and Then (contd)

For any readers interested in a comprehensive assessment of the progress in the design, development, and operation of offshore vessels I can suggest reference to **'The Development of the Offshore Support Vessel'**, published as Annex 2 of the Chamber of Shipping's response to a questionnaire on **'Community Guidelines on State Aid to Maritime Transport'**, which covers the development of the sector, from the first use of converted landing craft as support vessels for platforms operating close to shore in the Gulf of Mexico in the late 1940's, and commissioning of what was arguably the first dedicated offshore supply vessel, the 'Ebb Tide', in 1955, and continuing with a summation of progress up to 2012. For the purpose of this article however I offer the following summary, which also covers some additional aspects.

The 'Ebb Tide' was arranged with all superstructure, including the accommodation and bridge, at the bow, so leaving a large open aft deck area clear for operational activities, which principally involved the supply of materials, such as casing etc., to offshore installations, with the movement and mooring of rigs mainly being carried out by tugs.

By the early 1960's the functions of the offshore vessels had expanded to cover additional aspects of offshore operations, such as towing, and anchor handling/ mooring of rigs, by the addition of 'A' frames at the stern, and installation of towing winches at the forward end of the open aft deck, so initiating the trend towards 'support' vessels as opposed to dedicated 'supply' vessels.

Operating conditions in the North Sea were found to differ significantly from those in the Mexican Gulf area, and in the mid 1960's one of the early offshore support vessels custom built for operation in the North Sea was the 'Smit-Lloyd 1', operated by the Dutch shipowners and tug operators of the same name. In a significant change to the general design of the time, the 'Smit-Lloyd 1' was arranged with raised funnels located just aft of the forward superstructure, so removing the funnel structure from the outboard sides of the aft deck, and giving an almost completely clear working deck area, and was also fitted with a towing winch at the forward end of the deck, and a large diameter roller extending over almost the full width of the deck at the stern.

By the late 1960's, early 1970's, development of the vessels had progressed by the provision of larger Anchor Handling Tug Supply vessels (AHTS) with increasing power plant capacities and enlarged working deck areas, to allow for towing and assistance in mooring of rigs, and also by providing increased underdeck facilities and tankage to allow for the carriage and supply of Cement, Fuel, Drill/Potable Water etc., to the rigs once they had been commissioned and started offshore operations.

Through the 1970's progress continued with the introduction of gradually larger and more powerful vessels. As the need for ever larger cargo carrying and discharge capacities developed, so did the method of discharge at the rig. Initial discharge of cargo at the rigs was carried out by adopting the 'Mediterranean Mooring' technique, i.e. dropping an anchor on approach to the rig, and then approaching the rig stern first and securing lines from the stern to the rig legs. However as drilling depths increased, the need for additional lengths of drill casing/ pipes became greater, and the length of the aft deck areas were extended to allow for carriage of 2 or even 3 lengths of pipe.

The rig cranes no longer had sufficient outreach to cover the whole deck area, or unload the whole cargo, without moving the vessel, or moving the cargo on the deck. Initially this was resolved by discharging cargo from the extreme aft deck area within reach of the rig crane first, and then moving the remaining cargo from forward to aft. Subsequently this requirement led to the provision of tugger winches on the deck, and some vessels were provided with hydraulic moveable deck sections. The increase in handling and movement of cargo on supply vessels introduced additional risk to crew members working on the aft deck, and was especially dependent on suitable weather conditions. Occasionally, when the delivery was urgent or critical, some discharges were carried out on a 'snatch' basis, where the supply vessel would approach the rig without anchoring/mooring, and the cargo would be 'snatched' from the deck.

A basic form of Dynamic Positioning (DP) was initially introduced on drill ships in the early 1960's, but it wasn't until the late 1970's/early 1980's that it began to appear on offshore vessels. DP only became fully possible by the development of suitable thrusters.

Bow thrusters had been fitted to early offshore vessels, and then a combination of bow and stern units were fitted, with proportionate increases in thrust capacity, and finally Azimuth thrusters were installed offering easier implementation of the full benefits of Dynamic Positioning for vessel handling and station keeping.

Development of the vessels continued through the mid to late 1970's and on to the mid 1980's, with increases in the size and power output of supply and AHTS vessels, and the appearance of dedicated specialist vessels such

Contd./

Now and Then (contd)

as diving support vessels, and vessels capable of launching, operating, and supporting manned mini-submarines, and submersible Remote Operated Vehicles (ROV's).

The major drop in the oil price in the late 1980's caused a significant drop in offshore activity, resulting in a pause on further development of the vessel types for an extended period, and gains in operational efficiency and capabilities were maximised wherever possible by existing vessels fighting to retain a share of the market.

The Piper Alpha disaster in 1988 led to an ever increasing awareness of the need for Emergency Response and Rescue Vessels (ERRV's), and the development of these vessels from the original 'Standby' vessels continues to this day by incorporating fast rescue craft and high capacity fire fighting capabilities into the modern fully equipped ERRV. More recently a larger class of ERRV has been introduced, which carry 'daughter' craft for deployment in case of an emergency, and can also fulfil all the functions of a support vessel.

As continuing exploration in the North Sea, and extending into the UK Atlantic margin, new discoveries were made and fields developed. The ever increasing exploration depths, and extended distances offshore, led to the introduction of some multi-purpose offshore vessels, to avoid the continual need for return trips to the operational base, and deployment of several different types of vessel on the same installation. The continuing general increase in size and power of the vessels aided uninterrupted operation in the increasingly encountered adverse weather conditions.

By the early 1990's this had led to the development of Platform Support Vessels (PSV's) which could offer larger cargo carrying capacities and fulfil several additional functions as compared to the standard OSV or AHTS vessels. These PSV's tended to be fitted out with increased tankage capacities for rig supply purposes, and some were equipped with full dynamic positioning capability, and fitted with a moonpool, so allowing support for diving operations and/or ROV deployment.

As further development took place in the early 2000's even larger multi-role vessels were introduced incorporating more facilities, such as heavy lift crane capacity, and 'A' frames arranged over the stern, in addition to high capacity anchor handling and towing winches.

More recently specialist vessels have been introduced to serve the needs of offshore wind farms, some concentrating on fast crew transport, and some on the carriage/handling and installation of wind turbines and their towers.

Currently offshore vessels with power plants in excess of 14000kW, and crane capacities of up to 250 tons, are involved in numerous offshore construction projects for surface and sub-sea installations, and the sub-sea capabilities of some specialist vessels now extends to well intervention and downhole maintenance, while the early stages of developing and installing tidal energy will undoubtedly add to the range of support services required offshore.

In considering all of the foregoing, and to give a quick, more practical, comparison of the early offshore vessel design and capabilities, with the current range of vessel, I have selected the 'East Shore' and the 'Vos Partner', whose build dates were 50 years apart.

The 'East Shore' was a new build vessel ordered from Cochrane & Sons, Selby yard in 1965, and delivered in 1966, as part of a comprehensive newbuilding programme undertaken by the owners, Offshore Marine.

The 'Vos Partner' is an Ulstein type PX121 offshore supply boat, and is vessel No.100 built to the Ulstein X-BOW® hull line design, which minimises slamming from head seas, so offering improved seakeeping with better weather protection on deck, increased comfort and safety, and reduced fuel consumption.

The principal characteristics of the two vessels are displayed side by side in the opening section of this article, and the pictures and data highlight some of the significant differences between them.

'East Shore' was built to the standard configuration of offshore vessel design at that time, featuring a twin diesel engine installation, installed aft in the engine room, located under the aft working deck, with the exhausts led up into the low level funnel casings arranged on the port and starboard outboard sides, just aft of midships. The working deck extended the full width of the vessel to the bulwarks on both sides, and was fully exposed to the weather. The vessel was fitted with a small bow thruster, but was not fitted with CPP propellers or any other thrusters, and the main engines were arranged with direct drive to the fixed pitch propellers through flexible couplings and single reduction reverse gearboxes. There was no DP facility and no emergency generator, only emergency batteries. The twin main engines were arranged with bridge control and were rated at 800 bhp each, total 1600 bhp, and 3 x 85kW alternators were

Contd./

Now and Then (contd)

fitted. The maximum load capacity, comprising mainly deck cargo and a limited bulk cement storage capacity, was 965 dwt.

'Vos Partner' is one of six type PX121 newbuildings ordered from the COSCO Guang Dong shipyard by Vroon Offshore Services, and was delivered to owners in January 2016. The Ulstein X-BOW® design provides improved seakeeping and incorporates an enclosed forecastle area, and the vessel design provides for a working deck area of 850m^2, and a maximum load capacity, comprising a comprehensive mixture of tankage and dry bulk in addition to deck cargo, of 4200 dwt. The working deck is clear of obstructions and is arranged with double casings along the full length of both outboard sides, offering additional weather protection to the deck area.

The diesel electric propulsion plant is powered by 2 x 2186 bhp main diesels supplying 2 x 1600kW stern azimuth thrusters, and 2 x 880kW bow thrusters are also fitted. Vessel services are powered by 2 x 990kW auxiliary diesels, and a 130kW emergency generator is also fitted. The vessel is arranged with a Kongsberg DP2 dynamic positioning system, and is equipped with an external fire-fighting installation incorporating 2 x 1200m^3/hr fire monitors, and a foam monitor. The selection of a diesel electric installation allows for relocation of the engine room forward, and routing of the engine exhausts through the superstructure.

The 'East Shore' foundered with all hands in heavy weather in the Mediterranean while carrying a cargo of approximately 250 tons of drill casing in January 1974. The subsequent inquiry was hampered by the lack of any survivors, and the total loss of the vessel, however as far as could be determined from all communications and sightings in the lead up to the sinking, it was concluded that the shifting cargo had caused damage to the inboard side of the port funnel casing, allowing water penetration into the machinery spaces, which reached the main switchboard causing a blackout. In addition, some parts of the cargo had jumped the protection barriers along the sides of the deck, and damaged some of the air pipes arranged along the outboard sides, eventually leading to water contamination of the diesel daily service tank, and stopping the main engines and auxiliary diesels.

The relocation of funnel arrangements, and the provision of side casings on deck, as found on the 'Vos Protector', highlight some of the improvements implemented since the early days of offshore vessel design.

10 Things You Didn't Know About The Suez Canal

Posted to Eliot Keirl's Blog (byEliot Keirl) on 26 Oct, 2016

From http://www.maritimeprofessional.com/blogs/post/10-things-you-didnt-know-about-the-suez-canal-15166

A look at the Suez Canal – past, present and future – revealing its complex character throughout history and influence on geopolitics and world economy.

The Suez Canal, inaugurated in Egypt in December 1869, is one of the amazing industrial achievements that still inspires awe and continues to impress. The Canal was built to connect the North Atlantic ocean with the northern Indian one, considerably reducing the distance between Europe and Asia, and thus encouraging world trade and transatlantic transportation.

And while most everyone knows some bits of information about the Suez Canal, this massive construction that took 10 years to complete, has a fascinating history that can keep you fascinated for hours. Below you'll read 10 of the most incredible facts that contribute to the Canal's rightful place in history.

1. It was the inspiration for the Statue of Liberty
French sculptor Frédéric-Auguste Bartholdi came up with the idea of building a grand statue to celebrate the Canal, and pitched it to the Egyptian government and developer Ferdinand de Lesseps. The statue would envision a woman dressed in traditional Egyptian garb, wear a torch, and be titled "Egypt Bringing Light to Asia". The idea had been inspired by the Colossus of Rhodes, and it would have stood at the Mediterranean end of the Canal. It was also meant to have a practical purpose, serving as lighthouse to passing ships.
The idea didn't catch on here, but Bartholdi continued pitching it until it was finally brought to New York, where its original name was a more encompassing "Liberty Enlightening the World".

2. An expansion of the Suez Canal is underway
The Egyptian government decided to expand the Suez Canal in order to further decrease distances and promote world trade, especially trade routes between Asia and Europe. The project began in 2014, and is programmed to be open for use by the end of 2016. Originally, the Suez Canal shortened trips with as much as 7,000 kilometres, while the completed project will raise that to almost 9,600 kilometres.
While the original construction took almost a decade to complete, this new addition will be ready in under two years, and almost double toll revenue for the Egyptian government by 2023.

3. The Panama Canal was projected by the same developer
After successfully finishing the Suez Canal, Ferdinand de Lesseps developed the idea of building another canal over the Isthmus in Central America. Encouraged by his previous success, investors and governments gave their support and go-ahead, and Lesseps recruited architect and engineer Gustave Eiffel, creator of the Eiffel Tower. Lesseps had promised that building the Panama Canal would be easier and quicker than the Suez.
The project was initiated in 1881, twelve years after the Suez Canal was completed, but was subject to many failures and misfortunes under Lesseps' management, including an epidemic that resulted in thousands of deaths. Lesseps' company crashed in 1889, while he and Eiffel were prosecuted for conspiracy and fraud.

4. The great majority of labourers were native
Most of the people hired to work on the Suez Canal were native Egyptians. It is estimated there must have been around 30,000 workers in total. Building the Canal was a combined effort of both primitive manual labour and the latest technologies available at the time.
Drafting most of these laborers, which often worked in the most inhumane conditions, was done under the supervision of the Khedive, basically a viceroy, or governor of Egypt. This means that labour was mostly forced, and consisted of peasants threatened into working, basically using handheld tools to dig up the canal's way.

5. The British government initially opposed its construction
Lesseps, a former diplomat, had reached an agreement with the Egyptian government, or rather, the Egyptian Khedive, and together they formed the Suez Canal Company. But because the project had also received support from the French Emperor Napoleon III, the British government saw it as a deliberate act of defiance towards their global shipping power, which far surpassed any other at that time.
Albeit criticizing the project for many years, the British government did not hesitate to buy a whopping 44 percent of the company's shares when the Egyptian government put them up for auctioning as more funding became necessary, and continues to be a majority stakeholder.

Contd./

10 Things You Didn't Know About The Suez Canal (contd.)

6. It is approximately 19 miles (29 km) longer after its expansion
At the moment of its completion, the Suez Canal measured about 102 miles, or 164 kilometres. Out of this grand total, as much as 75 miles were excavated, which is one of the factors that added to the difficulties of its construction and delayed completion so much.
Nowadays, thanks to the expansion, the Suez Canal will be about 120 miles long, or 193 kilometres. This is a huge improvement and benefit for transoceanic trade on one of the most popular waterways in the world.

7. 15 ships were stranded on it for 8 years
Following the Six Day War in 1967, the Egyptian government blocked the Canal's entrances with mines and abandoned ships. The 15 ships that remained stranded were moored inside the Canal, and many of the crewmembers remained on deck for the entire period. During these eight years, the people formed a community of sorts, creating their own trading systems and organizing sporting events to pass the time.
A smaller part of the crew were rotated on and off the moored ships every three months. The ships were released in 1975, with all but two of them no longer seaworthy.

8. Another similar canal was built in Ancient Egypt
History has recorded that an Egyptian Pharaoh by the name of Senuset III built a canal connecting the Nile River with the Red Sea almost two thousand years before the Suez Canal, around 1850 B.C.

9. Napoleon Bonaparte also wanted to build it
So many great men tried to build a canal connecting the Red Sea to the Mediterranean not because of sheer inspiration, but because it is such a logical and strategic construction. So when he conquered Egypt in 1789, Napoleon Bonaparte send a team of researchers to take measurements for such a canal.
Unfortunately, they miscalculated and made Bonaparte reconsider. It was only decades later, when new measurements showed that the sea level difference would not hinder construction, that the project was approved.

10. It facilitated the European colonization of Africa
Also called the "scramble for Africa", the years between 1881 and 1914 represent a period which saw major invasions of African territory by what already were, or became great world colonizers. This included countries like France, Great Britain, Portugal, Italy, Spain, or Belgium, and which was followed by a division and colonization of these areas.

==========

New developments in professional standards for marine surveyors

By John Fearnley

Seawork 2014 saw the issue of an updated UK Workboat (Brown) Code following comprehensive updating by an industry technical working group (TWG) over a long period of time, supported by the UK Maritime & Coastguard Agency (MCA).

Further detailed work has been carried out by the TWG since then and the official launching of the Workboat Code Edition 2 is expected shortly.

The new Code has been enthusiastically supported by the UK workboat industry and it is hoped that this will be recognised and adopted internationally in the same way as the UK Large Yacht Code (LY3), thus countering criticism aimed at UK commercial vessel standards (i.e. those in MGN 280 (M)) by some EU Flag States, which spurred the development of the new WB code.

One consequence of this work was an early recognition and understanding that this excellent new standard must be embedded and supported by the professional standards of the Certifying Authorities (CA) and other suitably qualified and experienced surveyors who are to apply the new code.

To explore and develop this process further, the Certifying Authority Professional Standards Working Group (CAPSWG) was set up in February 2015 comprising professional surveyors from CA's, Class, Industry and the UK MCA, with additional input and advice from leading marine industry training and education providers.

The initial report from the CAPSWG was presented to the MCA CA British Certification Committee (CABCC) at the annual meeting at MCA Head Quarters in Southampton, UK in February 2016 and accepted for implementation.

Contd./

New developments in professional standards for marine surveyors (contd.)

There were three significant strands and recommendations from this first report that must be adopted and implemented if the new standard is to become universally successful and to be regarded as fit for purpose:

1. minimum entry standards for surveyors engaged in the certification of vessels based on a mix of educational achievements and qualifications, experience as a surveyor and time served.

2. the use of a matrix document for individual surveyors, which must objectively match the surveyor's experience, competency and qualifications to vessel type, survey type, vessel complexity and any specialist knowledge required for certain surveys.

3. continuation and expansion of the PSWG to develop and co-ordinate common training, education and continuing professional development (CPD), whilst embracing all current communication and delivery methods to make this available to all surveyors, engineers and naval architects.

One exciting consequence of this recent work has been the realisation that the profession as a whole, not just small ships, could benefit from a long overdue, joined up, education and training programme. This work must find a way to link academic and vocational qualifications, recognised by the relevant professional institutions, potentially all the way up the ladder to chartered status, with national occupation standards developed for the surveyors, for which validated technical apprenticeships could then be developed. As appropriate to the level of education, training and experience, as a code vessel surveyor, there should also be specific levels to be attained, for example *'registered'* and *'incorporated'* along the career ladder.

There is a disparity in the UK with different educational and training providers offering general and specialised courses in the surveying profession, none of which enjoy official high level recognition by the professional bodies, such as IMarEST or RINA. There are diplomas and educational programmes on the market (these may or may not be certified by a recognised Further Education or Higher Education institution), which are generally accepted as CPD by Certifying Authorities and others.

However, currently these educational programmes do not enjoy endorsement by the marine institutions towards core professional education and training. There are also leading Class Societies and the MCA providing high level training to their own people without seeking wider professional endorsement.

Development and co-ordination of education and training courses towards recognition by the professional institutions must be a prime goal of this initiative.

There is now an opportunity to re-structure the surveying profession in all sectors for the benefit of the industry, those who work in it and the wider UK marine industry generally.

These ideas have already been embraced at conceptual stage by leading vocational training and education providers and by IMarEST too, who are keen to support the surveying profession and sector. The task of bringing all the disparate stakeholders together is significant and should not be underestimated, but has already begun in earnest.

The next stage of the initiative will be to bring all stakeholders together to develop a realistic and achievable road map to the *'registered',' incorporated'* and *'chartered'* status steps and goals (ultimately awarded by the UK Engineering Council through appropriate professional engineering institutions) and to explore funding possibilities for the different entry points, for example technical apprenticeships for the vocational route.

This is not a short term project, nor a quick fix initiative. It is expected to take 5 to 10 years of development, but it is felt by those involved that it will become a vital ingredient for 'UK Marine Ltd' to achieve and maintain its status at the top of international marine standards.

This article does not set out to criticise any particular education or training providers, nor their courses and modules; rather it seeks to identify the need for all such existing and future courses and modules to have common and recognised accreditation. Course and education providers have a key role to play in this initiative. It is right and would be the intention that all those education, training institutions, certifying, surveying authorities and organisations who wish to contribute to the establishment and development of a system should be encouraged to do so at the appropriate time.

Authors:

John Fearnley - CEO Mecal Ltd - PSWG Chair 2015-16

Mike Schwarz – CEO, International Institute of Marine Surveying - PSWG Chair 2016

Mariners 'priced off the sea by low-wage foreign workers'

By Jillian Ambrose

(This article appeared in the Daily Telegraph on 30th January 2017)

The Government is preparing to defend the UK's declining maritime industry against the rise of cheap foreign shippers which threaten to price British seafarers out of the North Sea.

Transport minister John Hayes has assured industry groups his department will begin to review minimum wage rules this week amid growing fears that rock-bottom rates paid by foreign operators are undercutting UK workers.

In a letter to trade body Nautilus, seen by *The Daily Telegraph*, Mr Hayes said: "I am determined to see more UK seafarers employed and to be able to compete fairly for jobs, particularly for those jobs working on vessels operating out of UK ports or operating in UK waters".

Fears over the unfair competition faced by UK mariners were reignited last year after vessels owned by an Indian-based firm were detained in Aberdeen and Great Yarmouth after failing to pay their crew the Indian national minimum wage of around £2 an hour for more than four months.

The Malaviya 7, which last year was chartered by BP and Premier Oil, was detained twice in the second half of last year and is believed to have been abandoned by its owners over the unpaid fees.

Maritime trade group Nautilus said the UK's shipping industry cannot afford to compete with the prices offered by firms from Asia, which is spurring the decades-long decline for the sector. "For an island nation that relies on ships and seafarers for 95pc of its trade, it is deeply disturbing to see such a dramatic decline in the pool of maritime expertise," a spokesman for Nautilus said.

"British seafarers are being priced off the sea because of the unfair competition that is posed by the use of low-cost foreign crews in our waters. We don't allow people to work in our factories to be paid Indian wages—why should we allow seafarers working exclusively in our waters to be paid at those rates? Employment rights should not stop at the shoreline."

The UK's shipping industry has suffered a 22pc decline in the number of certificated officers in a decade. The historic decline is even more marked: the number of UK seafarers working at sea was 33,670 in 1977 and is now 23,060.

Nautilus claims further decline is inevitable unless action is taken.

Overall, the total supply of UK officers in 2026 is expected to be 7pc lower than in 2016 and the supply of deck and engine officers is projected to fall by more than 30pc in this period.

A spokesman for Department for Transport said: "We want a successful UK maritime industry so our nation is best placed to benefit from the expected doubling in world sea trade by 2030.

"Our seafarers are rightly recognised for their training and expertise and we are launching a review to see how we can help the sector thrive."